



2017

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### Recommended Citation

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<https://commons.und.edu/ot-oral-histories-papers/1>

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Evolution of Occupational Therapy Practice: Life History of Art (Arthur) Heinze

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### Abstract

*Objective.* The purpose of this qualitative study was to gather information about the history and evolution of occupational therapy (OT) practice in North Dakota and Wyoming through the life histories of individuals who have been influential in developing OT in these two states.

*Method.* An in-depth interview was completed with Art, his wife, and the two occupational therapy students who were conducting the research. Themes regarding his career path were synthesized from the interview data and compared with the history of the OT profession.

*Results.* There were 14 codes developed and placed into three categories. Ten themes emerged from the analysis. The findings indicate that Art had a positive impact on the evolution of the profession.

*Conclusion.* Art's life journey, including his personal and professional beliefs, has allowed him to play a prominent role in laying the foundation for OT to flourish in North Dakota and Northwestern Minnesota as a bilateral amputee.

### Introduction

The interview took place at the participant's home between 3:30pm and 4:45pm, seated at the dining room table. The participant's wife joined the researchers for the interview. No unexpected events occurred. Prior to the start of the interview, the researchers asked Art if he wanted to familiarize himself with the questions that would be asked; he took them and started answering the questions. The researchers received all of the necessary information during the interview, whether the researchers asked the question or Art read through and answered them himself. Following the interview, Art shared multiple scrapbooks of his life milestones related to his accident, career path, and family life. He allowed the researchers to take photos of his scrapbooks, and provided physical handouts and pamphlets, and, a DVD he made. This life history was one of 29 life history interviews which are a part of a larger project, *Life Histories of Individuals Who Have Been Influential in Developing Occupational Therapy (OT) in North Dakota and Wyoming*. The purpose of the project is to gather information about the history and evolution of OT practice in North Dakota and Wyoming through life histories of individuals who have been influential in developing OT in these two states. It is anticipated that the life history process will be a powerful way to gather this information. This study is intended to provide current and future generations of occupational therapists a view of the history and how OT practice has evolved from its inception to current practice in North Dakota and Wyoming.

### Literature Review

Art Heinze started his journey in occupational therapy after becoming a bilateral arm amputee in 1957 (Heinze, 2009). After the accident Art received rehabilitation services at Gillette Hospital in St. Paul, MN; being a patient later helped him understand and motivate his

clients in regards to what they were going through. At the time, there were no rehabilitation services in northern MN where he was living. Art thought he wanted to be a farmer because that is what his father did; he quickly learned that farming was not going to work for him. After taking a vocational test he found out that he would be a good therapist. Art credits his recovery to occupational and physical therapy. That was when he decided that he should become an occupational therapist (Heinze, 2009).

Art received his bachelor's degree in occupational therapy at the University of North Dakota (Heinze, 2009). After graduation in 1961, Art developed the OT program in Thief River Falls, MN; he was the only occupational therapist in northwestern MN. This was challenging as a new therapist because he only had one year of practice and OT was not well-known. He was motivated to work in a rural hospital due to growing up on a farm in a small MN town (Heinze, 2009).

As a result of his farm accident and becoming the only occupational therapist in Thief River Falls, Art received media coverage which helped educate others about the OT profession (Heinze, 2009). In 1966 as Art continued to grow more confident in his abilities as an occupational therapist, he contributed to the establishment of the use of therapeutic activities in eight nursing homes around Thief River Falls. Around 1969, rehabilitation services expanded to encompass mental health and school services, which were not previously available throughout the northwestern MN area. Art would go into the schools and give lectures to educate the kids on OT and his life as a bilateral arm amputee. He also became a member of the amputee coalition. Art became a guest speaker at amputee coalition conferences, as well as a handful of American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) conferences (Heinze, 2009).

As a therapist he advanced the OT practice by his involvement in legislation related to licensure in ND and advocacy through the amputee association (Heinze, 2009). Art felt that legislation was important in advocating for payment, reimbursement, and licensure in the state. Due to the lack of understanding on the local and national level, Art saw a role for technology in the education of the OT profession (A. Heinze, personal communication, October 13, 2017). Many changes happened regarding legislation throughout Art's OT career.

In 1976 North Dakota was able to develop their own association (North Dakota Occupational Therapy Association [NDOTA]) apart from South Dakota, due to an increase of memberships (Lind, 1987). While Art was practicing, in 1983 there were advancements in licensure as the North Dakota State Board of Occupational Therapy was established (Board of Occupational Therapy Practice, n.d.). In 1999, OT aides were allowed to practice under a licensed OT assistant or an occupational therapist. Other milestones for the profession included the inclusion of internationally trained occupational therapists to become licensed if they met the North Dakota state requirements (Board of Occupational Therapy Practice, n.d.).

