

# Sheffield Hallam University

*Occupation in occupational therapy, a political perspective*

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Occupation in occupational therapy, a political perspective

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*Published works submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of  
Sheffield Hallam University  
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy on the basis of published work;*

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## Declaration

I, Nick Pollard, hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that it contains no work published or written by another person except where acknowledged in the text, nor does it contain material that has been accepted for another degree at this or any other university.

Much of the work submitted here was co-authored; all collaborating authors have signed forms to indicate their contributions to this work (see section 2.6 and appendix 7.4).

## Abstract: Occupation in occupational therapy, a political perspective

Occupational therapy is broadly about the experience of 'doing' as the basis of human participation. This requires access to the means of participation: space, facilities and resources for different forms of human action. People who have experienced disability are frequently prevented from engaging in activities which other people can access, and can benefit from. Their rights to social participation at all levels are restricted, and this is a political aspect of their impairment – something that is recognized in feminist discourse in the recognition of the relationship between the personal and the political. Consequently rehabilitation has a dimension which is not just about restoring or adapting function, but also about addressing the social and political circumstances which produce barriers to occupation.

The submitted works discuss a rights based approach to human occupation, which in turn derives from a narrative understanding of 'doing' as an individual and collective expression of actions. My most significant and original contributions to occupational therapy and occupational science concern the development of an argument for the understanding of a political dimension to human occupation. These works are accompanied by research papers which evidence some aspects of my theories.

In its concentration on clinical and medically led objectives the profession has infrequently recognized the relationship between health conditions and the wider issues of social and economic disparities. Part of my work has called attention to the systematic nature of exclusions which prevent access to meaningful and purposeful

occupation, and calls for therapists to work with their clients not only in terms of traditional intervention, but to address them through political alliance.

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<b>Table 1, List of publications submitted</b>	
<b>A-D (books); E (peer-reviewed articles)</b>	
<b>A: Kronenberg, F, Simo Algado, S and Pollard N (2005) (eds), Occupational Therapy without borders - learning from the spirit of survivors, Edinburgh, Elsevier Science</b>	
Chapters:	Kronenberg F, Pollard N. Introduction: a beginning. 1-13 6: Kronenberg F, Pollard N. Overcoming occupational apartheid: a preliminary exploration of the political nature of Occupational Therapy. 58-86
<b>B : Pollard N, Sakellariou D, Kronenberg F (2008) (eds), A Political Practice of Occupational Therapy, Edinburgh, Elsevier Science</b>	
Chapters:	1: Pollard N, Kronenberg F, Sakellariou D. A political practice of occupational therapy. 3-20 2: Pollard N, Sakellariou D, Kronenberg F. Political competence in occupational therapy. 21-38 3: Pollard N. When Adam delf and Eve span: occupational literacy and democracy. 39-51 4: Pollard N, Kronenberg F, Sakellariou D. Occupational apartheid. 55-68 5: Sakellariou D, Pollard N. Three sites of conflict and co-operation: class, gender and sexuality. 69-90 6: Sakellariou D, Pollard N. Political challenges of holism: heteroglossia and the impossibility of holism. 91-105 21: Pollard N, Sakellariou D. Facing the challenge: a compass for navigating the heteroglossic context. 237-244
<b>C: Kronenberg F, Pollard N, Sakellariou D (eds) (2010) Occupational therapies without borders (Volume 2). Edinburgh, Elsevier Science.</b>	
Chapters	15: Pollard N, Occupational therapists—permanent persuaders in emerging roles? 171-180 18: Pollard N, Parks S. Community publishing 143-152
<b>D: Pollard N, Sakellariou D, (eds) (2012), Politics of Occupation-Centred Practice. Oxford, Wiley.</b>	
Chapters	1: Pollard N, Sakellariou D, Introduction 1-24 2: Pollard N, Sakellariou D, The Language of Occupation 25-41 3: Pollard N, Sakellariou D, Occupational Literacy 42-50 4: Pollard N, Sakellariou D, A Grammar for a Language of Occupation 51-60 5: Pollard N, Sakellariou D, Towards a Transformational Grammar of Occupation 61-71 6: Sakellariou D, Pollard N, Narratives of Recognition 72-80 7: Sakellariou D, Pollard N, Narratives and Truths 81-91 11: Pollard N, Communities of Writing 146-161 13: Pollard N, Carver N, Models and Human Occupation 180-196 15: Pollard N, Sakellariou D, A Society Founded on Occupation 217-236
<b>E: Peer reviewed and journal articles</b>	
Pollard N, Cook S, (2012) The power of low-key groupwork activities in mental health support work. <i>Groupwork</i> , 22(3) 7-32	
Pollard N. (2010) Occupational narratives, community publishing and worker writing groups: Sustaining stories from the margins. <i>Groupwork</i> . 20(1) 9-33	
Pollard N (2007) Voices talk, hands write: sustaining community publishing with people with learning difficulties, <i>Groupwork</i> 17(2) 36-56	

## **2 Methodology and related issues**

### **2.1 Rationale for selection of submitted works**

This narrative covers the development of aspects of my writing and research within occupational therapy and occupational science. The submitted works represent a discussion of how occupational therapy can articulate itself politically to meet the needs of individuals and communities. The core of my work concerns a rights based approach to human occupation, which in turn derives from a narrative understanding of 'doing' as an individual and collective expression of actions.

Occupational therapy is broadly about the experience of 'doing' as the basis of human participation. This requires access to the means of participation, space, facilities and resources for different forms of human action. People who have experienced disability are frequently prevented from engaging in activities which others can access and benefit from. Their rights to social participation at all levels are restricted, which is a political aspect of their impairment – something that is recognized in feminist discourse through the relationship between the personal and the political. Consequently rehabilitation may involve more than restoring or adapting function, and extend to addressing the social and political barriers to occupation. Part of my work has explored the systematic nature of exclusions which prevent access to meaningful and purposeful occupation, and calls for therapists to consider interventions in the form of political alliance with client groups.

This submission refers to 'my' work, but I initially developed my writing skills within the worker writing and community publishing movement, in which group processes were an important critical tool. Therefore I should say that this submission regards

'my' work as the element which I can own within what has often been a collective discussion. Even in the process of research I have invited participants to co-author or to be acknowledged for their input, where appropriate and possible, since much of the data depends on the narrative that they produce.

Although I have written more widely, this submission represents my most significant and original contributions to occupational therapy and occupational science: the development of an argument for the understanding of a political dimension to human occupation. The works progress from a setting out of a political territory in the chapters of submission A, through a more detailed exploration in submission B, further conceptualization in submission C, and attempts to widen and reassert the discussion in submission D. Thus I have drawn on aspects of the four internationally significant edited books published in the period. Although I have written peer reviewed papers on a range of topics, those included here in submission E (and appendix 7.3) were three different research studies which concern my attempts to evidence aspects of my theories (in referencing these submissions the capital letter will refer to the submission and the number to the chapter or the date of the paper).

Chapter A6 is widely cited (appendix 7.2). In both A chapters I discussed ways in which human occupational activities are restricted by disparities and social and political structures, and how occupational therapists were citizens in a local and global combination of contexts beyond the medical and clinical. Approaches to occupation based interventions should therefore be negotiated; that the access that clients of occupational therapists have to meaningful activity represents the litmus paper by which notions of society and the enactment of citizenship could be judged. Chapter A6 introduced the controversial topic of occupational apartheid as a critical

category for the systematic exclusion of people from meaningful occupation, and outlined a tool, political Activities of Daily Living (pADL), which could be used to identify conflict and co-operation aspects of human occupation in communities.

These presentations did not satisfy me. I argued with my colleagues that a further book should explore them further. The opportunity came with an invite to edit a replacement for a sociological text on occupational therapy. This was the basis for B, which expanded upon the arguments in A, drawing on evidence from the authors of other chapters, some of whom had actually employed occupational apartheid and pADL concepts. The chapter on occupational literacy (B3) drew upon my community publishing interests. It attempted to explore how a narrative based in occupation could be a tool for consciousness raising. Potentially then, the role of the occupational therapist (which had been identified as catalytic in A-6) could have an activist dimension. Rehabilitation or intervention might encompass critical processes towards enabling health service clients to independently negotiate their participation in community activity.

The setting out of these arguments in B was sometimes dense and difficult for readers and the use of 'political' in the title limited scope for popular appeal. Nonetheless, although it has had a smaller readership, it has been well received. It became suggested reading on a good range of courses, and is cited in passing as one direction in which aspects of the profession could develop (appendix 7.2).

During the process of writing A and B, particularly following a review article of these works (see appendix 7.2) I began to feel that the concept of *occupation* is limited both by its link with therapy and the way it is claimed for occupational science. The idea of meaningful occupation as a right is often tacitly understood, but this powerful

concept has rarely been articulated by the professionals and academics laying claim to it, let alone made available to a general readership.

A further development arose from C15, in which I had explored how the political ideas of Gramsci related to occupational therapy. This began as a workshop presentation with Rius-inspired slides for a European Network of Occupational Therapists in Higher Education conference (See appendix 7.1). It stemmed from my work on community publishing (C18) with Stephen Parks, who suggested that I read Gramsci and De Certeau's work. Gramsci's paper on the New Intellectual seemed to be especially relevant to the period in which professions like occupational therapy developed. This presentation was the basis for C15, a chapter in the second volume of *Occupational Therapies Without Borders*. This sets out the challenges of representing occupation as a popular discourse and the task occupational therapists may have in getting this across. This is my 'desert island' chapter; close to my gut feelings about the profession and the issue of occupation as a right. I revised it again for a keynote at the Universidad Andres Bello (appendix 7.1). Gramsci is not on the reading list of many Western occupational therapy or occupational science programmes though his ideas are included in some Latin American modules.

This might not make for easy reading, and conscious of this I attempted a cartoon and collage presentation like Rius's '*Marx for beginners*' (1994). I would like to popularise my ideas in this way. Part of Gramsci's discussion relates to the role of language in human occupation as a reflection of the culture of exchange. The development of Italian as a lingua franca was a product of its role in facilitating the vernacular business of trade. I explored with my colleague Dikaios Sakellariou the idea that occupation might be understood as having a grammatical component, and we proposed a further book, D, in which we argued this. We had already established



the grounds for some of this discussion with our exploration of occupational literacy and heteroglossic contexts for occupation. Although we used the same format as B in that other contributors were invited to provide chapters that we could refer to in our discussion, the emphasis was on relating the language of occupational experience to new areas of practice.

The considerable success of my publications has meant that I can draw on a wide range of practitioners and experts to test ideas and provide underpinning evidence, but it is also necessary that I develop this experience myself. While much of the discussion of concepts in this submission is the product of desk-based research referring to the literature of the profession, occupational science, politics, history, cultural theory and other subjects, E is composed of peer reviewed articles based in empirical or practice centred research activities. Representing an older interest that predates my occupational therapy career, these papers comprise a related but parallel engagement to the other submissions, the time line of which is discussed in the next section. This is centred on different aspects of community based voluntary practices in health services and community writing and the opportunities they present for understanding the negotiation of occupational activities. People involved in community based activities need to retain the ownership and autonomy of the group beyond the point at which money runs out, a development barrier Turner (2011) has referred to as the 'iron rice bowl'. This question of sustaining community based activities is discussed in the chapters forming A and B.

The considerable success of *Occupational Therapy without Borders* has also produced tensions in my work. It has been described as originating a movement (Frank, Baum and Law, 2010) and even a new paradigm within occupational therapy. Its popularity with some students has sometimes been a distracting, charismatic

element. This Romantic reception of some of the ideas can be at odds with my purpose as a writer, researcher and educator in mining out the seam of a discourse on the essential nature of human occupation and the political implications this has for rights. It is not a new paradigm, but builds on the work of Liz Townsend, Anne Wilcock, Karen Whaley Hammell, Ruth Watson and Leslie Swartz amongst others. My work has successfully posed questions of the profession. In section 3 I will return to the critical evaluation of these issues.

