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## State of the Journal: Past, Present, and Future

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## State of the Journal: Past, Present, and Future

### **Keywords**

five years, world events, achievements

Happy birthday to us! *The Open Journal of Occupational Therapy* (OJOT) is celebrating 5 years of publication. Those 5 years have moved rapidly, and we have had little time to stop and reflect on the changes that have occurred in the world as we have focused on the growth of the journal. There have been numerous political, tragic, scientific, and universal events of interest in the past 5 years. Politically, we have seen the transition to new leaders in many countries, including the United States, the United Kingdom, the Philippines, and Egypt. Other countries, such as Brazil and South Korea, have impeached their presidents, and some countries have interfered with the elections in others. World leaders, including Nelson Mandela and Margaret Thatcher, died. Wars have continued to create hardships for people in countries such as Afghanistan and Syria. North Korea launched long range rockets, Britain voted to leave the European Union, the transpacific partnership flopped, the coup in Turkey failed, and the Colombian president bypassed a public vote to hammer out a peace deal.

In the last 5 years, there have been many tragic events throughout the world. The world combated an Ebola and a Zika virus outbreak. We witnessed a cruise ship run aground in Italy, an attack at a mall in Kenya, a factory collapse in Bangladesh, a bombing at the Boston Marathon, a mine accident in Turkey, the abduction of school girls in Nigeria, a ferry sink in South Korea, a terrorist attack in Paris, and most recently an attack in New York City. Malaysian and Russian planes crashed, and one was shot down over the Ukraine. United States citizens have been victims of mass shootings in Denver, Colorado; Minneapolis, Minnesota; Brookfield, Wisconsin; Newtown, Connecticut; Santa Monica, California; Washington, D.C.; Ft. Hood, Texas; Isla Vista, California; Charleston, South Carolina; Chattanooga, Tennessee; Roseburg, Oregon; Colorado Springs, Colorado; San Bernardino, California; Orlando, Florida; Burlington, Washington; Fort Lauderdale, Florida; San Francisco, California; Las Vegas, Nevada; and most recently in Corning, California. There have been major earthquakes in China, Nepal, and Mexico and a typhoon in the Philippines. In 2017 alone, we have witnessed many tragic weather events including a monsoon in India, Hurricane Harvey, Hurricane Irma, a landslide in The Democratic Republic of Congo, a monsoon and mudslide in Sri Lanka, a landslide in Colombia, an avalanche in Afghanistan, flooding in Peru, Hurricane Maria, a typhoon in Japan, and wildfires in California.

Not all of the events of the past 5 years have been tragic. We have seen many advances in the exploration of our universe. The Rover Curiosity successfully landed on Mars; the China Moon Rover landed on the moon; the Rosetta, a European spacecraft, landed on a comet; the Juno probe entered the orbit of Jupiter; and flowing liquid was found on Mars. We also had the chance to view a total solar eclipse in the U.S. in August, 2017. If you missed it, you will have to wait until the year 2028 for the next one to occur; this time in Australia.

Scientific breakthroughs also occurred in other areas. In paleontology, a feathered dinosaur tail was discovered in China, fossilized brain tissue from a dinosaur was discovered in England, and a new horned dinosaur species was found in the U.S. Environmental discoveries included an edible, biodegradable six-pack ring to help save the lives of marine animals; the use of urine as a conductor in microbial fuel cells; a new solar cell prototype that can generate energy not just from sunlight but also from raindrops; and a polymer film that is able to soak up solar energy for later use.

