

Letters to the Editor

Responses to Augustine's "Does Paranormal Perception Occur in Near-Death Experiences?"

To the Editor:

Keith Augustine acknowledged in his response to my commentary on his article, "Does Paranormal Perception Occur in Near-Death Experiences?" that my data show that NDErs "*as a whole* were not particularly prone to embellish" their accounts (Augustine, 2007, p. 271). However, he added that "it remains to be seen whether NDErs who, *in particular*, report ... NDEs with paranormal elements, are prone to embellishment, such as those claiming veridical paranormal perceptions during out-of-body NDEs, accurate prophetic visions shown to them during their experiences, or encounters with recently deceased persons they did not know about at the time of their NDEs" (pp. 271–272). Actually, that evidence does *not* remain to be seen, because I had already reported it in my study that Augustine cited. In addition to documenting that NDE Scale scores in general were not embellished over a period of two decades, I presented data showing that purportedly paranormal and transcendental NDE features were not embellished but actually declined nonsignificantly over time, including claims of precognitive visions, extrasensory perception, encounters with mystical "presences" or deceased spirits, and out-of-body experiences, which actually diminished significantly over the two decades (Greyson, 2007).

Augustine reported what he described as "relevant, albeit indirect, survey data" bearing on the beliefs of near-death researchers, in an effort to establish their cognitive bias, but none of the studies he cited in fact involved near-death researchers, *even indirectly*. He noted that a study of the beliefs of Parapsychology Association members showed that very few thought that the evidence supported a belief in survival. However, that survey was conducted in 1975, before the term "near-death experience" had been coined and the phenomenon described (McConnell and Clark, 1980), and therefore had absolutely no