## 2.2 Commitment to research and publication

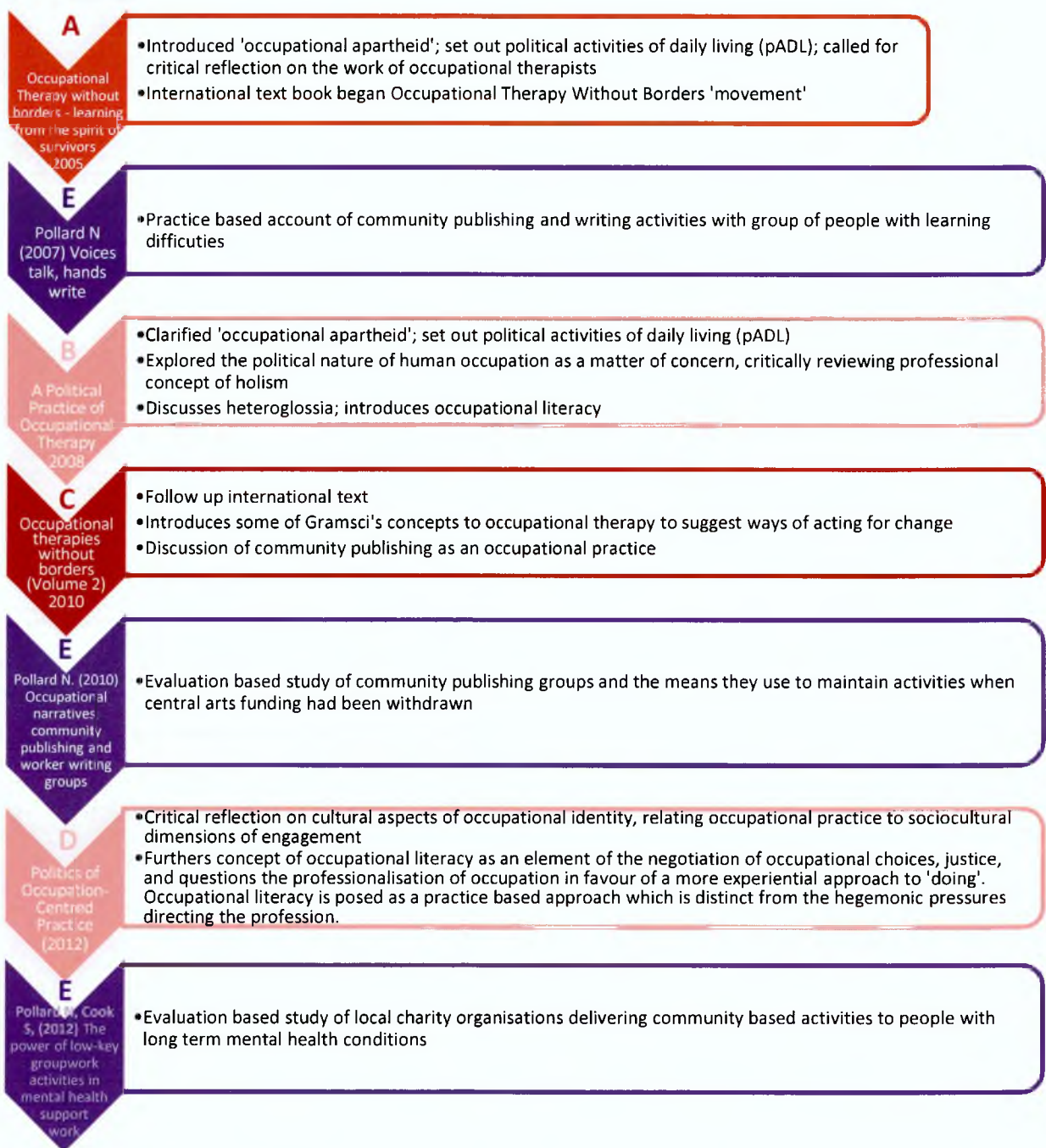


Figure 1 A timeline showing the development of the submitted texts.



Since 2000 I have:

- edited four international occupational therapy texts (A-D in which I have contributed 24 chapters );
- significantly contributed to the publication of a new edition of Morley and Worpole's *The Republic of Letters*, an account of community publishing;
- written three chapters for major occupational therapy text books, one for a public health text (in press), and others for a text on community literacy and on therapeutic writing;
- written 27 peer reviewed papers;
- produced two evaluation reports;
- produced a number of editorials, served on editorial panels and reviewed papers for several more, contributed widely to non-peer reviewed journals, and to conference proceedings.

My submissions are part of a sustained programme of writing, research and dissemination. Other projects include:

- A book and a further research paper exploring the relationship of meaning and human occupation, a project commenced with Moses Ikiugu (Ikiugu et al 2012). This draws on the study of community published writing by working class authors and aspects of my books, particular the occupational literacy chapter in B.
- Editing an anthology which aims to bring together occupational therapists, occupational scientists, anthropologists and disability activists around the issue of occupying, or colonizing disability.

- Editor in chief of a projected new series of books framing critical perspectives of occupational therapy and occupational science projected by publishers Whiting and Birch, with an international editorial team.
- Autoethnographic research on the occupation of model making hobbies.

I began publishing academically during my MSc. In 2001 I took a 3 year post as a part time research and development worker, still working as a practitioner. This job gave me the time to develop other papers. The discussion in A6 around occupational apartheid began in on-line forums during this period through which I was invited to join the other *Occupational Therapy Without Borders* editors in May 2003. That September I joined the Occupational Therapy programme at Sheffield Hallam University, retaining a research related role as the team's research co-ordinator. My modules on the social consequences of disability and working in communities in both the BSc and MSc programmes drew on the access I had to a global panel of experts through progressing *Occupational Therapy without Borders*. Much of my teaching, for example elective modules on occupational science, or core modules on the community context of occupational therapy, continues to be fed directly by a dialogical writing process. As they have been written while at Sheffield Hallam University, aspects of all these submissions have therefore, even while at draft stage, been presented in class as well as at conferences.

E represents a line of research which has fed into the other submissions but began earlier. E2010 includes some account of my 2001 MSc dissertation which had explored the occupational elements of group activities in the Federation of Worker Writers and Community Publishers (FWWCP). When the organization lost funding in 2007 I produced an evaluative study to evidence the occupational benefits such activities provided, involving the surviving groups. E2007 was based on the

revisitation of another FWWCP project in which I had worked. The Voices Talk, Hands Write group of writers with learning difficulties was the most ambitious of the submissions. This experientially based project was initially funded with a year-end allocation of £14,000 in 2004 (Pollard, Smart, Voices Talk and Hands Write 2005; Pollard, Voices Talk and Hands Write 2008). E2007 discusses the practices and dilemmas of maintaining this self-constituted group and its volunteer support following the end of the FWWCP engagement. The group, which still meets, achieved a number of positive outcomes for its participants, such as publication and active community participation in a range of local events.

E2012 evaluates two linked primary care voluntary organisations based around enduring mental health needs. The focus group and interview based study explores the organic way in which the groups worked maintained the health benefits of occupational engagement in community based activities. A small local health authority grant paid for some of my involvement. My interest in these groups continues with one of the projected book chapters (Pollard, in press).

## 2.3 Quality

Although I have published frequently in peer reviewed journals, this PhD submission is predominantly based on the book publication which represents the core of my work. Peer review and journal impact are important criteria for assessing the quality of published work, but other measures may include the breadth and depth of work, the number of citations, adoptions by educational programmes and even its popularity. Research tends to be understood in terms of the application of scientific methods to gather and interpret data; my work has concerned the development of ideas based in 'desk top' or library based research, lengthy discursive processes, and the reflective interpretation of experience. A series of papers might have higher impact in academic circles but does not facilitate the extended development of a discourse as coherently as a book (Galheigo, 2011).

Part of the exercise of pursuing a PhD by publication is to determine whether sufficient quality has been attained. External evidence of the value of work in the occupational therapy profession can be thin. The World Federation of Occupational Therapists estimates its professional membership at 350,000. With these numbers it is difficult for occupational therapy journals to attain significant impact factors compared to more numerous clinical disciplines. They are infrequently cited outside the professional discourse; each group favours its own literature. Perhaps the number of citations relative to the size of the professional literature indicates the interest my work arouses – but not its depth. Most citations of my work occur in passing, in introductory literature reviews. They are rarely critically explored (see appendices 2 and in particular 3, a response to rapporteur feedback on the balance

of submitted articles) and the occasion to complete a PhD by publication is therefore a valuable opportunity for external inspection and perusal.

The profession has understandably concentrated on those issues which are dominant in a medically oriented discourse. My view is that important aspects of the occupational discourse have consequently been neglected, and the development of occupational science has also been too narrow (to which end I am currently developing the book series with Whiting and Birch mentioned earlier). Both disciplines claim to be holistic, and this necessitates exploration of wider issues. Yet widening the focus of occupational discourse threatens critical discussion; individuals can only assimilate so much information and must specialize to be analytical. The audiences with which an issue can be explored will also dwindle as they are taken further from what they regard as their core interest.

## 2.4 Coherence

Critical discussion of the relationship between politics and occupational therapy and occupational science concepts of human occupation has been sparse (see appendix 7.3). Those people wanting to explore the issue coherently have had to demonstrate the connections and the relevance. I have tried to address an occupational therapy and occupational science audience and to make connections in fields of interest outside that sphere, such as groupwork and disability studies. This has met with some critical recognition from other professional disciplines (see appendix 7.2), but my students have struggled with the breadth and depth of these connections and my presentations have often had a mixed reception. While some recognize the content as addressing essential challenges, others have questioned its relevance. I often see things expansively, in terms of wider implications and bigger connections, and this may not sit well with a theme of relating the personal to the political, which recognizes that therefore everything has a political dimension.

One possible effect of the terms in which I have addressed aspects of occupational injustice, i.e. occupational apartheid (A6), has been to obscure the depth of the later arguments. If my work had developed logically rather than organically, it might be made more coherent by beginning with the issues arising from E, moving on to their relevance to the substance of C15 before their expansion in B and D, introduced by submission A. However, such historical hindsight ignores the necessary rites of passage the organic development of my work has undergone, the chronology of which contributes to the process of critical reflection on it.

The problem then is to argue effectively why something so tacit, often expressed in vernacular forms, relates to an academic discourse worthy of a profession with

clinical priorities. Exhortations to actively develop a political understanding of occupation and employ this in the process of negotiation of intervention and resources may be at odds with a traditional and ethical perspective of clinical work as based in a neutral science. Yet interventions which are person-centred necessitate qualitative research to reveal the nuances of individual experiences to support their ownership by the client or service user. This is key to a professional ethos based around client needs. A critique often made of occupational therapy is that it is merely applied common sense, that its techniques can be understood by anyone. Indeed, this is necessary for person-centred, occupation-based and bespoke intervention to be effective. Yet the importance of tacit knowledge and the commonplace in the process of recovery can be neglected in favour of 'more scientific' and clinical forms of intervention. The results do not come in standard doses. In E2012 one participant describes how simply being given a plant to grow at home provided something to talk about and made a significant difference in the quality of his life. Much of the project with the Voices Talk and Hands Write group (E2007) involved narrative exploration of the importance of everyday events.

In occupational therapy and occupational science the term 'occupation' means more than its general understanding as 'work'. It is connected with a broader concept of purposeful human activity, expressed by 'doing'. Occupation-based interventions are therefore part of the narratives developed between people and communities from which the stories of larger events can be built. I have been interested in the link between occupation and the environment, and how societies are determined by the means our ancestors used to manage their surroundings for agriculture and the extraction of resources (B1; D1). This relationship between the personal and individual dimension of occupation occurs across the local, the global, and the epic



scale of domain political processes, but arises from the everyday activity of engaging with others (B3, C15, D). A tool for understanding this process may be occupational literacy (B3; D3).

My understanding of 'occupation' derives partly from worker writing and community publishing in which I'd been involved before becoming an occupational therapist (B, D). The experience of professional training around a clinical understanding of occupation in daily life seemed to be incongruous with the vernacular narrative of experiences which were shared in this field. For example, experiences of work or of domestic life are often the focus of community publication, which frequently had a Freirean purpose of consciousness raising or developing a literacy (Friere, 1972; Morley and Worpole, 2009) through critical dialogue about the everyday and familiar, as will be explained in section 3. They offer a back story to the issues of 'functions of daily living' concerning the profession; provide the reasons for particular medical conditions, for clients having difficulty prioritizing their post treatment exercises or appointment keeping, or for service users being able to successfully integrate to a community.

