

***The Handbook of
Near-Death Experiences:
Thirty Years of Investigation***

Editors

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Proceeds to International Association for Near-Death Studies

***Chapter 1
The Field of Near-Death Studies:
Past, Present, and Future***

Janice Miner Holden, Ed.D.; Bruce Greyson, M.D.; Debbie James, M.S.N.

- Field formally opened in 1975 with *Life after Life* by Raymond Moody, M.D., Ph.D.
- Descriptions of near-death experiences (NDEs) in ancient Egyptian, Tibetan, Greek, and Christian texts.
- By 2005, many books and >700 journal articles, incl:
 - 65 research studies
 - In U.S., Europe, Asia, and Australia
 - Involving more than 3,500 near-death experiencers (NDErs)
 - Studying both the experience and aftereffects.

***Chapter 2
Pleasurable Western Adult Near-Death Experiences***

Nancy Zingrone, Ph.D.; Carlos Alvarado, Ph.D.

- NDEs occur most often during serious illness or injury
- NDEs include one or more features:
 - Sense of absolute or hyper-reality
 - Being out-of-body
 - Peace, well-being, safety, ecstasy
 - Trans-physical perceptual and mental capabilities
 - Meeting deceased loved ones and spiritual entities
 - Life review
- Average incidence of 17% (prospective studies) - 35% (retrospective studies) of people close to death

Chapter 3
Aftereffects of
Pleasurable Western Adult Near-Death Experiences
Russell Noyes, Jr., M.D.; Peter Fenwick, MB, BChir, FRCPsych; Janice Miner Holden, Ed.D.; Rosam Christian, Ph.D.

- Psychological aftereffects include:
 - Loss of fear of death
 - Profound shifts in fundamental values
 - Increased self-worth and meaning and purpose in life
- Spiritual aftereffects include deeper religious/spiritual faith
- Social aftereffects include:
 - Relationship stress from NDEr's psychospiritual shifts
 - Shift toward service-oriented careers
- Physical aftereffects include:
 - Changed bodily functions
 - Malfunction of electrical devices in NDEr's vicinity

Chapter 4
Distressing Western Near-Death Experiences:
Finding a Way through the Abyss
Nancy Evans Bush, M.A.

- Unlike predominant emotions of pleasurable NDEs, those of distressing NDEs (dNDEs) include terror, horror, despair.
- Four types (from most to least frequently reported):
 - Same contents as pNDE but experienced as unpleasant
 - Absolute isolation in an eternal void
 - Hellish torment
 - Condemnation (1 case)
- In 20 studies, dNDE incidence ranged from 0% to 50%.
- Research has revealed no clear differences between pNDErs and dNDErs; it appears anyone can have a dNDE.

Chapter 5
'Trailing Clouds of Glory':
The Near-Death Experiences of Western Children and Teens
Cherie Sutherland, Ph.D.

- Children and teens of all ages have reported NDEs.
- Children's and teens' NDEs are similar to adults' in:
 - Contents
 - Aftereffects
- Children's NDE testimonies can be particularly poignant.
- Whereas many adult NDErs need focused assistance in integrating the NDE into subsequent life, even more children may need such assistance.

Chapter 6
Characteristics of Western NDEs
Jarice Miner Holden, Ed.D.; Jeffrey Long, M.D.; Jason MacLurg, M.D.

- NDEs have been reported by people of both sexes and all ages, races, socioeconomic statuses, levels of education, religious affiliations/non-affiliation, levels of religiosity, sexual orientations, physical abilities/disabilities, occupations, marital statuses, life histories (prosocial/antisocial), and cultures.
- NDEs reflect the same mental health statuses as the population at large.
- It is unknown whether possibly greater levels of a few psychological features, such as absorption, preceded the NDEs or resulted from them.

Chapter 7
Census of Non-Western Near-Death Experiences to 2005: Observations and Critical Reflections
Allan Kellehear, Ph.D.

- Researchers have conducted studies of
 - 200-300 NDEs in Asia
 - 9 NDEs in the Pacific Area
 - 30 NDEs among hunter-gatherers worldwide
- Features universal to all these groups include:
 - An otherworldly physical/social environment
 - Otherworldly beings (deceased and/or spiritual)
- Features in some but not all these groups include:
 - Out-of-body experience
 - Tunnel experience
 - Life review

Chapter 8
World Religions and Near-Death Experiences
Farnaz Masumian, M.A.

- NDE features can be found in the afterlife teachings of the scriptures of,
- And NDE aftereffects reflect the values of,
 - Hinduism
 - Buddhism
 - Zoroastrianism
 - Judaism
 - Christianity
 - Islam
 - Bahá' í

Chapter 9
Veridical Perception in Near-Death Experiences
Janice Miner Holden, Ed.D.

- In apparently non-physical veridical perception (AVP), NDErs perceive phenomena in the material world during their NDEs that they could not have known from sensory or logical processes yet that are later corroborated as accurate.
- A collection of 107 anecdotes of AVP revealed substantial evidence of their validity.
- Five different controlled studies of AVP in hospitals yielded no cases of AVP.

Chapter 10
Explanatory Models of Near-Death Experiences
Bruce Greyson, M.D.; Emily Williams Kelly, Ph.D.; Edward F. Kelly, Ph.D.

- Scholars have proposed psychological, physiological, and transcendental theories to explain NDEs.
- Psychological and physiological models fail to account for all features of NDEs and their aftereffects.
- Mainstream scientists, who believe the brain somehow produces the mind, have not embraced transcendental models that include the contentions:
 - that mind sometimes functions, often exceptionally well, when brain is disabled, and
 - that mind is primary and that brain, like a cell phone, receives and transmits mind.

Chapter 11
Practical Applications of Research on Near-Death Experiences
Ryan Foster, M.A.; Debbie James, M.S.N.; Janice Miner Holden, Ed.D.

- Clinicians have generated recommended approaches for healthcare providers –
 - medical (physicians, nurses, EMTs),
 - mental (counselors, psychologists),
 - social (social workers), and
 - spiritual (chaplains, clergy)
 – to work most effectively with NDErs in the immediate and long-term NDE aftermaths.
- Knowing about NDEs can be beneficial for non-NDErs in settings such as education and grief counseling.
