

# Editor's Foreword

In 2015, with *Journal of Near-Death Studies* volume 34, number 1, the *Journal's* editorial team implemented the use of Digital Object Identifiers (DOIs) with our publication. Henceforth, as well as retrospectively, every piece ever published in the *Journal* had its own identification number, was published online by the University of North Texas, and was listed with its DOI under the *Journal's* Past Issues tab at the IANDS website (<https://iands.org/research/publications/journal-of-near-death-studies/past-issues.html>), providing researchers with unprecedented access to this large volume of work.

When we implemented DOIs, we composed them with a period at the end of the URL. For example, this Foreword's DOI would have been <https://doi.org/10.17514/JNDS-2022-40-1-p1-3>. Although this practice seemed to make sense at the time, it actually was very much the exception; most DOIs have no punctuation at the end. And recently, consulting editor Robert Mays conducted an analysis of the error rate of *Journal* DOIs—the number of times people entered an “incorrect” DOI. He found that, whereas the overall DOI error rate is 4%, the *Journal* DOI error rate was a whopping 54%—and almost always, the error was that the period was left off at the end of the DOI.

For this reason, beginning with this volume 40, number 1, the *Journal* DOI will contain no period at the end—as readers can see at the bottom of this page. It isn't feasible to go back and change all previous *Journal* DOIs, but hopefully moving forward, this change will help us better achieve our original vision of making the *Journal* highly accessible as an online resource.

This *Journal* issue contains works on diverse topics that share a focus on the phenomenology and the physiological correlates of experiences involving actual death or the threat of death. It opens with a commentary by psychiatrist Bruce Greyson, cardiologist Pim van Lommel, and neuropsychiatrist Peter Fenwick, who accepted my invitation to team up for a response to a recent provocative journal article. The authors of that article described a case of increased brainwaves in the gamma frequency in a patient whose heart had stopped, and they speculated that such electrical activity might explain the life review that near-death experiencers have often described. Greyson, van Lom-

mel, and Fenwick examine the case record closely and find several reasons to conclude that this one intriguing case falls short in providing adequate evidence for post-mortem memory processing.

Next, Robert A King, MPsych, addresses the phenomenon of *observed somatic continuance*, a category of out-of-body experience in which the experiencer's consciousness observes their body continuing to behave—for example, when a near-death experiencer watches their own body engaging in life-saving activity. King presents three hypotheses regarding the cause of such experiences and provides extensive and fascinating case evidence that, he concludes, supports one hypothesis over the others.

Then Ana Sofia Machado Ferreira, MA; Ana Paula Fainha, PhD; and Mário Simões, PhD—all affiliated with the University of Lisbon Laboratory of Mind-Matter Interaction with Therapeutic Intention (LIMMIT)—present some of the results of Machado Ferreira's PhD thesis research. In her study, she guided a group of participants at a transpersonal conference workshop in a script involving the use of hypnosis to induce a near-death-like experience—and then used the Near-Death Experience Scale to assess how their subjective experiences compared to the subjective experiences of spontaneous near-death experiencers. Finding an apparent match, and finding that older participants scored higher on three of the Scale's four subscales, the authors discuss the nuances of comparing phenomenology between induced versus spontaneous experiences, and they point to future research that may further clarify such comparison.

In the next piece, James G. Matlock, PhD, anthropologist and Parapsychology Foundation affiliate, reviews P. M. H. Atwater's book, *The Forever Angels: Near-Death Experiences in Childhood and Their Lifelong Impact*. In her book, Atwater reported on her investigations of adults who described their near-death experiences (NDEs) before age six and the long-lasting effects on their lives. Noting the extensive case material in each chapter, Matlock reportedly found the book provocative and of likely value to anyone interested in childhood near-death experiences.

This issue closes with a Letter to the Editor in which Norman Klaunig, MA, Licensed Professional Counselor Associate, and University of the Cumberland's doctoral student, reports on a promising new multi-national, multi-hospital study of the contents and aftereffects of NDEs in Spanish-speaking countries—a population heretofore not studied prospectively. He explains that the project leader, Dr. Xavier Melo—himself a near-death experiencer—is hoping to approximate

replication of Pim van Lommel's famous Dutch study of NDEs that was published in 2001 in the prestigious journal *The Lancet*. Klaunig conveys the research project team's call for additional site suggestions, collaborators, participants, and financial contributors and provides contact information for anyone in one or more of those categories who is motivated to help.

It is my hope that this issue's eclectic works with a unifying theme provide readers with enriching information pertaining to near-death experiences and related experiences.

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