Editor’s Foreword

As knowledge advances, one scholarly undertaking in both the field of near-death studies and other fields is to reexamine the past in light of new information. This undertaking is the focus of the first three articles in this issue of the Journal.

First, retired psychology professor, now writer and religious experience researcher Ken Vincent, Ed.D., argues that Jesus’s post-crucifixion appearances were—and continue to be—after-death communications (ADCs) as these experiences have come to be understood in contemporary times. Vincent’s contention is that the resurrection appearances and ADCs share so many commonalities that any dissimilarities reflect differences in degree rather than kind.

Next, Liberty University Distinguished Research Professor Gary Habermas, Ph.D., responds. Drawing from logical and historical considerations, he finds at least six points on which the resurrection appearances differ from ADCs such that, taken together, the result is a difference not merely of degree but of kind.

Finally, Vincent rejoins by addressing each of Habermas’s points and reasserting his original contention. I found their exchange thought-provoking; readers are left with the task of weighing the authors’ arguments and drawing their own conclusions.

Following this dialog, three authors offer reviews of a total of six recent books related to NDEs. First is Lee Kinsey, M.S., a doctoral student in the University of North Texas Counseling Program where he is currently conducting NDE-related research. His review was prompted by four books published since 2009 in which the authors used NDEs as part of their arguments that consciousness survives physical death: Chris Carter’s Science and the Near-Death Experience: How Consciousness Survives Death; Roberta Grimes’ The Fun of Dying: Find Out What Really Happens Next!; Stephen Hawley Martin’s The Science of Life after Death: New Research Shows Human Consciousness Lives On; and Roy Abraham Varghese’s There is Life after Death: New Research Shows Human Consciousness Lives On. In reporting on his comparative analysis of these four books, Kinsey hopes to help Journal readers decide which of these books to read.
Next, this Journal’s own Assistant Editor for Media Reviews, Ryan Foster, Ph.D., reviews Michael Jawer and Marc Micozzi’s (2009) book, *The Spiritual Anatomy of Emotion: How Feelings Link the Brain, the Body, and the Sixth Sense*. Foster describes feeling drawn to the authors’ hypothesis that transpersonal experiences—those that transcend the usual personal limits of space and/or time—can be explained through neurological processes that include but are not limited to the brain and in which emotion plays a catalyzing role. He then describes the extent to which the book ultimately fulfilled his expectations.

In the final book review, Madelaine Lawrence, Ph.D., RN, reviews Nancy Evans Bush’s (2012) book, *Dancing Past the Dark: Distressing Near-Death Experiences*. Though some readers may feel threatened by the “darkness” of the book’s focus, those who courageously overcome those feelings and delve into the book find a treasure-trove of knowledge and wisdom that can serve distressing NDErs themselves; their family, friends, and healthcare providers; and anyone who seeks a more complete view of the nature of human consciousness.


Finally, from the Netherlands, Rudolf Smit reports on his and others’ experiences carrying out the test anesthesiologist Gerald Woerlee suggested in his 2011 article in this Journal—a test designed to demonstrate how Pam Reynolds, in her famous case of veridical perception during surgical anesthesia and visual and auditory blockage—could have heard through normal means. Smit is decidedly unconvinced by the test—a test that readers of the Journal may want to try for themselves.

On a truly final note, P. M. H. Atwater contacted me about an erratum regarding her editorial “NDE as a Threshold Experience” that appeared in the Summer 2011 issue of this Journal. She noted that on page 445, she had referred to harmonics that run through the entire body and “are so sensitive that they react to conditions four to five minutes before actual occurrence.” She now notes that the sentence should have read “. . . four to five seconds, sometimes minutes, before actual occurrence.” She explained that the error likely arose from Dr. Rees having misspoken during the cited presentation. Though she
would have preferred to have caught the error prior to publication, at least she has, through this Foreword, created a record of a correction.

It is my expectation that among the eclectic mix of articles, book reviews, and letters in this issue of the *Journal*, every reader will find something—and perhaps many things—of interest and value.

Janice Miner Holden, Ed.D.
jan.holden@unt.edu