

Evolution of Occupational Therapy Practice: Life History of Kathlyn L. Reed, Ph.D., OTR, FAOTA, MLIS

Tristen Smith, OTS & Audrya Tarango, OTS

Introduction

- This life history is one of 30 life history interviews which are part of a larger project, *Histories of Individuals Who Have Been Influential in Developing Occupational Therapy (OT) at the National Level and Beyond*. The purpose of the study is to provide current and future generations of occupational therapists a view of the history and how occupational therapy practice has evolved from its inception to current practice through the life history stories of occupational therapists who have held leadership roles at the national level and beyond. It is anticipated that the life history process will be a powerful way to gather this information.

Participant Description

- Kathlyn L. Reed has made a great impact on the profession of occupational therapy.
- Dr. Reed received her BS in 1964 for Occupational Therapy at the University of Kansas. She also received her M.A. in 1966 for Occupational Therapy at Western Michigan University. She then received her Ph.D. in 1973 for Special Education at the University of Washington. Dr. Reed went back to school and received her M.A. in 1987 for Library & Information Studies at the University of Oklahoma.
- Dr. Reed has been contributing to the field of occupational therapy in many different ways including teaching at universities, contributing to the occupational therapy literature, writing books, writing articles, and much more.
- “One of my long-standing interests had been in the history of OT, and when I was in OT school, my instructors kept saying no there isn't much written about occupational therapy. And I'd always been a bit of a history buff, even when I was in high school. So I actually read the chapter that was in what was then called the Willard and Spackman textbook, about our founders ... So it struck me as sort of odd that if they knew they were supposed to publicize it where was the literature that they supposedly did about it?”
- Dr. Reed continues to contribute to the field of occupational therapy by holding leadership positions and adding to OT literature.

Timeline Literature Review

- 1965 - The Social Security Amendment Act of 1965 established Medicare and Medicaid and mentions occupational therapy
- 1980 - Dr. Reed co-published her first book. Reed and Sanderson, *Concepts of Occupational Therapy*.
- 1990 - The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act was signed into law, modernizing the Education of the Handicapped Act (Kalscheur, 1992).
- 1991 - Dr. Reed published her book, Reed, *Quick Reference to Occupational Therapy*.
- 1997 - The Balanced Budget Act made significant cuts to Medicare and caused massive disruption to occupational therapy.
- 2006 - Dr. Reed published *Occupational Therapy Values and Beliefs: The Formative Years: 1904-1929*.

Methodology

- This study was a qualitative study using a life history approach.
- Participant Selection: The participant was selected from a participant list compiled through purposive sampling by the project directors. Informed consent was obtained prior to the interview and the project was approved by the UND Institutional Review Board and because of the study design, the formal IRB process was waived.
- Interview Schedule: 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 student researchers were allowed to modify or add interview questions as needed for each specific interview.
- The interview was conducted via a mobile-phone and lasted approximately 48 minutes.
- The data collected consisted of an audio recording from the interview that was later transcribed and further examined during data analysis.



Data Analysis/Findings

Personality Components

- The essence of a personality is developed over time and is influenced by many intrinsic factors.
- Dr. Reed finds motivation in the development of OT literature.
- Dr. Reed has gained knowledge from her years of experience and values sharing that wisdom for the development of OT.

Career Development

- Making the decision to change lead her to increase her opportunities in the field of occupational therapy.
- Dr. Reed believes that you can only get so far in your career if you are not willing to change.
- Over her years of practice, staying ahead in education has allowed her to hold more successful positions.

Contributions to OT

- Dr. Reed believes that you have to be willing to take different leadership positions to make a difference.
- Dr. Reed believes that it is important to continue to contribute to the profession of OT through teaching, contributing to leadership, and adding to the OT literature.
- Dr. Reed's roles in OT revolve around her values of increasing what the profession has to offer.

“It's sort of silly to reinvent the wheel as it has been pointed out numerous times. But on the other hand, the wheels that work for other professions, are not the same as the way we use our wheels. And I think it's been important for us to develop that.”

The verbatim transcription was coded and yielded 18 codes. Codes were collapsed with into three categories with corresponding themes.

Discussion/Conclusions

Final Assertion:

A combination of personality components, career development, and personal contributions to OT have been a personal motivator for Dr. Reed to continue to enhance the occupational therapy profession in any way she can.

- Through this Life History experience, Dr. Reed provided a rich description of the progression of the occupational therapy profession and her experiences throughout.
- Dr. Reed's role in occupational therapy consisted of sharing her knowledge through teaching experiences, sharing wisdom, and being highly motivated in continuing to contribute to the professions' literature.
- The lack of occupational therapy literature has been a prime motivator for Dr. Reed to continue to contribute to the profession and society. Through the development of literature, Dr. Reed has expanded the knowledge of occupational therapy for the use of future generations.

Acknowledgement

- We would like to thank Dr. Reed for giving us the opportunity to learn more about her and her contributions to the field of occupational therapy.
- We would like to also thank Dr. Jedlika and Dr. Bass for their support throughout this Life History process.

References

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