On the horizon in medical treatments are medicines that combat alcoholism using a genetic marker, an effective male contraceptive, and an antibody potentially capable of indefinitely staving off the effects of Alzheimer's Disease. In 2013, scientists successfully cloned human stem cells. Since that time, many advances have occurred in stem cell research for the treatment of spinal cord injury,

neurodegenerative diseases, cardiac disease, cancer, and diabetes. Scientists in Japan have even used human stem cells to grow an adult human ear on the back of a rat. In 2016, money raised from the Ice Bucket Challenge was used to fund research that led to the identification of the gene responsible for Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis, also known as Lou Gehrig's disease. In 2016, researchers unveiled an extensive new map of the human brain that contains 97 previously unknown regions, most of which are involved with high-level cognitive functions. And finally, applied technological advances have resulted in a wearable device that uses gyroscopes to ease and stabilize the tremors from which many people with Parkinson's disease suffer and a device that can interpret signals from the brain and stimulate muscles in the arm to help people who are paralyzed regain the use of their limbs.

While all of these events were happening in the world, the profession of occupational therapy (OT) continued to persevere and grow. In those 5 years, OJOT has grown and developed into an exceptional publication that has contributed to the advancement of clinical reasoning and educational resources for the profession of OT. We have had over 400 submissions and have published 211 papers that have been downloaded 241,500 times in 188 different countries. The most popular papers that have been published in our first 5 years are "Visual-Motor Skills Performance on the Beery-VMI: A Study of Canadian Kindergarten Children," by Melissa Coallier, Natasha Rouleau, Florence Bara, and Marie-France Morin (with over 19,000 full-text downloads); "Art in Occupational Therapy: An Introduction to Occupation and the Artist," by Molly Bathje (with over 15,000 full-text downloads); and "Rehabilitation of the Upper Extremity after Stroke: Current Practice as a Guide for Curriculum," by Mylene Schriener, Janell Thome, and Monica Carrier (with over 13,000 full-text downloads). We have featured three special issues on the topics of assessment, OT education, and interprofessional collaboration. Each issue of OJOT has been generously sponsored by an individual, university, or company, and each issue has featured a cover artist who has been either a recipient or a provider of OT services.

### **The Present**

In this issue, in addition to this letter from the editor and our artist profile, we are publishing 13 new manuscripts. Nine of those articles are in the Applied Research category and four are in the Topics in Education category. The articles in this issue cover a range of topics, including OT intervention using occupational adaptation, expressive art and postacute care for stroke; pediatric issues, including health, responses to food, and sensory processing; and scholarship issues, including OT professionalism and British OT authors. The Topics in Education manuscripts include using simulations with OT students, building OT education research, examining the preferences of OT fieldwork educators, and exploring factors associated with OT student academic performance. All of the manuscripts submitted to OJOT continue to be blind peer-reviewed and professionally copy edited. Authors continue to retain their copyright. Thanks to our many generous sponsors, especially Drs. Barbara Rider and Fred Sammons, we are able to remain an open access journal with low publication fees.

### **The Future of OJOT**

We look forward to continuing to contribute to the profession of OT by publishing high-quality articles that provide clinical solutions and educational resources. The Summer 2018 issue will be a special issue titled "Technology in Occupational Therapy and Occupational Science: Evidence, Education, and Impact" with guest editors Lenin C. Grajo, PhD, EdM, OTR/L, from Columbia University Medical Center and Angela Boisselle, PhD, OTR, from Cook Children's Healthcare System.

OJOT will be present at the 2018 Annual American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) Conference and Expo in Salt Lake City, Utah, in April. Come visit us at the booth! We will also be

attending the World Federation of Occupational Therapy (WFOT) Congress in Cape Town, South Africa, in May 2018, to continue our efforts to connect with our fellow occupational therapists who read, publish in, and support OJOT throughout the world. We hope to see you there!

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*[Diane Powers Dirette, Ph.D., OTL, FAOTA](#) is the cofounder of OJOT and has served as Editor-in-Chief since the first issue was published in the fall of 2012. She is a professor in the Department of Occupational Therapy at Western Michigan University and was inducted into the American Occupational Therapy Association Roster of Fellows in 2016. Her areas of research include self awareness after acquired brain injury, evidenced-based practice, visual disorders, and cognitive rehab. She has extensive experience with scholarly writing, editing, and publishing.*

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