Although occupational therapy is about working with clients from a range of social backgrounds, its' strongly female gendered, culture and class defined professional milieu excludes discussion of aspects of everyday experience. This also creates problems in defining its professional sphere (Pollard and Walsh, 2000; B, C, and D).

I'm making a common observation that the kind of work therapists and other health and social care workers do often concerns social extremes, and suggesting that professional distances contain politicised elements that could be renegotiated. Here a colleague has pointed out Marx's shadowy workings in my thinking. Marxists such as Guevara, Lenin, Debray, Vaneigem and others have suggested aspects of



political practices. I feel their revolutionary emphasis is not as useful as what they obliquely tell the reader about the practices of maintaining organisations in difficult circumstances. They cannot serve as models<sup>1</sup>, just as Foucault (1980) remarks of Marx's influence that invoking an orthodox obeisance to it is unnecessary. Gramsci provides an acceptable face for most of them (C-15) in my attempt to pull strands of occupational experience together that are sometimes over-ridden in the process of achieving other unifying perceptions which arise from power relations in a multiprofessional environment. These, concerning finance and the cost of health care, professional hierarchies or a dominance of science and clinical concerns over the human scale of intervention are considerable forces against an iteration of the everyday or the power of the mundane suggested in the papers of E, and D13.

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<sup>1</sup> The chief contribution is that of cell theory. In 'What is to be done' Lenin sets out the differences and the discipline that marks out Bolshevism from the other tendencies. Guevara and Debray offer more modern versions of this. While it is a long step from Vienna, Cuba, The Congo, and Bolivia to the moderate development of a profession, these people illustrate, a little like Machievelli, the need for clarity of focus on a political goal. A brief hint of this occurs in D15, p230. Peters (2011) suggests that late 20<sup>th</sup> century American professional leaders adopted political strategies which look similar to a cell approach, however.

## **2.5 Methodology**

While I have drawn on wide ranging and interdisciplinary literature sources for much of the writing submitted here, the basis of my research projects has been around the investigation of occupational practices that are organic, low key, and can be applied at grass roots level. The methodology used can be described under three headings relating to i) editing, ii) conceptual work and iii) relating empirical and conceptual work.

### **2.5.1 Editing major new texts in Occupational Therapy**

When Frank Kronenberg and Salvador Simo Algado invited me to join them in editing *Occupational Therapy Without Borders* none of us had previous experience of editing a major text book. We discussed our own protocol: chapters would be reviewed three times by all the editors who would give critical and discursive feedback on all the submissions received using the 'comments' facility in Microsoft Word. This approach was worked as a virtual version of the writers' workshop method with which I was familiar through my years in the FWWCP, and is described in Morley and Worpole (2009), Parks and Pollard (2009), Pollard (2004), C18, D11, E2007, E2010. The three editors took it in turns to read a submitted chapter, circulated comments between ourselves, sometimes adding to each others' comments, before the text was collectively sent back to the author. We applied the same process to our own writing. As he was not in regular work at the time, Frank managed a lot of the editorial administration, but I did much of the fielding of this exchange.

Thus the process was broadly 'collective', employing methods that might be applied in community publishing. The work generated by three rounds of critical feedback was intensive with 60 contributors and 38 chapters, many of whom were not using English as a first language. Although we used a similar approach to develop *A political practice of occupational therapy*, generally one round of intensive feedback has been the norm for subsequent editing. (I have encouraged colleagues on the *Occupying Disability* editorial team to assume the same process, reverting to several rounds of feedback as we navigate new territories of dialogue between occupational therapy, occupational science, and disability theorists and activists).

The marketing and promotion of books is a process which has much changed since the first of these submissions. Publishers now invest much less in marketing, and editors need to consider how they can enlist their authors to assist them in promoting the work, by developing accompanying papers or conference presentations to generate interest. Our meetings and discussions also explored strategic ways to target the occupational therapy and occupational science conference calendar to ensure that we kept a high profile. We used journal editorials (e.g. Pollard 2006; 2007) to reference recent or forthcoming publications. We kept ourselves open to contacts from students and other enquiries and passed these around amongst ourselves so that we could collectively answer them. Being accessible is important to maintaining advocacy that is not just about theorizing but also practising activism for occupation-based approaches to intervention.

Finally it should be acknowledged that the editing of texts constitutes a methodological process which transcends the key text itself. The formal process begins with the submission of a proposal to the publisher which asks questions about the perceived market and audience for the text, the availability of competing

texts and the rapidity with which the knowledge the proposed book contains will need to be revised, information about the plan of the text and a sample chapter which will be critically appraised by peer reviewers as well as the commissioning editors. It is a rigorous process which demands at least two years' commitment, involving liaising effectively with contributors, including finding replacements for people who drop out or - as I did with C15 and C18 - producing suitable chapters to replace those which could not be developed by other authors.

### **2.5.2 The development of conceptual chapters**

A further aspect of this approach emerged from the email dialogues which Frank and I developed. This included what might now be recognised as a dialogical autoethnographic examination of the concepts we were using in order to reveal their coherence: my concern was that we grounded them by relating them to our personal histories (Muncey 2010) and also ascertained whether they already existed in the wider discourse. For example the term 'occupational apartheid' had been previously applied to racial barriers in employment. In order to 'own' the arguments we were developing we needed to debate them amongst ourselves.

This virtual 'workshop' approach derived from the community publishing movement, and I took Frank to the 2004 FWWCP Festival of Writing to experience some of this process. Community publishing was seen by some as a form of dialectic (Morley and Worpole, 2009), which was based in the outcome of workshop dialogue. This was not just about the form of writing but robustly arguing its content and the issues arising from it, such as black, gay and feminist consciousness and forms of collective organisation, a common experience of radical initiatives during the 1970s and 1980s.

Aside from the FWWCP, I had encountered these interrogative approaches through association with various Marxist organisations, and work in a community arts media centre. From this I gained a wide knowledge of literature, history and critical approaches to social theory. Frank also saw the value in doing this, although his perspective came from the style of upbringing he had had in the Netherlands. These methods were essential in establishing common ground between the editors as a team. Although we acknowledge our differences (not least because we have different first languages and cultural backgrounds) they have enabled us to continue to share similar goals.

The continuation of these dialectical dialogues framed the arguments that would become *A political practice of occupational therapy (B)*. When Dikaios Sakellariou joined the editorial team he also readily participated. Notomi (2004) suggests that dialectic emerges from dialogue, and this describes our intentions in generating knowledge through our discussions. Dikaios and I had already employed this approach to explore the analysis of data from the WFOT CBR sub project. We were to use it to steer our development of all the papers and presentations which drew on this research or were stimulated by it (Sakellariou et al 2006; Sakellariou and Pollard 2006, 2012; Pollard and Sakellariou 2007a, 2007b, 2009). This working method also underpinned *A politics of occupation-centred practice (D)*.

Developing our dialogue through email meant that we quickly had a working text for our chapters, sections of which are lifted directly from our exchanges. We supplemented this with meetings in which we developed the concepts we wanted to use or set objectives for each other to research, working to a prearranged agenda.

### **2.5.3 The relationship between empirical work and conceptual work.**

Although E2007 employed a participatory approach, this was based more on community publishing and basic adult literacy education practices from which an emergent narrative of experiences could be locally disseminated. These approaches concern the testimony of the author as witness and guarantor of authenticity. The significance of testimony in a narrative interpretation of occupation as a political concept is repeated through my work, particularly B, which was being written simultaneously with this study. This requires inclusive approaches which facilitate witnesses to speak, which can be simply negotiated at grass roots level of political occupations as set out in B1 and B2, and to critically reflect, B3, D3. The project generated two book chapters and an article, all of which were negotiated with the group members. It contributed to the thinking behind 'an alliance with clients' set out in B2 (p29), the discussion of the therapist role in relation to community publishing activities in C18, and as a literacy sponsor (one who facilitates people in verbal articulation) and permanent persuader C15 (a social agent for change).

A further exploration of these approaches is discussed in E2010, which seemed opportune to produce at a point when the community publishing movement that began with the FWWCP was experiencing significant transition. A focus group methodology enabled comparison with an earlier study with FWWCP members. Having edited the FWWCP's magazines for 17 years I was already embedded in it, but my involvement in resolving the crisis which precipitated the study prevented me from beginning earlier when more participants would have been available. The evaluation took place over the period in which I was writing and editing B and C and many references to FWWCP based research or publications inform the theoretical chapters. The radical basic adult literacy approach offered by some of the



participants, particularly those from Pecket Learning Community in both E2007 and E2010 has been a significant influence on my thinking with regard to occupational literacy, and the case I made for 'literacy' which went beyond the level of reading and writing. The self advocacy of Pecket Well College basic adult learners' principle that 'a beginner writer is not a beginner thinker' (Smart, 2005) as well as their practical approach to peer-led tuition (see E2007; [www.pecket.org](http://www.pecket.org)) has inspired and informed the belief in grass roots action and participation indicated throughout my work.

E2012 describes a multi-method realistic evaluation which was developed to reflect the needs of two linked charitable organisations in community mental health.

Interviews and focus groups attempted to involve as many people as possible, and generated rich data about an enthusiastic community concerned about the survival of their organization. I have continued to pursue opportunities to write about this (Pollard, in press). The evaluation coincided with the writing of C15 and the theory chapters of D, Although the data was not available to influence C15, the issues arising from it could illuminate the theoretical arguments, particularly the significance of everyday activities for individuals and the readings they take from them. For example, participants in E2012 agreed that without group support they might have committed suicide; that having Marks and Spencer biscuits in groups signified their personal worth; and that having a tomato plant gave a very isolated participant something to talk about in the place of having nothing to do. These are telling pieces of focus group data from participants with chronic mental health experiences, a group which often finds expression difficult.

Rapporteur feedback in the process of submission suggested the need to bolster evidence of my research capabilities. This gave me the opportunity to return to the issue of a lack of political discussion in occupational therapy and science (see

section 5) with a metasynthesis which has been submitted for publication (appendix 7.3).

#### **2.5.4 Reflection on methodology**

There is a continuous growth in qualitative approaches, and while the availability of a diversity of methods might be integral to the processes of qualitative investigation, the problem of methodology is that of the quality of best fit of any method to a study. In the methodology used in my own work I have integrated working with the investigation of ideas and experiences as they arise with concepts or ideas that have been part of my own commitments (which nearly all this work represents). Of course most researchers will have been involved in studies through happening to be there at the time, or which reflect their personal interest in something. My writings on community publishing and literacy began with my interest and empathies arising from my experiences, but were opportune because my academic position gave me access to the means to develop research papers and pursue their publication. However, this is a necessary process, as Bhaskar (1989) points out, one of the components of a critical theory alongside its philosophical and scientific elements arises from examining the complexities of human activities, relationships and individualities set against their historical and social context. However, this requires a reflexiveness with regard to the academic researcher's or the occupational therapist's own position. If working from the outside, there is a risk of reproducing only a stereotypical characterisation of those complexities and contexts, an objectivity which fails to acknowledge the experience from a subjective perspective.



