

Support the translation and publication of a book on veridical perceptions in NDEs

In 2013, NDE researchers **Titus Rivas, Anny Dirven and Rudolf Smit** from the Netherlands published a book in Dutch which describes **78 cases of veridical perceptions and other verified paranormal aspects** of near-death experiences. These perceptions are called “apparently non-physical veridical perceptions” or AVPs in the NDE literature.



Veridical perceptions in NDEs that have been verified by third parties **provide the best evidence of the apparent separation of consciousness from the physical body** during NDEs. Investigation of AVPs during NDEs has been the subject of much experimental and phenomenological research in the field since 1988, including by NDE researchers Jan Holden, Bruce Greyson, Ken Ring, Michael Sabom, Sam Parnia, Peter Fenwick, Penny Sartori, Pim van Lommel and Kim Clark Sharp. This evidence has also been used by many other NDE researchers in theoretical arguments about the nature of consciousness. The AWARE (AWAreness during REsuscitation) study, a multi-hospital study of NDEs during cardiac arrest, led by Sam Parnia, has a major objective of detecting possible AVPs of hidden visual targets.

The only prior work that summarized the evidence for AVPs was Jan Holden’s statistical analysis of AVPs, first presented at the 2006 IANDS Conference and published in the *Handbook of Near-Death Experiences* (2009). **Until the recent book by Rivas, Dirven and Smit, there was no phenomenological analysis whatever of the collection of AVP cases.** The debates in the literature about AVPs have focused mostly on three well-known cases, namely, Maria’s shoe case, the dentures case and the Pam Reynolds case. Most of the other cases that Jan Holden included in her analysis are scattered among a number of research papers and books by different authors.

While Holden’s statistical analysis is significant in showing that over 90% of the cases of AVPs were completely accurate, the details of the cases are not described and are not available without going back to the original research reports and books. Furthermore, Holden included a number of cases where the perceptions were verified only by the NDEr.

In contrast, **this book presents a much stronger case for the validity of non-physical explanations of AVPs.** First of all, it includes only cases of AVPs that were independently verified to researchers by another person. These cases are not simply anecdotes—stories repeated from one person to another—but rather cases that have been studied and thoroughly vetted. Furthermore, the book includes a number of important later cases of AVPs that were not included in Holden’s analysis, for example, the case of Dr. Lloyd Rudy’s patient.

More importantly, **the book provides the significant details of the cases and divides them into different phenomenological categories**, such as perceptions during cardiac arrest, perceptions outside the reach of physical senses and manifestations of the NDEr to other people. The phenomenological clusters of several cases considered together allow a more thorough examination of possible causes. Physical explanations that cover all cases of a particular type then become more difficult to devise.

Indeed, this book poses a real challenge to a number of the favorite physical explanations of AVPs. The fact that each case has third-party corroboration makes it **difficult to argue that the perceptions were due to hallucinations, fabrication or confabulation of information derived from other sources.** Many cases of AVPs that occur while the brain is flat-lined or where the perceptions are physically impossible for the patient would require physical explanations that are highly questionable. And with the sheer number of cases, the weight of the evidence becomes daunting to those who would dismiss the fact that AVPs occur.

In light of this, it is clear that this book is **a very important contribution to the field of near-death studies and its translation into English is crucial** to allow its full impact to be felt in the field.

Please Consider Making a Donation to this Project!

The International Association for Near-Death Studies (IANDS) will manage this project to translate the book in English and publish it. The authors have found several additional recently documented cases that will be added to the book, bringing the number of cases to over 80. Jan Holden, Ed.D., the Editor of the *Journal of Near-Death Studies* will be the editor of the English edition. NDE researchers Robert and Suzanne Mays will write the Foreword to the English edition.

The project will take about \$17,500. The IANDS Board approved an allocation of \$4,500 from the PMH Atwater Research Fund and the Board of NetwerkNDE, the IANDS Affiliate in Netherlands, is providing the funds to secure the rights to publish the English translation. Several other donations have been received bringing the total raised to \$9,200 (as of 4/12/15). The translation work has begun and should be completed by early May.

Please donate to help this project! So far we have raised more than 50% of the funds needed but the success of the project is far from assured. **We need your help to complete the translation and publication.** Please consider a US tax-deductible donation to this important project!

Project web page: <http://iands.org/translate>

Donation page: <http://iands.org/donate>

Project Budget and Fund Raising Need

The cost of publishing an English translation of the Dutch book, with the tentative English title of *The Self Does Not Die*, is as follows:

• Fee to gain the rights to publish an English version of the book (quote)	\$ 1,300
• Fee for the translation (based on quotes)	7,600
• Cost for editing the English text (<i>pro bono</i> commitment received)	0
• Cost for Foreword (<i>pro bono</i> commitment received)	0
• Cost for indexing (estimate)	1,100
• Production, cover design, composition, proofs (estimate)	5,000
• Expenses to establish print on demand (estimate)	<u>900</u>
Subtotal	\$15,900
Contingency (10%)	<u>1,600</u>
Amount needed from crowd sourcing and the IANDS research grant	<u>\$17,500</u>
Current amount raised to date (as of 4/15/15):	<u>\$9,200</u>
Total still to raise:	<u>\$8,300</u>

Synopsis of the book to be translated: *The Self Does Not Die*



Original title (translated from Dutch): *What a dying brain can't do: evidence for parapsychological phenomena connected to near-death experiences: the hard core of confirmed cases* by Titus Rivas, Anny Dirven and Rudolf Smit. 2013, 404 pages. Description on the [publisher's web site](#) (Google translated) and on [Amazon.de](#).

