

Religion, Science and Near-Death Experiences

Oluwatoyin Adebola GBADAMOSI, Ph.D

E-mail: tygbadamosi@gmail.com

Phone: +2348036857692

Olulade Awodokun ADENIYI

Department of Religious Studies,
University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria

meetladeadeniyi@gmail.com

Phone: +2348135278503

Abstract

Near-death experiences (NDEs) are remarkable events in the lives of the people who have had such experiences, which leave major impacts on their personal beliefs. Over the years, various explanations have emerged for NDEs, ranging from scientific to religiously driven elucidations. While scientists suggest the subjective nature of NDEs, which are traceable to disturbances in bodily multisensory integration during life-threatening events, religious beliefs which revolve around the afterlife align with many NDEs. This paper seeks to explore the phenomenon of NDE from the perspectives of religion and science to find the intersection between the two fields. This is with the view of offering a holistic understanding of the experience. The study focuses on the intricate interplay between scientific explanations and religious or spiritual interpretations of Near-Death Experiences (NDEs). It concludes that by striking a balance between these varying perspectives, one can gain a more comprehensive understanding of NDEs, acknowledging both their scientific underpinnings and their profound impact on spiritual and metaphysical realms.

Keywords: Near-Death Experiences, Afterlife, Religion and Science

Introduction

Near-death experiences (NDEs) encompass a wide range of sensations and perceptions that people report when they are in a state of clinical death or what is called near-death. Many people report feeling detached from their physical bodies, often observing themselves from an outside perspective. NDEs may involve a sensation of floating or levitating, often accompanied by a sense of weightlessness. Those who have had NDEs often describe feelings of profound serenity, peace, and security during the experience. Most people recall an experience of warmth and overwhelming joy, a complete dissolution of their sense of self or ego. People often report a vivid and rapid review of significant life events, sometimes with a sense of understanding and clarity. Many NDEs involve the perception of a bright, warm light that is often described as loving and inviting. Some individuals claim to encounter deceased loved ones or relatives during their NDE. Conversely, negative NDEs can include sensations of anguish, distress, emptiness, and even visions of hellish places or the presence of evil forces.

NDEs usually occur during reversible clinical death, and people who have survived such experiences often report a profound impact of the experience on their lives and

beliefs. There are various explanations for NDEs, ranging from scientific to religious perspectives. Some scientists suggest that NDEs are subjective phenomena resulting from disturbances in bodily multisensory integration during life-threatening events. Many NDEs align with transcendental and religious beliefs about an afterlife, as they share similarities with descriptions of what individuals may experience when they pass from this life to the next based on their particular beliefs of an afterlife. This paper seeks to explore the phenomenon of NDE from the perspectives of religion and science with the goal of finding the intersection between the two fields with the view of offering a wholistic understanding of the experience. The study focusses on the intricate interplay between scientific explanations and religious or spiritual interpretations of Near-Death Experiences (NDEs). It thereby delves into the vital role that cognitive neuroscience and psychology play in unravelling the mysteries of NDEs, presenting cases where these disciplines intersect and cases where conflicts arise between scientific elucidation and personal belief systems. Thus, by striking a balance between these varying perspectives, one can gain a more comprehensive understanding of NDEs, acknowledging both their scientific underpinnings and their profound impact on spiritual and metaphysical realms.

Near Death Experiences in History

Although modern research on Near-Death Experiences (NDEs) is relatively recent, accounts resembling NDEs can be traced to ancient civilizations and diverse cultural traditions. Plato's "Myth of Er" in *The Republic* presents a strikingly NDE-like journey, including the soul's separation from the body, passage through realms of light and darkness, encounters with spiritual beings, and a choice to return to life (Halliwell, 2007). Similarly, ancient Egyptian beliefs depicted the soul's journey after death, including the "weighing of the heart" judgment described in the *Book of the Dead*, a process comparable to the life review reported in NDEs (Tompkins, 2012). Greco-Roman myths also feature underworld journeys by figures such as Orpheus and Aeneas, involving spiritual guides and interactions with the deceased (Winkler, 1985). Across cultures, interpretations of NDEs reflect prevailing religious and philosophical frameworks—Christian, Muslim, Hindu, indigenous, or secular—shaping whether such experiences are seen as visions of heaven or hell, steps in reincarnation, or encounters with ancestors and spirits (Belanti, Perera, & Jagadheesan, 2008; Klass, 1999). In some traditions, NDEs are viewed as transformative spiritual awakenings or rites of passage, especially in shamanic cultures (Zane, 1999). Even secular societies often acknowledge the psychological significance of NDEs, interpreting them through neurological or psychological lenses. Despite cultural differences in meaning, the core elements—such as out-of-body sensations, tunnel travel, encounters with light or beings, and life reviews—appear consistently, suggesting that NDEs may reflect a universal human experience shaped by diverse cultural narratives (Sartori, 2014; Lukoff, Lu, & Turner, 1995).

Common Features of Near-Death Experiences (NDEs)

1. **Out-of-Body Experience (OBE):** An OBE involves the sensation of leaving the physical body, often accompanied by a feeling of floating or observing one's surroundings from above. This experience can occur during NDEs, but also in other contexts like meditation or sleep paralysis (Bünning & Blanke, 2005).
2. **Tunnel Experience:** Many NDErs report traveling through a dark tunnel toward a radiant, warm light. This sensation is typically associated with feelings of

peace, serenity, and a sense of being drawn to something beyond (Greyson et al., 2009).

3. **Void Experience:** Some individuals describe entering a vast, peaceful void during their NDE, feeling an overwhelming sense of interconnectedness and unconditional love. This experience is often associated with a sense of spiritual oneness and a profound sense of comfort and peace (Novak, 2002).
4. **Encounters with Beings:** Many NDErs report meeting deceased relatives, angels, or spiritual guides. These encounters are often transformative, providing emotional comfort, wisdom, and guidance, often conveyed through non-verbal communication (Serdahely, 1990; Bonenfant, 2001).
5. **Life Review:** A common feature is the re-experiencing of one's life, where individuals relive past moments, often feeling the emotions they generated in others. This life review is typically compassionate, offering profound insights into the interconnectedness of life and the significance of one's actions (Olson & Dulaney, 1993; Sartori, 2014).
6. **Reluctance to Return:** Many NDErs report feeling a deep reluctance to return to their physical bodies due to the peace, love, and spiritual connection experienced during the NDE. This reluctance often stems from a desire to remain in a blissful state or from the sense of fulfillment and understanding gained during the experience (Marsh, 2018; Sartori, 2014).

Notable Documented Case Studies of Near-Death Experience

Near-Death Experiences (NDEs) have been reported by individuals from various backgrounds and belief systems, often featuring transformative and profound experiences. While each case is unique, many share common themes, including encounters with deceased loved ones, feelings of overwhelming love, and a sense of interconnectedness. Notable cases include Pam Reynolds, who during brain surgery described leaving her body and observing the procedure (Laws & Perry, 2010), and Eben Alexander, a neurosurgeon who, after a coma, reported a vivid journey to a realm of light and love (Alexander, 2012). Anita Moorjani's NDE, following a near-fatal battle with cancer, led to her miraculous recovery and deep insights into life's interconnectedness (Moorjani, 2012). Other cases, such as Howard Storm's transformation from atheism to faith (Marsh, 2016), Dr. Mary Neal's kayaking accident and meeting of heavenly beings (Neal, 2012), and George Ritchie's journey guided by a being of light (Ritchie, 1991), all highlight the profound personal and spiritual transformations that many experience. These cases, along with others like Mellen-Thomas Benedict's journey through a tunnel of light (Vincent & Williams, 2014), illustrate the powerful impact NDEs can have on individuals' beliefs and understanding of life and death.

Scientific Investigations into NDEs

Scientific investigations into Near-Death Experiences (NDEs) have sought to demystify these profound and often transformative events (Greyson, 2015). Researchers from various scientific disciplines, including neuroscience, psychology, and medicine, have embarked on extensive studies to unravel the underlying mechanisms and explanations behind NDEs. One central objective of scientific investigations is to elucidate the role of the brain in generating NDEs. Researchers

have explored how altered states of consciousness, neurobiological processes, and physiological factors contribute to the vivid and mystical elements often reported in NDE accounts. By examining brain activity during near-death episodes, scientists aim to determine whether specific neural processes can reproduce NDE-like phenomena while seeking to understand NDEs as natural phenomena.

Over the past few decades, an increasing number of studies have been conducted to systematically investigate NDEs. These studies often involve surveys, interviews, and observations of individuals who have had NDEs (Pasricha & Stevenson, 1986). Researchers have sought to collect and analyse data related to the common features and characteristics of NDEs, aiming to identify patterns and consistencies across diverse accounts. The empirical approach has allowed for a more structured exploration of NDEs, providing valuable insights into the prevalence and subjective experiences of those who have undergone such phenomena. Additionally, empirical research has contributed to the development of standardized scales and questionnaires designed to assess and measure NDEs, enhancing the scientific rigor of investigations in this field. As a result, the empirical study of NDEs has become an interdisciplinary endeavour that bridges psychology, neuroscience, and medicine, shedding light on the complexities of altered states of consciousness and their impact on individuals' lives.

Consistency of Reports: NDEs have shown remarkable consistency in the features reported by individuals from diverse cultural and religious backgrounds. Despite variations in personal beliefs and cultural contexts, several common elements emerge in the descriptions of NDEs (Parnia, 2014). One of the most striking consistencies is the phenomenon of out-of-body experiences (OBEs). NDErs frequently describe a sensation of leaving their physical bodies and observing events from an elevated or detached vantage point. This element transcends cultural and religious boundaries and is a shared thread in NDE accounts worldwide. Whether in Western societies or Eastern cultures, the OBE component remains remarkably consistent.

Another notable feature reported across different belief systems is the encounter with deceased loved ones. NDErs often describe reunions with family members, friends, or figures of personal significance who have passed away. These encounters are characterized by a sense of connection, love, and comfort. While the cultural interpretations of these encounters may differ, the core experience of being reunited with loved ones transcends these variations. Feelings of peace and love are another consistent theme in NDE reports. NDErs frequently express a profound sense of serenity, tranquility, and overwhelming love during their experiences. This universal emotional resonance suggests that the feelings of peace and love are intrinsic to the NDE phenomenon and are not limited by cultural or religious factors.

The remarkable consistency of these features across cultural and religious boundaries challenges reductionist explanations that rely solely on cultural or psychological influences. It prompts further exploration into the nature of NDEs and their potential implications for our understanding of consciousness, the afterlife, and the human experience.

Veridical Perception: This refers to the phenomenon where individuals undergoing near-death experiences (NDEs) report accurate observations of events, objects, or details that they could not have known through their normal sensory channels (Parnia, 2014). Numerous cases of veridical perception during NDEs have been documented

and studied by researchers. These cases often involve NDErs accurately describing events or objects in their physical surroundings while their bodies were in a state of clinical death. One remarkable aspect of these reports is that the details provided by NDErs are later confirmed to be factually accurate by third parties. The occurrence of veridical perception during NDEs poses significant implications for our understanding of consciousness, the mind-body relationship, and the nature of NDEs themselves.

NDEs often lead to profound and positive transformations in the lives of those who experience them. This includes reduced fear of death, increased spirituality, and changes in attitudes and behaviours. One of the most notable transformations resulting from NDEs is the significant reduction in the fear of death. Those who have experienced NDEs often describe a newfound sense of peace and acceptance regarding mortality. The direct encounter with the afterlife or a realm beyond the physical world reassures them that death is not the end but a transition to another existence. NDEs frequently result in reduced fear of death, increased spirituality, and profound changes in attitudes and behaviours. These transformations contribute to a more meaningful and spiritually enriched life, driven by a deep understanding of the interconnected nature of existence and the enduring significance of consciousness beyond the physical realm.

Theories and Hypotheses on NDEs

Neurobiological Explanations:

The Dying Brain Hypothesis suggests that NDEs are the result of neurophysiological processes that occur during the brain's transition from life to death (Lake, 2017). Anoxia (lack of oxygen) and hypercapnia (high carbon dioxide levels) can trigger hallucinatory experiences that mimic NDEs. Anoxia refers to a condition in which the body and brain are deprived of an adequate supply of oxygen (Auer & Sutherland, 2002). When an individual experiences anoxia, especially during a life-threatening situation, the brain may undergo various changes that can result in hallucinations. These hallucinations can mimic elements commonly reported in NDEs, such as a sense of floating, bright lights, and encounters with deceased loved ones. When the brain is deprived of oxygen, it may respond with altered states of consciousness, producing vivid and often surreal experiences that are misinterpreted as supernatural or spiritual. Hypercapnia occurs when there is an excessive build-up of carbon dioxide in the body, leading to a disturbance in the body's acid-base balance (Auer & Sutherland, 2002). This condition can result from various factors, including respiratory issues or other medical conditions. Elevated levels of carbon dioxide in the blood can have profound effects on brain function. Hallucinations and altered states of consciousness can be induced by hypercapnia, and these experiences may bear a striking resemblance to NDEs. People who have undergone hypercapnia-induced hallucinations have reported experiences like leaving their bodies, encountering deceased individuals, and entering otherworldly realms.

The correlation between these physiological conditions and experiences akin to NDEs emphasizes the potential role of the brain's response to oxygen and carbon dioxide imbalances in generating such phenomena. Some researchers have however proposed that temporal lobe anomalies, such as seizures or electrical disturbances, could lead to near death-like experiences (Lake, 2017). The temporal lobes, integral components of the human brain, play a multifaceted role in various cognitive functions, particularly in the realms of memory, emotions, and sensory information integration.

These vital brain structures are situated on each side of the brain, with one temporal lobe located in the left hemisphere and the other in the right hemisphere. Understanding their association with memory, emotions, and sensory integration provides insight into their importance in the functioning of the human mind.

Temporal lobes are closely linked with the storage and retrieval of memories. This brain region serves as a critical hub for the formation of long-term memories, where experiences and information are encoded, organized, and later retrieved for conscious recollection. The hippocampus, a structure nestled within the temporal lobes, is particularly responsible for this memory formation process. Damage to the temporal lobes can lead to memory deficits, affecting one's ability to recall events, facts, or personal experiences. As a result, the temporal lobes are a vital region of the brain that intertwines memory, emotional regulation, and the integration of sensory information. Their role in memory formation, emotional processing, and sensory integration underscores their significance in cognitive and emotional functioning. Damage or dysfunction in the temporal lobes can result in a range of cognitive and emotional challenges, highlighting the importance of understanding and preserving their functions in maintaining overall well-being and cognitive health.

Cognitive and Psychological Explanations

NDEs can be viewed as the mind's adaptive response to the profound fear of death and the intense stress experienced during life-threatening situations. These experiences serve as a psychological coping mechanism, offering several mechanisms to help individuals navigate the overwhelming emotions associated with mortality and near-death experiences (Britton & Bootzin, 2004). NDEs often involve a sense of peace, serenity, and a departure from physical suffering. This can alleviate the fear of death itself. The feeling of leaving one's body, traveling through a tunnel, or encountering a bright light can create a sense of reassurance and detachment from the impending threat of mortality. The mind may generate these experiences as a means of shielding itself from the terror of death, offering a comforting narrative that death is not the end but a transition to a more peaceful existence. Life-threatening situations can be traumatic, causing extreme distress and anxiety. NDEs can serve as a protective psychological response to mitigate the psychological impact of trauma. By creating a comforting narrative of an otherworldly journey, the mind may help individuals process the traumatic event more effectively. The sense of detachment from the physical body can minimize the emotional burden of experiencing pain or witnessing distressing events. Altered states of consciousness refer to conditions in which an individual's perception, thoughts, and awareness deviate from their normal waking state (Vaitl et al., 2005).

NDEs are distinctive in that they occur during life-threatening situations, such as cardiac arrest or severe illness. During these critical moments, the brain's response to reduced oxygen supply, trauma, or other physiological stressors can lead to the alteration of consciousness. This altered state can manifest as vivid and often otherworldly experiences, including out-of-body sensations, encounters with deceased loved ones, and journeys through tunnels or voids. Similar to dreams, NDEs may be characterized by a surreal and non-linear quality, where individuals report a heightened level of perception and sensory clarity. The boundary between NDEs and dreams can sometimes blur, as both involve vivid imagery and a sense of detachment from the physical body. Additionally, NDEs may share common features with

psychedelic experiences, as both involve altered sensory perceptions and profound mystical or spiritual insights.

Challenges and Limitations

NDEs are highly subjective experiences, and their measurement relies primarily on self-reporting by individuals who have undergone such experiences. The subjectivity of NDEs poses a significant challenge when attempting to gather objective data and draw universally applicable conclusions. Since these experiences are deeply personal, individuals may interpret and recount them in diverse ways, adding layers of complexity to the research process.

Many NDE studies involve self-selecting samples, where individuals who have had particularly vivid or memorable NDEs are more likely to participate in research or share their experiences. This introduces potential sample bias, as individuals with intense or life-altering NDEs may be overrepresented in studies. As a result, the findings may not accurately represent the full spectrum of NDEs, as they could be skewed toward the most profound or impactful cases. Researchers need to be cautious when generalizing conclusions from these self-selecting samples and consider the limitations of such biased participant pools in their analyses.

The study of NDEs presents ethical challenges due to the nature of the experiences themselves. NDEs typically occur during life-threatening situations, such as cardiac arrest or severe accidents. Conducting controlled experiments that deliberately expose individuals to such life-threatening conditions is ethically problematic. Researchers are constrained by ethical guidelines and principles that prioritize the safety and well-being of study participants. As a result, it is difficult to replicate NDEs in a controlled, systematic manner while adhering to ethical standards. This limitation impedes the ability to conduct rigorous empirical investigations.

While NDEs offer profound and deeply personal experiences to those who undergo them, the empirical evidence for the existence of an afterlife or the survival of consciousness beyond death remains elusive. NDEs provide anecdotal and experiential insights, but these experiences do not constitute conclusive empirical evidence that can be consistently replicated or rigorously tested through the scientific method. The absence of empirical evidence for the afterlife poses a challenge to those seeking scientific validation of NDE claims. The question of whether NDEs reflect actual interactions with an afterlife realm or are products of brain activity during extreme conditions remains a topic of ongoing investigation and debate in the scientific community.

Scientific investigations into NDEs have shed light on the psychological and neurobiological aspects of these experiences. The theories proposed offer plausible explanations for the common features of NDEs, but they also underscore the complex interplay between brain physiology, psychology, and subjective perception. Despite the challenges and limitations inherent in studying NDEs empirically, ongoing research continues to deepen our understanding of these intriguing phenomena, contributing to the broader conversation about life, death, consciousness, and the nature of reality.

Religious Perspectives on Near Death Experience

Encounter vs. Delusion: NDEs are frequently perceived as divine encounters or spiritual journeys within various religious traditions. Those who undergo these

experiences often report encounters with deceased loved ones, angels, or divine beings. These experiences are seen as bridges to the afterlife, providing individuals with glimpses into a transcendent realm. Such encounters may reinforce faith and offer profound insights into the nature of existence and the afterlife. They are regarded as sacred and transformative events that connect individuals with the divine.

Hallucinations, on the other hand, are generally regarded as delusions or distortions of reality within religious contexts. While religious experiences often involve visions or dreams, hallucinations are seen as subjective and unreliable manifestations of the mind, potentially influenced by mental or physical conditions. They lack the spiritual authenticity attributed to visions, revelations, or spiritual encounters. As such, they may not hold the same significance or validity within religious frameworks.

Purpose and Transformation: These experiences are often perceived as having a profound transformative potential within religious contexts. Individuals who undergo Near-Death Experiences (NDEs) or engage in Astral Projection often describe their encounters as spiritually enlightening. They believe that these experiences serve a higher purpose, whether it be to provide guidance, offer reassurance of an afterlife, or remind them of fundamental spiritual truths. As a result, many individuals find that NDEs experiences deepen their faith and encourage them to make positive changes in their lives. These changes may include increased devotion to religious beliefs, enhanced empathy and compassion, or a greater sense of purpose.

In contrast, hallucinations are not typically seen as transformative in religious contexts. They are often considered disturbances or distractions from the divine path. Hallucinations do not carry the same spiritual weight as NDEs experiences. They are not viewed as bearing a divine or spiritual purpose but are, instead, seen as manifestations of cognitive or physiological imbalances.

Therefore, the difference between hallucination and NDEs when viewed through the lenses of religion and science, centres on interpretation, purpose, and empirical investigation. Religious perspectives often frame NDEs as profound spiritual experiences with divine significance and transformational potential. In contrast, scientific perspectives approach these phenomena as altered states of consciousness, investigating their neurobiological underpinnings and seeking empirical evidence while acknowledging the subjectivity of individual experiences. While these perspectives may seem at odds, they contribute to a nuanced understanding of the human mind, spirituality, and the mysteries of consciousness.