Thus one challenge in producing and disseminating meaningful accounts of experience which reflect issues like peer led advocacy (E2007) or the negotiation of group diversities within communities like the FWWCP (E2010) as an ethnographer is of representing what one has been allowed to see from the inside (as a witness) to outsiders. As Ellis Adams and Bochner (2011:8) explain, for autoethnography, this includes an account of an "epiphany" which arises from the understanding of a cultural identity as a participant. The period described in this submission covers a set of epiphanies in the development of ideas including concepts developed in the chapters, for example: occupational apartheid applying to UK communities (A6); occupational literacy connecting the tacit knowledge of doing to an occupation based understanding of action (B3); the occupational therapist as a permanent persuader (C15). These are not complete because the work of recognising and making clear the political dimensions of occupation and occupational justice is still in development within occupational science and occupational therapy, as Durocher et al's (2013a; 2013b) work as indicated. For myself the task of tracing the development of the consciousness which led to these concepts is also incomplete although in the process of producing this critical review a further 'epiphany' has occurred in relation to thinking around methodology and the consideration of the editorial process derived from community publishing practice as a method. Thus one appropriate future method of exploration may be to employ an emancipatory research method such as autoethnography to investigate my acquisition of ideas through the narrative of engagement in the FWWCP and community publishing groups. Ellis, Adams and Bochner (2011) suggest that autoethnographic methods can deal with the connection between research practices and the representation of others. These are issues that run through all my chapters and papers because questions of

representation were fundamental to the community publishing and worker writing experience. It was a set of approaches to generating writing, developing consciousness and publishing a body of literature which was developed in response to the exclusions its authors perceived in relation to the mainstream of culture (E2010). As is made clear in Morley and Worpole (2009) and the example of radical approaches to adult literacy in Pecket Well College (E2007; Smart 2005), these were grass roots processes, which were aligned to the work of Freire (1972) towards democracy through emancipatory learning based in experience.

My view is that narrative methods, as a form of “situated research” (Whiteford and Pereira, 2012:199), can describe experiences of human occupation as political in impact, while empirical study through meta-synthesis and critical review would determine their wider currency in the profession. The experiential work is necessary first to determine whether the phenomena are 'real' through a process of critical reflection and dissemination, before the concepts that arise from this are represented in the wider literature. Muncey's (2010) account of autonethnographic method may offer a way to recapture some of the developments with which I have been involved, and employs the use of literature forms amongst the means of eliciting themes from experiences. This approach could be applied to the chapters in this submission. These contain much of the dialectical exchanges that resulted from the dialogues which are preserved in the drafts. I have, in the process of compiling with this submission, struggled with the problem of recognising the significance my work has clearly had. On reflection this difficulty has arisen from several aspects of its origin; 1) the problem of distance from a participatory process of editing and dialectical formation, which to me is perceived as a continuous process, a habituation derived from a long involvement in community publishing and worker writing approaches and

applied in the process of writing now; 2) the 'marginalisation' narrative in the worker writing and community publishing process, which might be regarded as a form of internalised oppression towards which the collective process of developing a counter narrative works against claiming individual responsibility or achievement. I strongly believe in participatory action, and this is of course compounded by my education and training as an occupational therapist, in which the aim is to facilitate others through occupation, rather than oneself; 3) one of the challenges in presenting arguments about political aspects of human occupation is that the focus of occupational therapy and occupational science has mostly been around health. My arguments necessarily relate to experiences that are broader in scope, and have their solution in economic and social as well as health outcomes, wherever political actions may be applied. Whiteford and Pereira (2012) argue that occupational science has to develop this wider focus in order to achieve fuller development as a discipline, and this is something that I have also been arguing (e.g. B3, C15). In the quest for knowledge and in the process of establishing theory the size of the task does not diminish, but expands both in relation to the new frontiers and in the search for its origins.

## **2.6 Contribution to research embodied in multi-authored works.**

Worker writing and community publishing was often a collective endeavour for cultural action. It involved much discussion of the purpose of work as well as content and style to encourage dialectical thinking about concepts of social change (Morley and Worpole 2009). Writing was often subjected to a group process of critical feedback, participants were encouraged to revise and bring their work back to the group. Thus the production of writing becomes a kind of Bakhtinian (1981) dialogue animated through a hybrid of voices, languages, literatures and processes contributed by group members' suggestions.

I suggested we apply this dialogical approach to the first 'without borders' book. It contributed to an intensive critical learning curve that enhanced the quality of our work overall. The extensive critical discussion was too unwieldy a dialectical process to use in subsequent books, sometimes producing over a hundred comments per chapter in the process of clarifying and resolving the agreed text. This was, for example, culturally and linguistically challenging where authors' and most editors' first language was not English, but it enabled us to introduce a number of new authors, some (like Sandra Galheigo) well known in their native languages, to readers of English texts. Most contributors valued this critical process, which several remarked they had not experienced in other edited books. It remains an interrogative practice that I still use with my colleagues (see figure 2 below), and makes each edited book a learning opportunity, not only for myself but for my students, since I have often had a close relationship with others' material in the process and can draw on this for teaching.

The table (table 2) below shows the estimated percentage of my contribution to each chapter or paper in which authorship is shared: Although this has been a dialogical process, the additional contribution I have made to much of the writing has been to support it from the literature and to address coherency.

**Figure 2:** example of dialogue around editing of text: Editors' comments anonymised, my responses in green:

Our occupational engagement with the world around us is one of the elements of our human nature: all people can potentially play a transformational role in society. Given the organisation of modern **society** with its many strata ordered to functions such as the maintenance of health or social care, there are many opportunities for individuals to mediate or channel social outcomes. Occupational therapists are members of what **Gramsci** called "the political society" or the "civil society" (1971, p12) depending on which sector (state or private) they work for. As 'new intellectuals' they carry out the operations of society such as mediating care processes and assessing entitlements to forms of treatment or state benefits. These functions set them apart from service users since their professional status depends on managing such processes for others. Consequently occupational therapists' **social transformational** role is limited but can have a critical role, for example generating evidence to raise awareness of conditions and support interventions and collaborations.

Does this refer to belief in 'human agency' beyond 'influencing one's own state of health ...' (Reilly's OT adage)? **Yes... toyed with putting in a ref to Reilly but thought better of it, I think the belief predates her adage, and the transformational perspective is certainly older.**  
**OK**

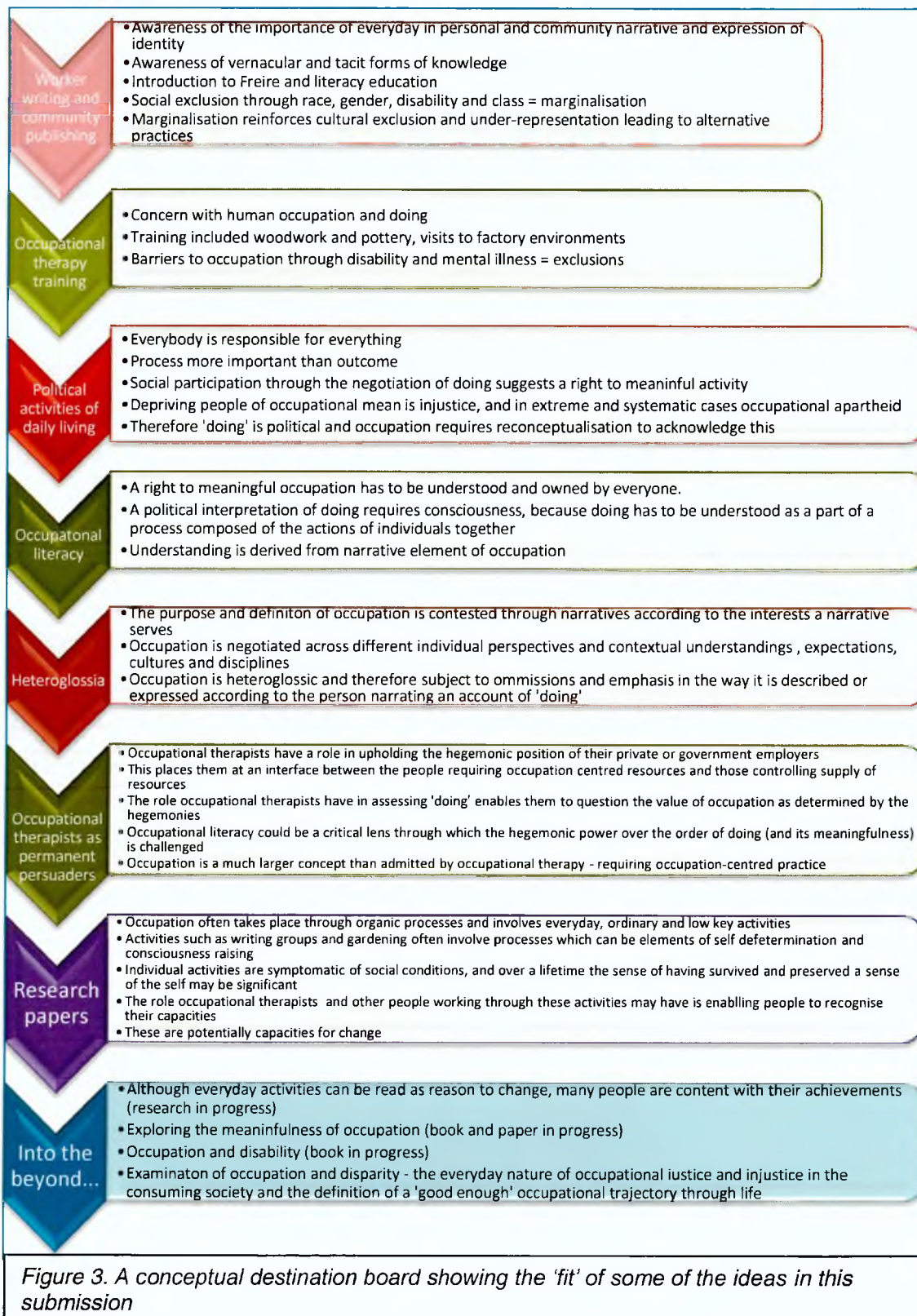
Did Gramsci specifically refer to OT's or is this your attribution/illustration of what he said Nick? **No, Gramsci never met or heard of OTs - see comment above and ref to Paterson.**  
**OK**

Would you say that this connects w/ the discussion we had with Liz Townsend, who had suggested that we identify the 'third realm of OTwB' as 'Critical or Radical OT', instead of the 'Radical or Revolutionary Practice'? I'd argue that the social transformational role(s) of (collectives of) individuals who choose to (strategically) use their professional knowledges, skills, networks, etc. could be less limited than that of 'the profession of OT' or an 'OT professional'. Do you see what I mean? See changes. Is it something we should refer back to Liz to check if we should indicate idea came from her?

<b>A: Kronenberg, F, Simo Algado, S and Pollard N (2005) (eds), Occupational Therapy without borders - learning from the spirit of survivors, Edinburgh, Elsevier Science</b>	
50%	Kronenberg F, Pollard N. Introduction: a beginning. 1-13
50%	6: Kronenberg F, Pollard N. Overcoming occupational apartheid: a preliminary exploration of the political nature of Occupational Therapy. 58-86
<b>B : Pollard N, Sakellariou D, Kronenberg F (2008) (eds), A Political Practice of Occupational Therapy, Edinburgh, Elsevier Science</b>	
50%	1: Pollard N, Kronenberg F, Sakellariou D. A political practice of occupational therapy. 3-20
60%	2: Pollard N, Sakellariou D, Kronenberg F. Political competence in occupational therapy. 21-38
100%	3: Pollard N. When Adam delf and Eve span: occupational literacy and democracy. 39-51
60%	4: Pollard N, Kronenberg F, Sakellariou D. Occupational apartheid. 55-68
50%	5: Sakellariou D, Pollard N. Three sites of conflict and co-operation: class, gender and sexuality. 69-90
50%	6: Sakellariou D, Pollard N. Political challenges of holism: heteroglossia and the impossibility of holism. 91-105
60%	21: Pollard N, Sakellariou D. Facing the challenge: a compass for navigating the heteroglossic context. 237-244
<b>C: Kronenberg F, Pollard N, Sakellariou D (eds) (2010) Occupational therapies without borders (Volume 2). Edinburgh, Elsevier Science.</b>	
100%	15: Pollard N, Occupational therapists–permanent persuaders in emerging roles? 171-180
50%	18: Pollard N, Parks S. Community publishing 143-152
<b>D: Pollard N, Sakellariou D, (eds) (2012), Politics of Occupation-Centred Practice. Oxford, Wiley.</b>	
50%	1: Pollard N, Sakellariou D, Introduction 1-24
60%	2: Pollard N, Sakellariou D, The Language of Occupation 25-41
70%	3: Pollard N, Sakellariou D, Occupational Literacy 42-50
60%	4: Pollard N, Sakellariou D, A Grammar for a Language of Occupation 51-60
60%	5: Pollard N, Sakellariou D, Towards a Transformational Grammar of Occupation 61-71
50%	6: Sakellariou D, Pollard N, Narratives of Recognition 72-80
50%	7: Sakellariou D, Pollard N, Narratives and Truths 81-91
100%	11: Pollard N, Communities of Writing 146-161
50%	13: Pollard N, Carver N, Models and Human Occupation 180-196
70%	15: Pollard N, Sakellariou D, A Society Founded on Occupation 217-236
<b>E: Peer reviewed and journal articles</b>	
70%	Pollard N, Cook S, (2012) The power of low-key groupwork activities in mental health support work. <i>Groupwork</i> , 22(3) 7-32
100%	Pollard N. (2010) Occupational narratives, community publishing and worker writing groups: Sustaining stories from the margins. <i>Groupwork</i> . 20(1) 9-33
100%	Pollard N (2007) Voices talk, hands write: sustaining community publishing with people with learning difficulties, <i>Groupwork</i> 17(2) 36-56
<b>Table 2 Percentage of my contribution to each chapter or paper in which authorship is shared</b>	



### 3 Contribution to knowledge





My work has identified me with many other progressive critical voices in the profession and contributing to a movement (Frank, Baum and Law 2010) within it. This movement has been described by a number of colleagues as inspirational, as reshaping the profession, for example through influencing the education through non-traditional placements and transformational practice (e.g. Beck and Barnes, 2008; Boggis, 2008; Paluch, Boltin and Howie, 2008).