Once he retired, he continued to give consultations to individuals with upper extremity amputations, train other therapists to work with clients who were upper extremity amputations, and give lectures on disability awareness (Heinze, 2009). After retirement he continued to be available by phone and email as a peer counselor for individuals with upper extremity

amputations. He also received coverage regarding awards he won, such as the “Outstanding Commitment to Community Services Since Reaching the Age of 65” (Heinze Minnesota’s Outstanding Senior Award, 2013).

## **Theory**

The Kawa Model guided the research process in regard to the life history of Art Heinze. The researchers attempted to gain a better understanding of his life history through interview questions by focusing on Art’s river flow, river banks, rocks, driftwood, and spaces (Teoh & Iwama, 2015). The river banks represent the social surroundings of Art’s life. The rocks are the barriers that Art experienced through his career as an occupational therapist. Driftwood is represented as Art’s strategies and perceptions of the profession along his career path. The spaces between the rocks are the main focus of the interview, which emphasize Art’s experience as an occupational therapist and the impact he had on the profession (Teoh & Iwama, 2015). The purpose of the interview, as guided by the Kawa model, was to focus on Art’s role as a leader in OT.

## **Description of the Participant**

Art Heinze, 79-years old, has been a bilateral arm amputee for 59 years. In 1957, at the age of 18, Art was involved in a circular saw farm accident, which led him to be a bilateral arm amputee (Heinze, 2009). He received surgery on his right arm above the elbow, and his left arm below the elbow. On his road to recovery, Art engaged in both occupational and physical therapy (A. Heinze, personal communication, October 13, 2017). His first exposure to occupational therapy was in 1958 when he received services, and then continued with a service project at Gillette Hospital through his fraternity. He attended the University of North Dakota and graduated with his bachelor’s in OT in 1961. After one year of practice, he started the OT program in Thief River Falls in 1963, and was the only therapist in northwestern Minnesota. Throughout his career he completed many amputee consultations, created adaptive equipment, and participated in public speaking for disability awareness, the amputee coalition, and some AOTA and prosthetic conferences. He also made a video based off of his accident which included what a therapist should know when working with an amputee. Art retired after 40 years in the profession with many recognizable accomplishments. As an occupational therapist, he wanted to help individuals be as independent as they could be, with the limitations that they had; by once being a client, he felt he was better able to understand and motivate his clients to achieve successful outcomes. He retired in July of 2003 as the director of occupational therapy at Northwest Medical Center in Thief River Falls (A. Heinze, personal communication, October 13, 2017).

## **Methodology**

### **Study Design**

Throughout the study, a life history qualitative research approach was used to focus on the participant's involvement in the evolution of occupational therapy practice. The life history approach identifies and classifies "turning points" that occur throughout an individual's life. In addition to interviews and observation, archival information was collected to support the development and understanding of the individual's story.

### **Participant Selection**

The participant interviewed was selected from a participant list compiled through purposive sampling by the project directors. The directors of the project contacted and arranged for the participants to take part in the life history project. The participant gave his written consent to participate in an audio recorded interview and allowed researchers to incorporate artifacts into the study. The study was approved by UND Institutional Review Board and because of the study design the formal IRB process was waived.

### **Data Collection**

The semi-structured interview was guided by an interview schedule prepared by the project directors; the questions on the interview schedule were designed to be used with all the individuals interviewed as part of the larger project. The researchers were allowed to modify or add interview questions as needed for each specific interview. There were no gatekeeper issues because initial contact was made by the project directors. The participant was contacted by the researchers and an interview was set-up to be completed at his home. Time was spent before meeting the participant gathering information through articles about the participant online and through discussion with instructors. The interview was conducted face-to-face at the participant's dining room table. The interview took about 1.5 hours and then another 1.5 hours was designated for reviewing of his scrapbooks. The scrapbooks highlighted his career as an occupational therapist.

### **Trustworthiness**

Triangulation was used to increase the overall trustworthiness while completing Art's life history. The researchers used a semi-structured interview, participant observation, collection via the participant's scrapbooks, and a debriefing session to ensure multiple methods were used. Multiple perspectives were taken into consideration by having two researchers involved in the study to analyze and interpret the findings. To increase rigor of the study, credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability were assessed. Credibility was evident in the

study through the use of persistent observation and member checking during the interview data collection. Since this study is personalized to the life of Art, transferability to other situations and contexts is not evident. A reliable study comes from a valid study. To insure validity within the study the interview took place in Art's home. Another way the researchers insured validity was that the questions were guided by the participant's life and career path. When information required clarification, Art was willing to share more examples to help clarify and confirm the information that he was sharing.