Tension between Scientific Explanations and Religious Interpretations

Scientific and religious interpretations of Near-Death Experiences (NDEs) often diverge, reflecting fundamentally different worldviews regarding consciousness, the soul, and the afterlife. Scientific perspectives typically frame NDEs as brain-based phenomena that result from physiological and psychological stressors, such as oxygen deprivation, neurotransmitter surges, or neural disinhibition during trauma (Corazza, 2008; Marsh, 2010). In contrast, religious interpretations view NDEs as genuine spiritual encounters that affirm beliefs about the soul's survival and the existence of otherworldly realms (Benore & Park, 2004). This interpretive divide underscores an on-going tension between empirical inquiry and metaphysical belief.

Key interpretive contrasts include:

- **Scientific view:** NDEs are explained through altered brain function—e.g., hypoxia, temporal lobe activity, or dissociative states during trauma (Marsh, 2010).
- **Religious view:** NDEs are seen as evidence of the afterlife or spiritual dimensions, aligning with beliefs about heaven, reincarnation, or divine presence (Benore & Park, 2004).
- **Christian interpretations:** Emphasize glimpses of heaven or hell, reinforcing doctrines of eternal life or judgment.
- **Eastern religious views:** Link NDEs to karma and reincarnation, interpreting them as transitions between lives (Belanti, Perera, & Jagadheesan, 2008).
- **New Age/spiritual beliefs:** Frame NDEs as connections with higher consciousness or cosmic love.
- **Secular-scientific interpretations:** Treat NDEs as subjective experiences arising from brain mechanisms, not metaphysical realities.

While science seeks naturalistic explanations, and religion offers transcendent interpretations, both contribute to the broader exploration of consciousness and human existence. The debate remains unresolved, highlighting the limitations and insights of each framework.

Conclusion

This research underscores the profound manner in which Near-Death Experiences (NDEs) challenge and blur the demarcations between science and religion. They act as a powerful reminder of the intricacies that define human consciousness and the perpetual human quest for significance and purpose, particularly when confronted with the inevitability of mortality. NDEs serve as a poignant intersection where the empirical insights of science converge with the profound beliefs and spiritual yearnings of humanity, inviting us to explore the multifaceted dimensions of existence itself. NDEs, regardless of one's perspective, have a transformative potential. They prompt individuals to reflect on profound questions about life, death, and existence, often leading to personal growth and a re-evaluation of belief systems.

The convergence of science and belief within the realm of Near-Death Experiences (NDEs) not only encourages dialogue but also presents a unique potential for integration. It creates a space where individuals can harmonize the rigorous pursuit of empirical inquiry with the deeply personal and spiritual aspects of their experiences, ultimately cultivating a more comprehensive understanding of the intricate human condition. This junction between scientific exploration and spiritual revelation allows us to bridge gaps that have traditionally separated these domains, leading to a more profound appreciation of the complexities inherent to our existence.

In conclusion, the study of an Afterlife, Near-Death Experiences, scientific investigations, and the interplay between science and belief brings to the fore the enduring fascination with questions of life, death, consciousness, and spirituality. While this research provides valuable insights, it also highlights the boundless complexity of these topics. The dialogue between scientific inquiry and religious or spiritual experiences is ongoing, offering a profound lens through which to view the human quest for meaning and understanding in the face of mortality.