Tentative English title: *The Self Does Not Die: Amazing verified evidence from NDEs that refutes the dying brain hypothesis and demonstrates the existence of an irreducible Self.*

This book is a scholarly treatise on the main evidence from case reports of parapsychological or paranormal phenomena connected to Near-Death Experiences and its theoretical implications. It is the end product of a joint project of Athanasia Foundation, Merkawah Foundation/Netwerk Nabij-de-dood-ervaring and Limen/IANDS Flanders.

The book concentrates on paranormal phenomena, in which consciousness or the mind, spirit or soul of a patient seems to transcend the physical boundaries of the brain. It contains summaries of 78 cases [the English version will contain several more, i.e. over 80 cases] in which the patient's experiences were independently verified for a researcher or author by someone else, such as a physician, surgeon, nurse, partner, relative or friend. The cases have been derived from a thorough study of the available literature, a compilation of cases by Jan Holden, and the authors' own empirical studies.

The original Dutch title of the book is inspired by the materialist so-called Dying Brain-theory of skeptics such as Susan Blackmore and by the title "What computers can't do" of a book by the American philosopher Hubert Dreyfus. The English title will differ from the original title.

Book Chapters

Introduction

The criterion for including a particular case in our collection is that the paranormal aspect of it (as claimed by the patient) has been directly confirmed by someone else.

The main part of the book (Chapters 1 to 9) consists of chapters that describe and evaluate various types of paranormal phenomena. Chapters 1 to 4 deal with Extrasensory Perception (Clairvoyance and Telepathy). Chapters 5 and 6 cover contact with deceased persons. Chapter 7 discusses the paranormal manifestation of the patient during the NDE as perceived by other (living) people. Chapter 8 is about psychic faculties that seem to be the result of the NDE, and Chapter 9 describes paranormal healings related to NDEs.

We have chosen for concise and clear summaries of the NDEs discussed, with a strong emphasis on their paranormal aspects. Where we consider this relevant, we also summarize the debates engendered by some of these cases.

The book closes with a general discussion in Chapter 10 and a very interesting analysis in Chapter 11 by Rudolf H. Smit of the mostly unfair and irrational way so-called skeptics tend to handle the evidence for paranormal aspects of NDEs.

The NDEs in this book only concern 'real' Near-Death Experiences, in which the patient was physically at the brink of death.

Skeptics try to explain paranormal aspects of NDEs away and claim that all aspects of such experiences can easily be made to fit into the mainstream, materialistic paradigm. Consciousness and the mind would, according to this theory, completely depend on physiological processes in the brain. This would

make Near-Death Experiences nothing more than the comforting last firings of neurons in a dying brain. The brain would try to reassure the dying mind by conjuring up a beautiful illusion of a (non-existent) afterlife.

One of the central debates about Near-Death Experiences deals with the question whether Near-Death Experiences merely refer to an illusory concept of a spiritual dimension to personal life, just like a painting or dream may do, or really point to the existence of such a dimension.

Paranormal aspects of NDEs falsify the materialistic claim that the mind is completely determined or limited by the brain.

The parapsychological study of such aspects does not imply contempt for other aspects or the phenomenology of NDEs. Besides, many researchers of such anomalous aspects, including ourselves, are also interested in other aspects of NDEs.

Some scientists claim that only experiments may provide solid scholarly evidence for any phenomenon or process, but we do not agree. Well documented case studies should count as such evidence as well. The experimental and case-study methods of investigation both lead to 'real' and valuable evidence and are therefore complementary.

Chapter 1. Extrasensory Perception of the immediate environment

During a Near-Death Experience, patients may get correct extrasensory impressions of events or items in the immediate environment of their bodies. The cases in this chapter demonstrate convincingly that patients may get veridical perceptions of specific events in or properties of their immediate environment during their NDEs, which most probably cannot be explained by residual activity in their physical sense. These perceptions cannot be plausibly explained by coincidence or normal foreknowledge either.

Total number of cases of this type: 10. Examples: Al Sullivan, Dr. A.S. Wiltse.

Chapter 2. Extrasensory Perception of events outside the reach of the physical senses

Patients may also get clairvoyant impressions of events that take place outside their immediate physical environment.

Even if the physical senses of the patients in this chapter would still have functioned sufficiently as to make possible normal sensory perception, this still would not explain the veridical perceptions in these concrete cases. Apparently, patients are not only able to get veridical extrasensory impressions of their immediate environment, but their perceptions may surpass the range of their normal senses.

Total number of cases in this chapter: 14. Examples: Maria's tennis shoe, A quarter from 1985.

Chapter 3. Consciousness and Extrasensory Perception during cardiac arrest.

This chapter presents strong confirmed cases of consciousness and verified paranormal perceptions during clinical death. The presence of consciousness in this state amounts to a major anomaly for materialism, because, on average, during cardiac arrest, cortical activity is absent after 15 seconds. Materialist theory claims that cortical activity is necessary for complex forms of human consciousness.

This Chapter shows that there are more than two dozens of cases in which the NDE most probably took place during cardiac arrest rather than (only) during CPR. By now, there can be very little doubt that this phenomenon is real. