To the Editor:

I have spent as little as 10 minutes and as much as hours on issues of the Journal in the past 10 years after stepping down from being an active board member of the International Association for Near-Death Studies (IANDS) and an active near-death researcher. The Summer 2000 issue was the first that left me spellbound. How brave and honest of the Journal to publish the conflictual material between Kenneth Ring (2000) and Michael Sabom (2000)! I guess I can be considered one of Ring's colleagues and students because I was a near-death experiencer featured prominently in Ring's *Heading Toward Omega* (Ring, 1984); but how disappointing to be typecast as I was by Sabom. At the time Ring interviewed me for his book, I was not a member of IANDS, had not even seen his previous book, and did not know his "party line," nor had I read books by anyone else associated with IANDS. I was not interviewed casually at Ring's "Near-Death Hotel," but was tape-recorded on two consecutive afternoons in Ring's office at the University of Connecticut Graduate Center.

I loved reading Ring's accounts of "the good old days," having been the first active female member of the IANDS Board of Directors, from 1983 to 1990, after breaking open the "good old boy network." I worried about IANDS when I left in 1990, but seven years was enough for me and I needed to move on or burn up and burn out from the projections many of us have about what the near-death experience means to us and to the people who have them.

When I read this issue of the Journal containing Ring's and Sabom's articles, my first impression was that everything I had worried about happening to my cherished IANDS was happening. Then I realized that we all still have egos and they were at play. The editor has done a wonderful job of keeping the Journal balanced, and I am pleased that

he made room for researchers the caliber of Ring and Sabom to have their say and thankful that all this is being said because, while we get caught up in brand names, the NDE is generic. We need to remember that and bless the NDE for what it is: a direct communication from a power greater than ourselves that does not want it limited to the religions that limit us as humans.

References

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- Sabom, M. (2000). Response to Kenneth Ring's "Religious wars in the NDE movement: Some personal reflections on Michael Sabom's *Light & death*." *Journal of Near-Death Studies*, 18, 245–271.

Barbara Harris Whitfield, R.T., C.M.T.
Private Practice
Atlanta, Georgia
e-mail: c-bwhit@mindspring.com