



Publishing in the Age of Iteration: Repetition, Return, and Renewal in the Arts Therapies

Jason D. Butler, Vicky Karkou & Zoe Moula

This panel brings together editors and publishers from leading journals in the creative arts therapies to explore how academic publishing is transforming in the age of artificial intelligence. Drawing from the ECArTE 2026 theme “*Repetition and Return*,” we examine the cyclical and iterative nature of knowledge creation: how ideas evolve, return in new forms, and challenge traditional notions of authorship and originality.

In recent years, AI has entered nearly every aspect of the publishing ecosystem — from submission management and peer review to translation, accessibility, and co-authored text generation. For the arts therapies, disciplines grounded in embodiment, creativity, and relational process, these developments provoke essential questions: How does AI disrupt or repeat the human creative cycle? What new ethical responsibilities do editors and authors face? How might AI tools reshape global access and voice in our journals — amplifying some perspectives while risking the erasure of others?

Each panelist will offer a short reflection on emerging issues within their editorial and publishing context, including the detection and declaration of AI use, equity of access for authors in non-dominant languages, and the pressures of digital metrics that shape publication trends. Together, the group will consider how editors and authors might “return” to core principles of human encounter, reflexivity, and embodiment within these evolving technological systems.

Framed as a collective conversation rather than a series of papers, this 90-minute session invites audience engagement and critical reflection on how the arts therapies community can balance innovation with integrity—embracing iterative renewal while safeguarding the relational and creative essence of our disciplines.



Biography

Jason D. Butler, PhD, is professor of drama therapy at Lesley University (USA) and Editor-in-Chief of *The Arts in Psychotherapy*. A past President of the North American Drama Therapy Association, he teaches and presents internationally on creative arts therapies education, professional development, and mechanisms of change in Developmental Transformations. His research also explores the historical foundations of American drama therapy and the ethical and creative implications of artificial intelligence within education, research, and practice. Across his editorial and academic work, he is committed to sustaining the relational and imaginative core of the arts therapies in contemporary contexts.

Vicky Karkou is a professor and is the Director of the Research Centre for Arts and Wellbeing at Edge Hill University and a co-editor of the international journal *Body, Movement and Dance in Psychotherapy* published by Taylor & Francis. She is widely published (100+ peer-reviewed articles, 5 books) with over 30 years research experience and £10m+ external funding (NIHR, ESRC, AHRC) in the arts and arts therapies. She is an affiliate researcher of the Jameel Arts and Health Lab and a core member of the International Creative Arts Therapies Research Alliance, working with commissioned work from WHO.

Zoe Moula, PhD, is a Lecturer in Mental Health at King's College London and the Editor-in-Chief of the *International Journal of Art Therapy (IJAT)*. Her research advances interdisciplinary agendas across arts and outdoor therapies, school and community health, and planetary health. Zoe is the Lead Editor of IJAT's special issue on nature-based art therapy and the book *Arts in nature for children and young people: A guide towards health equality, wellbeing and sustainability*. Zoe is also the Deputy Chair of the Royal Society for Public Health (RSPH) SIG on Arts, Health & Wellbeing, and co-founder of the UK Association for Outdoor Therapy.

Recent Publications

Sajnani, N., Willemsen, M., & Butler, J.D. (2023). **A scoping review of observed benefits of Developmental Transformations (DvT)**. *Drama Therapy Review*. P. 273–315.

Karkou, V., Perris, E., Omylinska-Thurston, J., Konstant, T., Widnall, L. A., Brocklehurst, S., Fletcher, K., Hird, C., & Hutton, J. (2024). **Supporting staff wellbeing in healthcare**



settings through multi-levelled creative psychological intervention – a feasibility study. *International Journal of Art Therapy*. P.1-12.

Moula, Z., Bull, S., Okantey, N., Brown, M., Edleston, V., Crawford, M., Sawchuk, S., & Moniz, T. (2025). **A Scoping Review of Programs of Active Arts Engagement in International Medical Curricula.** *Perspectives on Medical Education* p.296–308.