The innovative terms such as occupational apartheid, or the connection of political expression to the clinical profession have been controversial, but there has also been readiness to recognise the issues they present. Wilcock (1998, 1999), Townsend (1993), Watson and Swartz (2004) and others had already begun highlighting these issues. Our first book appeared amidst a number marking out similar territories, for example Whiteford and Wright St-Clair (2005), but we seem to be perceived as having taken this further (Appendix 7.2 includes citations from social work, speech therapy, medical anthropology). The two edited books I led have contributed to a debate around recognising occupation as a political concept. Academic books rarely gain immediate responses, but B is the core text for the largest MSc OT programme in Chile. Feedback about the use of these texts is often anecdotal, picked up in conversation at conferences. However a heavily marked copy of B acquired while buying copies for this submission reveals how the reader interpreted and engaged with our chapters. I will look for such texts to help in planning new books. My forthcoming projects, in collaboration with disability activists and anthropologists; book series; and the development of a European position document on citizenship and occupation may present further opportunities to develop these perspectives.

Submissions A-D and many of my other papers (e.g. Pollard, Alsop & Kronenberg 2005, Lawson-Porter and Pollard 2006a, 2006b; Pollard, Sakellariou, Lawson-Porter 2010) belong to a wider argument about reconceptualising the occupational therapy profession in political terms over the last decade. I have worked with colleagues nationally and internationally to develop constructs and tools which can be used to enable occupational therapists to rethink their roles, and to harness more power from the concept of an occupation-based approach to intervention. I regard this as a natural outcome of engaging in occupational science which embraces many human sciences, including anthropology, psychology, sociology. Occupational science explores the human need and capacity for occupation as the means by which we engage with our environment, a notion which in turn suggests that meaningful human occupation is a basic human right.

Occupational therapy practice has a strong subjective element in the choice of occupations employed for *therapeutic* purposes (D2). Yet many are devalued, for example writing, because activities were prescribed according to the pathology of clients rather than their interests, emphasising 'therapy' over client needs (Rebeiro 2000). Many *community based* activities (for example arts) are also dismissed as lacking serious values, a dismissal which also extends to the participants.

One of my concerns has been to explore the meaning and value which comes from the quality of engagement and outcomes participants derive from activities (A-E; Ikiugu et al 2012). Writing about personal and community experiences is a tool I have come to value as an aspect of occupational therapy practice, hence my repeated interest in it (C18; D; E). It is also the basis for conceptualising human occupational practices as a form of 'literacy' (B3; C15; C18; D3; D11). Narrative practices abound in health professions and in the depiction of the client's 'journey' as

elements of the development of a critical consciousness (De Souza et al 2005, Detweiler and Peyton 1999, Mattingly 1994, 2000).

### 3.1 Reconceptualising

<b>Table 3 reconceptualising - chapters relating to this theme</b>
<p>Pollard N, Occupational therapists—permanent persuaders in emerging roles? Pp 171-180 (C15)</p> <p><b>in Kronenberg F, Pollard N, Sakellariou D (eds) (2010) Occupational therapies without borders (Volume 2). Edinburgh, Elsevier Science.</b></p>
<p>Kronenberg F, Pollard N. Overcoming occupational apartheid: a preliminary exploration of the political nature of Occupational Therapy. Pp 58-86 (A6);</p> <p>Kronenberg F, Pollard N. Introduction: a beginning. Pp 1-13 (A1):</p> <p><b>in Kronenberg, F, Simo Algado, S and Pollard N (2005) (eds), Occupational Therapy without borders - learning from the spirit of survivors, Edinburgh, Elsevier Science</b></p>
<p>Pollard N, Kronenberg F, Sakellariou D. A political practice of occupational therapy. Pp 3-20 (B1);</p> <p>Pollard N, Sakellariou D, Kronenberg F. Political competence in occupational therapy. Pp 21-38 (B2):</p> <p><b>in Pollard N, Sakellariou D, Kronenberg F (2008) (eds), A Political Practice of Occupational Therapy, Edinburgh, Elsevier Science,</b></p>
<p>Pollard N, Sakellariou D, A Society Founded on Occupation Pp 217-236 (D15);</p> <p>Pollard N, Carver N, Models and Human Occupation. Pp 180-196 (D13):</p> <p>Pollard N, Sakellariou D, (eds) (2012), Politics of Occupation-Centred Practice. Oxford, Wiley.</p>

My interpretation of the political in occupational therapy is through its meeting the needs of individuals, communities and marginalised populations through community interventions<sup>2</sup>, e.g. A1; A6; C15; E. In B I tried to locate a link between domain politics and personal interactions to suggest with examples that all occupation has political content. This may be expressed in tacit forms of knowledge and organic approaches to organization, something which has been part of my research focus, particularly E2010.

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<sup>2</sup> This concern is currently being pursued through two further edited books: on occupational science, occupational therapy and disability studies; and another on social inclusion projects

C15 offers a theoretical justification for the grassroots bottom up perspective from which much of my discussion of an occupational literacy (B3; D3) was developed. However it was written before the research was published – had the chronology been different perhaps the concept of occupational literacy would have been better illustrated. I viewed community publication practices as having consciousness raising agenda based in the testimony of experiences which are shared as narratives or poetry in writer's workshops. Through this people consider the relationship between their experience and its depiction in their writing (Pollard 2004; C18; D11; E2010). In this way occupational experiences that might otherwise be unrecognised or disregarded can be read as a vernacular literature which describes them and gives them value.

Any community based intervention can be a catalyst for this kind of process – and a publication project to capture the history should always be considered. These products can help us understand some issues of personal meaning (Ikiugu et al, 2012). Their roots in everyday experiences are also the basis for a real 'occupational literacy' (C15).

However, there is a discrepancy between this vernacular practice and the practices of a profession that claims to address 'occupation' (D2) and has to robustly base itself in academic rigour in order to be recognised. We argued that the challenges of asserting the profession's values were not only about the lack of research but also about its effectiveness in generating awareness about them. This issue of the politics of expression could be addressed by working collaboratively with service users and carers (B2). Put simply: let's do something together.

These subtleties can be lost to the reductionism of science and underestimated as supporting evidence for practice. An orientation towards communities and social participation requires occupational therapists to significantly reconceptualise their own careers and professional objectives in terms of the problems they encounter in practice and define and value the solutions which emerge from their experience (A1; A6; B1). As Max-Neef (2010) indicates, all human activity generates experiential value, like 'having fun'. These occupational activities are the motivators for human development, but they cannot be easily quantified, unless they are represented in terms of costs. Real value is ignored in favour of values that can be counted; costing is a form of control over value, and has produced a situation where people are denied values (D15).

'Let's do something together' is not merely an invitation but the celebration of the poetry of life as action (Vaneigem, 1983). Real value occurs when people are totally engaged in their occupations. Accounts of the politics of community actions are often ephemeral because people are too busy doing them to write about them or else singular (Tait 2005), so not generalisable. The example of community action I've consistently used is community publishing, some discussions of which have revealed to me divergences in how others understood the events I took part in. Interpretations from any one person (such as mine) may be unreliable. Some basic principles for this form of community exchange were suggested in A1 and A6, but they are set out as just one approach amongst other possibilities. Many larger political causes grow from individual experiences and issues that are first appreciated at community level (C15), which Kronenberg and I termed political activities of daily living, pADL (A1).

My key purpose in A-D was to promote a discussion of how political concepts could be recognized and incorporated into reflective occupational therapy practices. Until

recently community based activities (it is important to distinguish those based *with* the community from services located so as to provide *to* the community) have often been outside the clinical reference base of many occupational therapists (B5). Practitioners can learn about occupation based approaches from the tacit knowledge derived from vernacular community actions, for example those of the FWWCP and similar groups (C18; D11; E2010), and from what these reveal about dimensions of personal meaning (Ikiugu et al, 2012). As I have often discussed, the culture, gender and class focus of the profession may exclude some significant areas, eg D13. I learned through *Occupational Therapy without Borders* that Latin American practitioners had already developed social occupational therapy approaches and carried them out for decades.



### 3.2 Occupational apartheid

**Table 4: Occupational apartheid - chapters relating to this theme**

Kronenberg F, Pollard N. Overcoming occupational apartheid: a preliminary exploration of the political nature of Occupational Therapy. Pp 58-86 (A6),

**in Kronenberg, F, Simo Algado, S and Pollard N (2005) (eds), Occupational Therapy without borders - learning from the spirit of survivors, Edinburgh, Elsevier Science**

Pollard N, Kronenberg F, Sakellariou D. Occupational apartheid. Pp 55-68 (B4);

Pollard N, Kronenberg F, Sakellariou D. A political practice of occupational therapy. 3-20 (B1);

Pollard N, Sakellariou D, Kronenberg F. Political competence in occupational therapy. 21-38 (B2):

**in Pollard N, Sakellariou D, Kronenberg F (2008) (eds), A Political Practice of Occupational Therapy, Edinburgh, Elsevier Science**

The most widely cited of my works is the discussion of *occupational apartheid* in A6.

The term had already appeared in relation to discriminatory work practices, but

Frank Kronenberg applied it to the social marginalisation he witnessed while working

with Guatemalan street children (Kronenberg 2005). He began to advocate its use in

occupational therapy to define systematic forms of marginalization and we rounded

out a working definition (A6; B1). I felt I could give a name to this phenomenon

through observation of my clients' experiences and from those perspectives of race,

class, disabilities, culture and gender explored in community published literature.

Before the publication of *Occupational Therapy without Borders*, Kronenberg had

taken the concept of occupational apartheid to the World Federation of Occupational

Therapists (A6), applying it to position statements of which he was an author. It

proved controversial, but some people from countries in the southern hemisphere

and southern Europe saw it as useful. I wanted to set out a careful definition,

however. 'Occupational apartheid' might well be misread, coming from two white western men, from a profession whose middle class membership has shaped a diffusion associated with colonialism (Galheigo, 2011). We had to demonstrate that it was based in something both real and generalisable, and employed a range of supporting examples.

I continue to think that 'occupational apartheid' has value while extremes of wealth and disparity in quality of life persist, but agree with Thibeault (2012) about its limits, and have rarely employed it. Descriptions of disparity must avoid being drawn into dissembling arguments about exaggerations or inappropriate blanket terms, so its use has to be specific.

Access to vulnerable populations cannot be negotiated with those in power if officials feel that they will be accused of occupational apartheid. A recent illustration is an Occupational Therapy Press release on a lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex event in Queensland. This quoted our definition of occupational apartheid, but attributed it to the term occupational injustice, possibly mindful of recent legislation changes restricting non-governmental organisations from campaigning on political issues.