### **Data Analysis**

The interview was audiotaped, transcribed, and coded into 14 codes that reflected the themes throughout the interview. During transcription subjective comments were placed in the margins to assist in creating codes for the interview along with memoing during transcription and reflexive journals. Data saturation was not achieved due to only completing one interview with the participant. Triangulation was accomplished in the study due to two researchers being involved in the interview, transcription, and coding process. University of North Dakota instructors assisted in consultation of data collection and analysis during this study.

From the interview, 14 codes were developed, refer to the visual data display (see appendix). Inclusion criteria for selecting codes included the topics that Art consistently emphasized throughout the interview. Exclusion criteria included information that was not relevant to gain an overall understanding of his life history.

The Kawa model influenced the data analysis process and presentation of findings because the information gathered was based off Art's life history, not specifically his career as an occupational therapist. All aspects of Art's life were taken into account when processing the data, especially looking at how his accident impacted his career as an occupational therapist.

### **Findings/Results**

There were three categories that emerged from the 14 codes: evolution of occupational therapy, life journey, and personal and professional beliefs. Between 3-5 codes were placed in each category. Refer to visual data display for the breakdown of the codes, categories, and themes.

#### **Category One: Evolution of Occupational Therapy**

*Theme one. At first OT was not as prevalent in rural areas. Art spent time finding ways to advocate for and increase the recognition of OT throughout his career.*

"I joined to help get the northwest district started in northwestern MN. We kind of headquartered out of DL. I was more willing to drive."

“I really supported that that we would get to Detroit Lakes or to get to Fergus Falls or to Wadena. Usually Crookston would host one monthly meeting and Thief River would host one, the rest would be more centrally located.”

“As occupational therapy became more known it spread out and I think with all the publicity that I had we got through the Red River OT District.”

*Theme two. There were many misconceptions of what the role of occupational therapy was. Due to being a bilateral arm amputee the editor of the town’s paper took an interest in Art, which gave Art the ability to educate others about OT.*

“The editor took a shine to me here and anyway I got a front-page coverage and he just loved OT and respected what I did and how good it was. And so I got a lot of coverage.”

“And I mean a lot of people had that misconception or that occupational therapists were basket weavers.”

*Theme three. Early on there was a heavy emphasis on interventions that related to arts and crafts. Even though Art admitted to not being a crafty person, he saw the therapeutic benefits of using arts and crafts with his clients. When he attended school at UND a majority of his classes were based off some sort of art.*

“Back then it was a lot of classes that were taken and related to the arts and like industrial art, adapting equipment, learning machinery or jigsaws, and hand tools.”

“Woodworking, you couldn’t find a better therapeutic activity for a stroke patient, I mean pounding nails, changing a blade on a saw, and a bilateral activity.”

“I used arts and crafts a lot in psych, I’m not a crafty person, I mean, I think I’m the only OT that graduated and didn’t have to learn how to knit.”

## **Category Two: Life Journey**

*Theme four. He primarily practiced in northwest Minnesota and North Dakota. Art was the first occupational therapist to work in Thief River Falls and was the only occupational therapist in northwestern MN at the time. He had only one year of practice before starting the OT program in Thief River Falls.*



“In 1964 when I came to Thief River Falls I started the OT program here. I was the only therapist on this side of Fergus Falls, this side of Duluth, and this side of Brainerd. So, I was the only therapist up here in northwestern MN. ”

“But I liked it here and started from an empty room and went from there and now we have expanded in that time.”

*Theme five. Being a bilateral amputee from the farm accident allowed him to explore and become a part of the profession.* Art was able to receive rehabilitation services at Gillette hospital in St. Paul and there he became immersed in a field that he saw himself having a future in.

“Now it’s a little different with me, being a bilateral arm amputee but I can honestly say that 98% of the time, the disability was an advantage more than a disadvantage because I was good at motivating people.”

“Then I had occupational and physical therapy, and I really accredit occupational and physical therapy for giving me back my life.”

*Theme six. Being a patient helped him understand and motivate his clients and what they were going through.* Art commented on how his experience as a client receiving services, inspired him to become an occupational therapist. He was able to relate to his clients and help them see how an injury can only be as disabling as he or she makes it.

“Well I think the satisfaction of seeing a patient make progress, just like the physical therapist was very happy when I announced that I got my prosthesis on independently.”