References

- Alexander, Eben. *Proof of heaven: A neurosurgeon's journey into the afterlife*. Simon and Schuster, (2012).
- Auer, Roland N., and G. R. Sutherland. "Hypoxia and related conditions." *Greenfield's neuropathology* 1 (2002)
- Belanti, John, Mahendra Perera, and Karuppiah Jagadheesan. "Phenomenology of near-death experiences: A cross-cultural perspective." *Transcultural psychiatry* 45.1 (2008): 121-133.
- Benore, Ethan R., and Crystal L. Park. "Invited essay: Death-specific religious beliefs and bereavement: Belief in an afterlife and continued attachment." *The International Journal for the Psychology of Religion* 14.1 (2004)
- Bonenfant, Richard J. "A child's encounter with the devil: An unusual near-death experience with both blissful and frightening elements." *Journal of Near-Death Studies* 20.2 (2001): 87-100.
- Britton, Willoughby B., and Richard R. Bootzin. "Near-death experiences and the temporal lobe." *Psychological Science* 15.4 (2004)
- Bünning, Silvia, and Olaf Blanke. "The out-of body experience: precipitating factors and neural correlates." *Progress in brain research* 150 (2005): 331-606.
- Corazza, Ornella. *Near-death experiences: Exploring the mind-body connection*. Routledge, 2008.
- Greyson, Bruce, Emily W. Kelly, and Edward F. Kelly. (2009): "Explanatory models for near-death experiences." *The handbook of near-death experiences: Thirty years of investigation* 213-234.
- Greyson, Bruce. "Biological aspects of near-death experiences." *Perspectives in Biology and Medicine* 42.1 (1998): 14-32.
- Greyson, Bruce. "Western scientific approaches to near-death experiences." *Humanities* 4.4 (2015): 775-796.
- Halliwell, Francis Stephen. *The life-and-death journey of the soul: Interpreting the myth of Er*. Cambridge University Press, 2007.
- Lake, James. "The near-death experience: A testable neural model." *Psychology of Consciousness: Theory, research, and practice* 4.1 (2017)
- Laws, Valerie, and Elaine Perry. "Near death experiences: A new algorithmic approach to verifying consciousness outside the brain." *NeuroQuantology* 8.2 (2010).
- Lukoff, David, Francis G. Lu, and Robert Turner. "Cultural considerations in the assessment and treatment of religious and spiritual problems." *Psychiatric Clinics of North America* 18.3 (1995): 467-485.
- Marsh, Michael N. "The near-death experience: a reality check?." *Humanities* 5.2 (2016): 18.
- Marsh, Michael N. "The Phenomenology of Near-Death and Out-of-Body Experiences: No Heavenly Excursion for "Soul"." *The Blackwell Companion to Substance Dualism* (2018): 247-266.
- Moorjani, A. "Dying to be me: My journey from cancer, to near death, to true healing: Hay House." *Inc. USA* (2012).
- Neal, Mary C. *To Heaven and Back: A Doctor's Extraordinary Account of her Death, Heaven, Angels, and Life Again: A True Story*. WaterBrook, 2012.
- Novak, Peter. "Division of the self: Life after death and the binary soul doctrine." *Journal of Near-Death Studies* 20.3 (2002): 143-189.

- Olson, Melodie, and Peggy Dulaney. "Life satisfaction, life review, and near-death experiences in the elderly." *Journal of Holistic Nursing* 11.4 (1993): 368-382.
- Parnia, Sam. "Death and consciousness—an overview of the mental and cognitive experience of death." *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences* 1330.1 (2014): 75-93.
- Ritchie, George. *My life after dying*. na, 1991.
- Sartori, Penny. *Wisdom of Near Death Experiences: How Understanding NDEs Can Help Us Live More Fully*. Watkins Media Limited, 2014.
- Sartori, Penny. *Wisdom of Near Death Experiences: How Understanding NDEs Can Help Us Live More Fully*. Watkins Media Limited, 2014.
- Schwartz, Gary E., and William L. Simon. *The afterlife experiments: Breakthrough scientific evidence of life after death*. Simon and Schuster, 2002.
- Serdahely, William J. "A pediatric near-death experience: Tunnel variants." *OMEGA-Journal of Death and Dying* 20.1 (1990): 55-62.
- Tompkins, Ptolemy. *The Modern Book of the Dead: A Revolutionary Perspective on Death, the Soul, and What Really Happens in the Life to Come*. Simon and Schuster, 2012.
- Vaitl, Dieter, et al. "Psychobiology of altered states of consciousness." *Psychological bulletin* 131.1 (2005)
- Vincent, Ken R., and Kevin Williams. "Nothing Better Than Death: Insights from Sixty-two Profound Near-Death Experiences." (2014).
- Winkler, Martin M. "Classical mythology and the western film." *Comparative Literature Studies* 22.4 (1985): 516-540.
- Zane, Wallace Wayne. *Journeys to the Spiritual Lands: The Natural History of a West Indian Religion*. Oxford University Press, USA, 1999.