My fellow editors and I are uneasy that 'community' is read as a romantic concept which diminishes the people with whom interventions are made, which are often not followed up with proper evaluations, as the papers I developed with Dikaios Sakellariou between 2006-12 (see publication list) discuss. A veteran social rights campaigner from the FWWCP flicked through *Occupational Therapy without Borders* and said, 'if you can't back up the promise of what you've begun it can be better not to start'. There are ethical issues about how work on occupational justice is

presented to students, and about the purpose of all social interventions. These may provoke unrest; can be tools for social control operated by dominant parties or dubious charitable organisations; be regarded as new forms of colonialism (Fortune & McKinstry, 2012) or collusion. Occupational therapists may articulate themselves politically but have still to address how that articulation is read and interpreted. Many people who become occupational therapists want to be therapeutic in a medically oriented way: they have a mission, a vocation, and this might not lend itself to political reflection (see appendix 7.3). Dikaios and I thought it was significant that none of our sample of therapists involved in community based rehabilitation had remarked on negative elements of their experience. Doing so may have risked identification of their projects, but it might have also been challenging to the conceptualization they retained of their work.

The '3P archaeological perspective' (B1) of the relationship between the personal, professional and political aspects of individuals' interactions with events in the world around them arose from some of these concerns. It partly derived from the feminist maxim of the personal being political; our discussion of this relates in part to the overwhelmingly feminine gender dominance in occupational therapy. The right to meaningful occupation is a political right of social participation. Describing occupational intervention as a political practice may reveal how the professional activities of occupational therapists are part of the public or corporate apparatus which operates the gateway to resources (Gramsci 1971, p10; C15; Pollard 2011) and makes them part of the marginalization process experienced by people with disabilities. Although occupational therapists may wish to present a narrative of themselves as agents of social change, they are drawn through other aspects of their professional identifications to side with the forces of social control. Professional

claims to holism are limited where the therapist prioritises organisational requirements and protocols over individual need as they are caught up in the same power discourse, the same hegemonic orders, and conflicts of responsibility as any other professional (C15; B1; Pollard 2011). It is occupational therapists, not clients, who often mediate access to resources, and suggest the appropriate outcomes by which they will assess clients' occupational performances (Abberley 1995, Hammell 2007). One of our collaborators, Dennis Jubb, argues that through their unalienable disability clients are sometimes in a better position to demand resources than professionals (Pollard and Kronenberg 2008).

How, therefore, can occupational therapists realistically balance the obligations which my colleagues and I have set out for them, to exercise their element of "responsibility for everything" and reconcile their public and personal ethics (A6, p5). As social actors occupational therapists also have motivations and individual and community interests, just as much as the people they work with (A1; A6; B1; B2; D). The divide between client and therapist can be reduced by the process of negotiating how to work together. Processes such as the pADL analysis framework are intended to be operated by client, community, and practitioner alike.

### 3.3 Heteroglossia

**Table 5: Heteroglossia - chapters relating to this theme**

Sakellariou D, Pollard N. Political challenges of holism: heteroglossia and the impossibility of holism. Pp 91-105 (B6);

Pollard N, Sakellariou D. Facing the challenge: a compass for navigating the heteroglossic context. Pp 237-244 (B21):

Sakellariou D, Pollard N. Three sites of conflict and co-operation: class, gender and sexuality. Pp 69-90 (B5)

in Pollard N, Sakellariou D, Kronenberg F (2008) (eds), **A Political Practice of Occupational Therapy, Edinburgh, Elsevier Science**

Pollard N, Sakellariou D, A Society Founded on Occupation Pp 217-236 (D15);

Pollard N, Sakellariou D, The Language of Occupation pp 25-41 (D2);

Pollard N, Sakellariou D, Occupational Literacy pp 42-50 (D3);

Pollard N, Sakellariou D, A Grammar for a Language of Occupation pp 51-60 (D4);

Pollard N, Sakellariou D, Towards a Transformational Grammar of Occupation pp 61-71 (D5)

Sakellariou D, Pollard N, Narratives of Recognition pp 72-80 (D6)

Sakellariou D, Pollard N, Narratives and Truths pp 81-91 (D7)

In:

**Pollard N, Sakellariou D, (eds) (2012), Politics of Occupation-Centred Practice. Oxford, Wiley.**

Client, community, and practitioner represent diverse experiences and perspectives from which a mingling of conflicts and co-operation may be anticipated, rather than an expectation that all differences can or should be reconciled (A6). This suggests that occupation based practices are negotiated and operated through the meeting of different understandings, or languages, for the interpretation of shared events.

Sakellariou and I consequently developed our exploration of heteroglossia and occupational literacy to discuss the use of language and grammar as metaphors for

the social construction of occupation and human interactions based in activity (B6; B21; D2-7). We have not gone very deeply into linguistic theory; although the logical end of this enquiry would be to research and debate the extent to which the nature of an occupational exchange can be regarded in the same way as a speech act. We felt that this would not find an audience in a practice oriented profession, yet the relationship between what people do and who they are can be neglected in a reductive and clinical context (Frank, 2012). Thus through the chapters we obtained from our colleagues, as well as our own, we sought to combine our discussion with some accounts of practice and historical and socio-cultural observations from occupational perspectives.

**Heteroglossia** suggests a dynamic interaction of forces based in language. This does not demand a fixed solution, but a collaborative continuous process – and this is very much how I view my work. To return to the example of community publishing co-operatives: some community publishers found that their books encouraged other people to come forward and present their own perspective of local history, or narratives of their experiences. The collaborative approach employed in community publishing facilitated a sense of local involvement and participation across different community groups (Morley and Worpole 2009).

Professionals have access to a range of media such as journals, conferences and text books, supported by professional bodies, corporate and public health bodies and recognised organisational structures in addition to the modes of communication of practice which they traditionally employ. Many community organisations and individuals within them lack the resources occupational therapists command, and experience pressures to conform to imposed cultural and organisational standards (for example from funders) which they may not see as relevant to their purposes



(Morley and Worpole 2009). I value community publishing as a source of accounts of where, why, when, how and what people did, in developing what the profession would term occupational narratives, and its potential as a collaborative tool for therapists and service users. These practices have enabled the recognition and celebration of individual and group achievement and expression of occupational goals, but they developed in vernacular practices which were often outside both pedagogical and culture norms.

These capacity building and social and transformational experiences are rarely objectively described, and not accounted for in occupational therapy literature (D-11; E-2007; E-2010). Indeed they should not be framed as 'therapy' (Pollard 2004, C18) but as a Freirean process of consciousness raising (Freire 1972, Morley and Worpole 2009). This concept contributed to the idea of an **occupational literacy** (B-3), one aspect of which can be a conscious realization, through the narrative arts of writing and publishing, of how what one does can effect social change in a community (A1, A6; C18; D11; E2007; E2010). It is also an expressive assertion and testimony of participation in – to use a professional term - occupational functioning, a celebration of doing, being, becoming and belonging (Wilcock 2006, Hammell 2004) embedded in community contexts. Through collaborative writing and publishing people produce forms of social capital, i.e. the knowledge and cultural capital identified by Bourdieu (1986), based in the exchange of personal accounts of activity.



### 3.4 Occupational literacy

**Table 6: Occupational literacy - chapters and articles relating to this theme**

Pollard N. When Adam delf and Eve span: occupational literacy and democracy. Pp 39-51 (B3) in Pollard N, Sakellariou D, Kronenberg F (2008) (eds), <i>A Political Practice of Occupational Therapy</i> , Edinburgh, Elsevier Science;
Pollard N, Sakellariou D, Occupational Literacy. Pp 42-50 (D3) Pollard N, Communities of Writing. Pp 146-161 (D11) in Pollard N, Sakellariou D, (eds) (2012), <i>Politics of Occupation-Centred Practice</i> . Oxford, Wiley.
Pollard N, Parks S. Community publishing. Pp 143-152 (C18) In Kronenberg F, Pollard N, Sakellariou D (eds) (2010) <i>Occupational therapies without borders (Volume 2)</i> . Edinburgh, Elsevier Science.
Pollard N. (2010) Occupational narratives, community publishing and worker writing groups: Sustaining stories from the margins. <i>Groupwork</i> . 20(1) 9-33
Pollard N (2007) Voices talk, hands write: sustaining community publishing with people with learning difficulties, <i>Groupwork</i> 17(2) 36-56

When occupational literacy questions power and status as the means by which occupational opportunity is obstructed, it necessarily has to work from a base in the commonplace experience as this is something to which most individuals can relate (B3; C15). The concern with the everyday is shared with occupational therapists' predecessors amongst 19<sup>th</sup> century social reformers. Issues such as household budgeting, or obtaining occupational opportunities, continue to be documented in the application of a range of social and clinical interventions. But occupational therapy, being a strongly female profession, often concerned with domestic activity is not always regarded seriously by other professionals (Breines 2005, Pollard and Walsh 2000, Wilcock 2002) particularly in managing a process of care and its cost, rather than client needs for meaning and purpose.

One objective of disseminating occupational narratives that are directly related by the people with whom occupational therapists and other clinicians work is to challenge the problem of people with disabilities having so many aspects of their

lives unnecessarily mediated by professional carers (Pollard, Smart, Voices Talk and Hands Write 2005; E2007, Pollard, Voices Talk and Hands Write 2008). They are often denied the capacity to make their own occupational choices, gain experience and determine positive strategies to overcome barriers, and appreciate their right to democratic participation in society.

An occupational literacy is an applied literacy, i.e. it is intended for active use, reflection, analysis, proposition, enactment, not merely reading but the processes of challenge *to* rather than acceptance *of* power (B3; D15). Such reflective practices are demanded of clinicians: occupational therapists could not only facilitate occupational literacy through their practice and engagement with both individuals and communities but their practitioners' insider-based, embedded understanding of treatment and its effectiveness in all its nuances (Fish and Coles 1998, B2). This suggests that the development of an occupation based approach is far more than therapeutic, as reflected in the title of our 2012 book, *Politics of occupation-centred practice*. The concluding chapter (D15) sets out occupation as a political idea centred around the experience of engagement in doing, which need not be especially complicated. Its democratic application depends on being accessible and related to common experience. It also argues that occupational therapists and other professionals engaged in occupation-centred practice need to balance their allegiances in order to facilitate these developments.

### 3.5 Research articles

<b>Table 7: Research articles</b>
Pollard N, Cook S, (2012) The power of low-key groupwork activities in mental health support work. <i>Groupwork</i> , 22(3) (E2012)
Pollard N. (2010) Occupational narratives, community publishing and worker writing groups: Sustaining stories from the margins. <i>Groupwork</i> . 20(1) 9-33 (E2010)
Pollard N (2007) Voices talk, hands write: sustaining community publishing with people with learning difficulties, <i>Groupwork</i> 17(2) 36-56 (E2007)

The articles in this submission have concerned occupational based actions which have not been mediated by occupational therapy professionals. I have written other peer reviewed papers, some of which are opinion based, while others are based on the outcomes of questionnaire research for the World Federation of Occupational Therapists Community Based Rehabilitation sub project (Sakellariou et al 2006; Sakellariou and Pollard 2006, 2012; Pollard and Sakellariou 2007a, 2007b, 2009). Discussing these would have necessitated introducing considerable extra material, those included here were three different studies which complemented rather than extended the subject range of the submission beyond its permitted limits.

The first (E2007; E2010) concerns the occupations of sustaining writing and publishing groups. While E2007 was practice based in a community arts project involving people with learning difficulties, the second (E2010) followed a crisis in a community publishing network. Using focus groups (since group discussion is a key element of writing group participation), it looked at writing group members' experiences of running their own activities and exploring the benefits they obtained from them. These included mutual support; participation in events and occupational spin-off activities which developed organically as opportunities from group interactions, and ways of expressing and enacting individual and communal identity.

These issues had been identified as some of the objectives of the project described in E2007, and following reviewers' comments these details were expanded to better illustrate the participatory process.