“I got a lot of feedback that I motivated a lot of patients to do or to help themselves, and I think as an occupational therapist we are taught to help them help themselves.”

*Theme seven. As a therapist he advanced practiced by his involvement and advocacy through the amputee association and conferences in the profession.* Art had many personal and career achievements, as a bilateral arm amputee, there was a special need for his involvement.

“I did a lot of amputee consultations and a lot of public speaking on disability awareness, and I got a lot of calls for consultations with my being known in Minnesota and North Dakota.”

“I used to speak at NDOTA conferences, [I] presented at that for many years after we got really busy here, then I joined to help get the northwest district started in northwestern MN.”

### Category Three: Personal and Professional Beliefs

*Theme eight. The outcome is better when the therapist is enthusiastic and motivated, in terms of the client-therapist relationship.* Art guided his practice through motivating his clients to help themselves through his or her recovery. He believed that a therapist can assist the person in the recovery phase but the client needs to find his or her own motivation to make a successful recovery.

“I would want you to be a people person, I want you to be outgoing, you don’t have to know it all, cause that’s what you’re going to school for, you have to be willing to listen to people, not only listen but hear, there’s a difference.”

“I think if an OT is enthusiastic with what they can do and if they’re willing to listen, I think too many therapists listen but don’t hear, they need to understand what their client’s goals are and what they are motivated to do.”

*Theme nine. COTAs and OTs are both well-educated and vital in providing care.* As an OTR, Art believed that COTAs and OTs complemented each other with their skill set, and the inclusion of a COTA was a good idea.

“I think that having the COTA program was a smart move on the OT profession.”

“In that profession there are so many things that COTAs can do that they can do just as well as a PhD OTR if they are properly trained, and I think that took a while for people to accept.”

*Theme ten. Legislation is important to advocate for payment, reimbursement, and licensure in the state.* Art believed in the importance of legislation, which motivated him to get involved and assist in the development of different OT associations in North Dakota and northern Minnesota. Art also, helped get grants approved to start OT programs in nursing facilities.

“Well, legislation is very important, I mean, I think the OT profession, the amputees especially, on a national level, do a lot of public relations, contacting senators and all that kind of stuff, we went through that when NDOTA got licensed and they had a director at that time who wasn’t in favor of it, who didn’t join the OT association, which got me quite urinated off.”

“I was on deck when we developed and started the Red River Valley OT association.”

“I got a grant for the hospital through the office of economic opportunity that is a government program and they got a grant to start 7 nursing homes in town.”

### **Assertion**

Both Art's life journey, and personal and professional beliefs, has allowed him to have a prominent role in laying the foundation for occupational therapy to flourish in North Dakota and Northwestern Minnesota as a bilateral amputee.

### **Discussion/Conclusion**

Throughout Art's career, North Dakota was able to expand the OT profession and become its own association with the help of Art's contributions of the development of the Red River OT association. He experienced expansions in various areas of practice throughout North Dakota and northwestern Minnesota, specifically the development of mental health and school services. There were recognizable changes in legislature that were important to further Art's career and allowed him opportunities to advance the profession. He believed in the importance of educating others and advocating for the profession as evidenced by his career as an occupational therapist, his involvement in the amputee association, speaking at both state and national conferences, and post-retirement availability for amputee consultations. The Kawa model guided Art's life history project and by capturing an overall understanding of Art's career as an occupational therapist, there is a better appreciation behind the history of occupational therapy in North Dakota and northwestern Minnesota. Art played an important role in the development of what OT is today. His contributions to the OT profession, especially as a bilateral arm amputee, offer a unique perspective regarding all that OT can provide for an individual.

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## Appendix

Personal and Professional History of Arthur Heinzel by Ashley Heinzel, MO

Occupational Therapy	Life Journey	Personal and Professional
Modifying	Career Path	Politics of OT
Expansion for the Profession	Accident	OT as a Whole
Points in OT	Rewards of OT	Lack of Knowledge
ts	Personal Coverage Achievements	COTAs
		Personal Views on

Occupational Therapy	Life Journey	Personal and Professional
was not as prevalent in the many misconceptions of the occupational therapy role. It was a heavy reliance on interventions that were not evidence-based.	4. He primarily practiced in the northwest Minnesota and North Dakota. 5. Being a lateral entrant from the farm accident, he followed the profession. 6. Being a patient helped him understand and motivate his clients and what they were going through.	7. As a therapist, he was involved through the conference. 8. The outcome of the therapist motivated the therapist to become a COTA and a COTAs and a COTAs. 9. Legislation for payment licensure in

Personal and Professional Beliefs: He allowed him to have a prominent role in the