Similar findings were obtained in an evaluation of community based mental health groups centred around horticultural and writing activities in a voluntary organization (E2012). Although this engagement was based on referral and linked to primary health care, its volunteer and community base allowed a more organic relationship to develop between members and members and the volunteers who liaised with health workers and doctors. Members attending groups described how their participation in allotment gardening and writing enabled them to form friendships that led them into other activities. For me the most poignant elements were one participants' description of how taking a plant home gave him something to talk about, and another saying that having Marks and Spencer biscuits in the writing group rather than those from Poundland was a message that the members were not 'rubbish'.

I have been exploring similar issues with Moses Ikiugu in our forthcoming book on meaningfulness, and in our current research (e.g. Ikiugu et al, 2012). Ikiugu has a strong interest in pragmatism and the way approaches based in this can be developed to enable individuals to focus on their effect of their actions (Ikiugu, 2008). This raised the problem of ascertaining the nature of meaning. While writing our book I suggested that analysis of the narratives from FWWCP autobiographical publications could enable us to identify sources of meaning from everyday life. Most FWWCP authors shared their work through community based opportunities, not therapeutic groups. They were interested in revealing ordinary accounts of everyday life in their communities. Working with some of Ikiugu's students using FWWCP

autobiographical samples we identified five main sources of meaningfulness: meaningful relationships; a sense of control over one's life; ability to engage in enjoyable leisure; contribution to something greater than oneself; and a sense of wellbeing.



### 3.6 Impact on the profession

<b>Table 8: Publications submitted and numbers of citations (own references excluded, source google)</b>	
<b>A-D (books); E (peer-reviewed articles)</b>	
<b>A: Kronenberg, F, Simo Algado, S and Pollard N (2005) (eds), Occupational Therapy without borders - learning from the spirit of survivors, Edinburgh, Elsevier Science</b>	<b>81</b>
Chapters: Kronenberg F, Pollard N. Introduction: a beginning. 1-13	
6: Kronenberg F, Pollard N. Overcoming occupational apartheid: a preliminary exploration of the political nature of Occupational Therapy. 58-86	42
<b>B : Pollard N, Sakellariou D, Kronenberg F (2008) (eds), A Political Practice of Occupational Therapy, Edinburgh, Elsevier Science</b>	<b>23</b>
Chapters: 1: Pollard N, Kronenberg F, Sakellariou D. A political practice of occupational therapy. 3-20	5
2: Pollard N, Sakellariou D, Kronenberg F. Political competence in occupational therapy. 21-38	6
3: Pollard N. When Adam delf and Eve span: occupational literacy and democracy. 39-51	
4: Pollard N, Kronenberg F, Sakellariou D. Occupational apartheid. 55-68	2
5: Sakellariou D, Pollard N. Three sites of conflict and co-operation: class, gender and sexuality. 69-90	4
6: Sakellariou D, Pollard N. Political challenges of holism: heteroglossia and the impossibility of holism 91-105	
21: Pollard N, Sakellariou D. Facing the challenge: a compass for navigating the heteroglossic context. 237-244	
<b>C: Kronenberg F, Pollard N, Sakellariou D (eds) (2010) Occupational therapies without borders (Volume 2). Edinburgh, Elsevier Science.</b>	<b>6</b>
Chapters 15: Pollard N, Occupational therapists—permanent persuaders in emerging roles? 171-180	
18: Pollard N, Parks S. Community publishing 143-152	
<b>D: Pollard N, Sakellariou D, (eds) (2012), Politics of Occupation-Centred Practice. Oxford, Wiley.</b>	<b>2</b>
Chapters 1: Pollard N, Sakellariou D, Introduction 1-24	
2: Pollard N, Sakellariou D, The Language of Occupation 25-41	
3: Pollard N, Sakellariou D, Occupational Literacy 42-50	
4: Pollard N, Sakellariou D, A Grammar for a Language of Occupation 51-60	
5: Pollard N, Sakellariou D, Towards a Transformational Grammar of Occupation 61-71	
6: Sakellariou D, Pollard N, Narratives of Recognition 72-80	
7: Sakellariou D, Pollard N, Narratives and Truths 81-91	
11: Pollard N, Communities of Writing 146-161	
13: Pollard N, Carver N, Models and Human Occupation 180-196	
15: Pollard N, Sakellariou D, A Society Founded on Occupation 217-236	
<b>E: Peer reviewed and journal articles</b>	
<b>Pollard N, Cook S, (2012) The power of low-key groupwork activities in mental health support work. Groupwork, 22(3) 7-32</b>	
Pollard N. (2010) Occupational narratives, community publishing and worker writing groups: Sustaining stories from the margins. <i>Groupwork</i> . 20(1) 9-33	
Pollard N (2007) Voices talk, hands write: sustaining community publishing with people with learning difficulties, <i>Groupwork</i> 17(2) 36-56	1

Counting listings and citations may only give approximate indications of the impact my work has had on the profession (see appendix 7.2 and table 8). This includes landmark texts: *Occupational Therapy without Borders* was a major international project involving over 60 authors, a number of whom were relatively unknown in English. It has sold 9,000 copies in English and Spanish editions, and remains a widely used core educational book. A second volume, *Occupational Therapies without Borders*, promises a similar take up. Given a market with a professional population equivalent in size to that of Malta, a 'best selling' occupational therapy textbook may attain 7,500 copies, though some attain 13,000.

The high profile of the first enabled us to develop further texts, although with a narrower appeal. Submissions B and D address significant issues in the professional discourse, but are of more specialised interest and consequently lower sales (e.g. B: around 1800-1900). B attracted favourable comment (appendix 7.2), and brought opportunities for keynote addresses. It was another book which introduced new international authors. An invitation to teach in Chile arose because the book was already well known amongst academics as a pirated pdf file in Spanish translation. This version has been circulated as a key masters course text!

An edition of *Practicing Anthropology* (30,3) featured several articles connecting our work in *Occupational therapy without borders* and *A political practice of occupational therapy* with approaches to anthropology (Frank et al 2008, Paul-Ward 2008) and disability studies (Kasnitz 2008). These continue to generate invitations to speak at conferences or write for core text books (see section 5), more than I can accept.

Despite this, some occupational therapy educators constructively critique our books as exotic, sometimes difficult texts, and report tending to give students particular



readings rather than the whole book. My concern with political and social implications may be peripheral to clinically oriented professional concepts. There are lapses in clarity, particularly in D, and there have been calls for a less profession-centred language, citing B (Brown and Bourke-Taylor 2012). Others have privately suggested to us that our 'political' emphasis is arcane at a time when a retreat to basic, core interpretations of the professional message may be more attractive to service purchasers or service users.

We have, however, encouraged some other professional groups to critically examine the position of their own professions (Leibling 2010; Appendix 2). I'm actively progressing that discussion and trying to generate opportunities for others to join or develop their own through a new critical series. We have always tried to feature chapters by new writers in our books. From my FWWCP experience of encouraging writing, this is particularly important, as is responding to students who take the initiative to contact me directly having read our work. Since the publication of *Occupational Therapy Without Borders* I have often been personally approached by students or therapists who report that they found my work inspirational, or that they have taken on community development roles as occupational therapists after reading it. Sometimes this has led to further exchanges such as conference or Skype presentations and papers (Peer and Pollard, 2012), and it is also a factor in recruiting post graduate students to on-line MSc programmes at Sheffield Hallam. While my work has impacted on the profession, the sense of responsibility which comes from this is also something I must consider in maintaining an ethical stance and in remaining open, approachable, and striving to be a positive example.

## 4 Conclusion

The work in this submission has been mainly concerned with defining a critical process based around occupation. It began at a time when occupational therapists were beginning to question the purpose of their profession in response to economic restrictions on healthcare and the orientation of health services to market models, and to question the dominance of ideas from the 'northern' hemisphere in local occupational contexts. The international reach of our first book brought a number of authors previously unknown in English to the attention of the profession. Its range captured the imagination of many students and educators before it was even published, and it still does, leading to what others have described as an occupational therapy without borders 'movement'. Some have described it as inspiring changes in the profession, particularly with regard to education through non-traditional placements and working for transformational practice. Indeed some individuals have been inspired to action, although we have not attempted to mobilise a formal organisation.

The key element of my approach to transformational practice has been a call for the profession to return to bottom up and 'grass roots' approaches, to occupation based practice around the experience of 'doing' as the essence of human participation. In its concentration on clinical and medically led objectives the profession has infrequently recognized the relationship between health conditions and the wider issues of social and economic disparities. The critical refocus on the occupational core of the profession has also had some impact outside occupational therapy,

attracting comment amongst other professional groups about the need to re-examine their values.

My work, through its concern with the systematic nature of exclusions which prevent access to meaningful and purposeful occupation, has proposed that therapists not only negotiate work with their clients about their needs but also address them through political alliance. It has considered some ways in which people can be enabled to develop spaces, facilities and resources for different forms of human action. My most significant and original contributions to occupational therapy and occupational science concern the development of an argument for the understanding of a political dimension to human occupation, i.e. that social participation is a right, and has a political aspect through its articulation of the personal. As a consequence rehabilitation is more than restoring or adapting function, it also requires a social and political approach to negotiating the barriers which people experience in accessing occupation.

The rights based approach to human occupation discussed in these submitted works derives from a narrative understanding of 'doing' as an individual and collective expression of actions. This has been derived in turn from my earlier involvement in the critical dialogical workshop processes employed in some community publishing groups. These storied dialogues, such as those eliciting tacit forms of knowledge which are shared in worker writing, or the editorial discussions in the development of books reveal a dialectic around human occupation. Some aspects of my theories concerning the collective production of narratives that express occupational experiences have been evidenced through the accompanying research papers.

The intensity of this scholarly activity has significantly changed my life and the lives of my colleagues, opening up opportunities as teachers and internationally known academics. It has enabled me to be identified and widely respected amongst the progressive and critical voices in the international occupational therapy and occupational science communities. Over nearly a decade from 2003 I have kept up the momentum gained from working on the first book. I have maintained a regular output of peer reviewed papers and led the editing teams of two further books, as well as participating in conferences to support these projects with presentations and invited lectures where possible (due to having a young family and my teaching role I have not been able to accept many speaking engagements to promote my work as I might have liked). My current writing commitments involve two further edited texts including a new edition of the without borders books.

My work is core material for many educational programmes around the world, for example the MSc at Andres Bello University, the largest in Chile, where the profession has expanded by 387%. It can be argued that my work has had a considerable influence on the education of the profession over the last eight years and may continue to do so as those students currently using my books try to practice in a socially committed way.

Many individuals have told me how they have begun to pursue professional goals in response to my work. With a group of people committed to developing ideas and to find ways of enacting them, I have maintained a worldwide correspondence with therapists, students and educators from several disciplines, and have written and continue to produce further publications which I hope will usefully challenge the profession and encourage its development. My challenge is to develop yet more

robust theory, and the research skills, experience and further connections with practices to support this. A political conception of occupation has to transcend the narrowly profiled arena of occupational *therapy* in which it has been nurtured, and establish itself amongst more formidable environments as occupation based practice, an implementation of occupational science. This may appear to present some challenges to occupational therapy as a profession, but may also benefit its popular recognition and facilitate its being understood.

Since political approaches are often considered partisan, this concept should be resolutely centred on the occupational aspect of human rights and interdependencies. Bhaskar (1989) points out, for example, that this entails working with the complexities of human relationships and individualities, gaining an appreciation of the things they have done (their occupational performances), and had done to them in the historical and social context. The critical realism which may be arrived at through this experiential approach has to transcend simple ideologies and formula. If occupational science were to be conceived as simply underpinning the occupational therapy profession then its vision would be constrained. Clearly it has far broader objectives, but there is still much work to be achieved to be sure of the correct identification of the phenomena it purports to be concerned with. I have pointed to some of the political issues, but a democratic and participatory occupation based approach has to be popular and understandable if it is to be transformational, i.e. if the realism supposed by occupation based practice is to actually be carried out. To achieve popular recognition it needs to be more accessible; some educators have remarked that my texts are not always easy for students: I've attempted to produce a 'mash-up' approach to theory (see appendix 7.1) but the language, especially as some of the ideas originate in the vernacular experience of occupation and need to

be translated back into terms that can be applied, needs to be simplified. This, as perhaps the vocabulary of Bhaskar's work demonstrates, can be difficult to achieve. Despite the concern with praxis, even a series of interviews cannot break down the agglutination of philosophical terms he uses to explain his developments (Bhaskar & Hartwig, 2010).

One future development is to employ metasynthesis (see appendix 7.3) to clarify terms and make them accessible to practice for change, but another would be to develop a narrative exploring the development of the concepts in an engaging way, since part of a true emancipatory process has to include work on the self (Bhaskar & Hartwig, 2010). A critical process has to be revealed as a lived process. Some of my next papers will employ autoethnography to this end. I see my work as a slow burning fuse, a somewhat unpredictable, necessarily collaborative, collective process, a continuing and enjoyable dialogue, but with the aim of promoting transformational practices through which people will achieve their occupational needs.

In writing this submission one of the significant personal challenges has been to acknowledge my achievements. While I have been able to recognise the international importance my work has had for the profession over the last decade, this is tempered with the scale of the tasks I sense of realising a wider application of occupation based practices towards human dignity and rights, retaining and extending the focus on rights to life quality for health against many layers of counterpressures, and sustaining an optimism that co-operations towards these ends will produce achievable outcomes.



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## 6 complete list of publications

### Books and book chapters

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### In progress:

Block, P, Kasnitz D, Nishida A, Pollard N (eds) *Occupying Disability*. New York: Springer, due for publication 2013/14

Pollard N (in press) The little society: The personalisation agenda and sustaining older adults with enduring mental health needs in community care provision for A

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Pollard N & Cook S. (2012): The power of low-key groupwork activities in mental health support work. *Groupwork*. 22(3) 7-32

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Sakellariou D, Pollard N (2006) Rehabilitation: in the community or *with* the community, *British Journal of Occupational Therapy*. 69(12), 562-7

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Pollard N (2006) Is dying an occupation? (comment) *Journal of Occupational Science*. 13(2), 149-152

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### **Conference Papers and Presentations**

Pollard, N & Sakellariou, D (2012) Citizenship – Be a Year Ahead – Relation to OT; What are the occupations of a model citizen? European Network of Occupational Therapists in Higher Education conference, Vilnius, Lithuania, 20<sup>th</sup> October (Keynote).

Pollard, N. (2012). Political competence in occupational therapy. Occupational justice special interest group for OT, OT Australia, Queensland. Skype based interaction. March 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Pollard N, Sakellariou D (2011) Emergent roles: voluntary occupations, social entrepreneurs. European Network of Occupational Therapists in Higher Education conference, Ghent, 4<sup>th</sup> November. (workshop)

Pollard N, Guajardo A, (2010) Occupation in an age of austerity. Student Occupational Therapy Links Scotland conference, Queen Margaret University, Musselburgh. November 25<sup>th</sup>

Pollard N (2010) Occupational narratives, community publishing and worker writing groups: sustaining stories from the margins. 16<sup>th</sup> European groupwork symposium, York, 10<sup>th</sup> September

Pollard N, Garth A, Cook S, Tottle D, Frost A (2010) Having somewhere to go on Monday: groupwork and social inclusion in a primary care- voluntary sector partnership. 16<sup>th</sup> European groupwork symposium, York, 9<sup>th</sup> September

Sakellariou D, Pollard N, Leech S, Frank G, Kasnitz D (2010) Online module on a political practice of occupational therapy, World Federation of Occupational Therapists Congress, Santiago, Chile, 7th May

Pollard N (2010) Communities, Occupations and Narratives, World Federation of Occupational Therapists Congress, Santiago, Chile, 6th May

Parks S, Pollard N (2009) The republic of letters. TheFED minifest, Faraday House, London 21st November

Sakellariou, D, Pollard N, Frank G, Kassnitz D, Leech S, Bronson K, (2009) Developing an online module on the political practice of occupational therapy based on a problem based learning approach. European Network of Occupational Therapists in Higher Education conference, A Coruna, 16th October

Pollard N, Sakellariou D (2009) Survivorship issues: the right to engagement and occupation. HIV/AIDS, Oncology, Palliative Care Annual Conference, Brighton Centre, 26<sup>th</sup> June

Lawson-Porter A, Pollard N, Sakellariou D (2009) Will occupational science facilitate or divide the practice of occupational therapy? College of Occupational Therapists 33<sup>rd</sup> Annual Conference and Exhibition, Brighton Centre, 25<sup>th</sup> June

Bryer M, Cook S, Pollard N (2009) Enhancing Learner Autonomy In Final Year Occupational Therapy Students Using Collaborative Partnerships With Academic Staff Throughout The Research Dissertation Module - A Pilot (Poster). Centre for Promoting Learner Autonomy, Sheffield Hallam University, January 14<sup>th</sup>

Sakellariou D, Pollard N (2008) Exploring daily life in the context of a natural disaster. Society for the Study of Occupation USA, Fort Lauderdale, Florida, 25th October

Pollard N (2008) Occupational Therapists - practical persuaders in emerging roles? (workshop) ENOTHE, Berlin, 26th September

Pollard N, Murray B, Johnson H (2008) Broadening Horizons (poster), COTEC, Hamburg 22nd-25th May

Pollard N, Sakellariou D, Kronenberg F (2008) Occupational literacy: needs, rights, participation (poster) COTEC, Hamburg 22nd-25th May

Pollard N, Sakellariou D, Kronenberg F (2008) Community publishing: occupations and narratives (poster) COTEC, Hamburg 22nd-25th May

Sakellariou D, Pollard N, Kronenberg F (2008) Introduction to a political practice of occupational therapy (poster) COTEC, Hamburg 22nd-25th May

Sakellariou D, Pollard N (2008) Taking a new look at holism; heteroglossia and professional discourse (poster) COTEC, Hamburg 22nd-25th May



Pollard N (2007) What role for worker writers in the 21<sup>st</sup> century? Faraday House, London, 3rd November

Sakellariou D, Pollard N, Fransen H, Kronenberg F, Sinclair K, Pattison M, Haglund L, (2006) The WFOT-CBR project team: Reporting on the data collection subproject, World Federation of Occupational Therapists Congress, Sydney, 27th July

Kronenberg F, Pollard N (2006) Getting A Handle On The Political Dimension Of Occupational Therapy, World Federation of Occupational Therapists Congress, Sydney, 25th July

Pollard N (2006) Groupwork without borders (keynote), 12th European groupwork symposium, York, 13th-14th July

Pollard N (2006) Thinking Outside the Box, BAOT Eastern Region Study Day, Stansted Hilton, 12<sup>th</sup> May (workshop)

Pollard N (2005) pADLing upstream: challenge and change in the workplace, Challenge and Change for Managers, College of Occupational Therapists Managers' Conference, Newcastle, November

Lawson-Porter A, Pollard N, Kronenberg F (2005) Occupational therapy - a case of occupational injustice, College of Occupational Therapists Annual Conference, Eastbourne, June

Pollard N (2005) Putting the 'P' in partnership and practice, Association of Occupational Therapists in Mental Health Annual Conference, Stockport, April

Kronenberg F, Pollard N, Simo Algado S, Urbanowski R, (2004) Understanding and Facing up to the Political Nature of Occupational Therapy, European Congress of OT, Athens, September

Simo Algado S, Kronenberg F, Pollard N, Thibeault R, (2004) A Garden Where Education, Research and Social Justice Take Place, European Congress of OT, Athens, September

Pollard N, Smart P, Diggles T (2004) Occupational Benefits of Community Publication, European Congress of OT, Athens (poster presentation), September

Urbanowski R, Kronenberg F, Simo Algado S, Pollard N (2004) The Politics of Occupation, 2nd Canadian Occupational Science Symposium, Toronto, May

Pollard N, Davidson E, (2003) Mental Health and Social Inclusion, Developing Meaningful Lives, Aston Villa

Kronenberg F, Pollard N, (2003) Occupational Therapy Without Borders - Occupational Justice Education, 9<sup>th</sup> Annual ENOTHE Meeting, Congress Centre Smichove, Prague, 1st November

Pollard N (2002) DIY community publishing, Groundswell Self-Help Forum, Sheffield, June

Pollard N (1995) Community Publishing and Mental Health, Democratic Psychiatry Forum, Ashbourne in the Water, September

### **Non peer reviewed articles for popular magazines and abstracts**

Bryce H, Pollard N (2009) Short term gains versus long term stability? (reflections on working with an NGO in Nigeria), *OT News* 17 (8) 46-47

Pollard N, Murray B, Ferguson W, Johnson HJ (2009) From small acorns... collaboration between mental health services and the Workers Educational Association, *OT News* 17(7) 30-31

Pollard N (2008) COTEC – European OT Congress strengthens the profession. *OT News*, 16, 8, 40-1 (report on COTEC attendance part funded by Barbara Penn Travel Bursary)

Lawson Porter A, Pollard N (2006) Think, consider and convey...part II *OT News*. 14(2), 28

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Pollard N, Kronenberg F, Simo Algado S (2004) Community Based Rehabilitation - a role for community publishers? *Federation* 27 12-14.

Pollard N (2003) Making Adult Learning Fun. *OT News*, 11(3) 30

Pollard N (2003) The art of doing it yourself *Tools for Change, the 4<sup>th</sup> Groundswell Self-Help Forum Report*, p21

Pollard N (2002) Doncaster-Dumfries Part 1 *Federation* 24, pp13-15

Pollard N, Steele A (2002) From Doncaster to Dumfries *OT News* 10 (11) 31

Pollard N (2002) Could occupational therapy activities chosen for psychiatric rehabilitation produce a community experience in which service users attain citizenship, autonomy and the capacity for self representation? (abstract) *British Journal of Occupational Therapy* 65(1) 14

Pollard N, Bryer M (2002) Community Publishing and Rehabilitation: Stories of ordinary lives *RED Journal (Doncaster and South Humber Healthcare NHS Trust)*

Winter 6-10

Ryan H, Pollard N (2002) Poetry on the agenda for Scottish weekend, *Adults Learning, January, pp10-11*

Pollard N (2001) Creative writing and publishing with enduring mental health clients (abstract) *British Journal of Occupational Therapy 64(12) 611*

Pollard N (2001) What is the relationship between internal migration and mental health (abstract) *British Journal of Occupational Therapy 64(12) 611*

Pollard N (1993) On Doing the Write Thing, *Reading Therapy Newsletter 5(2) 7-9*

### **Invited presentations**

Guest lecturer and presenter 6-13 April 2013 Universidad Andres Bello, Santiago and Concepcion, Chile. 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of occupational therapy programme guest speaker and master's programme lectures.

Pollard, N. (2012). Political competence in occupational therapy. Occupational justice special interest group for OT, OT Australia, Queensland. Skype based interaction. March 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Pollard, N, Guajardo, A, (2010). Occupations in an age of austerity. Student Occupational Therapy Links Scotland conference, Queen Margaret University, Musselburgh, November 27<sup>th</sup>

Pollard, N (2010) Promoting Occupation through Community Partnerships, Countywide Occupational Therapy Development Meeting, Lincolnshire Partnership Foundation Trust, Sleaford, 23rd March.

Pollard N (2008) River of culture: narratives of occupation, University of Liverpool, 11th June

Pollard N (2008) Gender, Class and Sexuality, SHOUT (local group of the Trent BAOT region) Sheffield Hallam University, 4th June

Pollard N (2008) Who's opening up the workshop? Worker writing and community publishing in Britain, Ray Smith Symposium, Syracuse University, 22nd April

Pollard N (2007) Cultural competence: community publishing as a tool for health professionals, ISG4CP Study day, Chartered Society of Physiotherapists, London, September 25th

Pollard N (2006) Political awareness for occupational therapists, Mile End Hospital, London, May 17th

Pollard N (2005) Occupational Apartheid, Occupational Justice - a rights based approach to occupation, lecture, University of Coventry, December 5th

Pollard N (2002) Benefits of community publication for mental health, The Gap Show, Museum am Ostwall, Dortmund, May

### **Internal publications**

Pollard N (2001) *Getting Published: a brief guide to publishing your work*, Doncaster and South Humber Healthcare NHS Trust

Pollard N (2001) *A guide to basic research skills for clinicians*, Doncaster and South Humber Healthcare NHS Trust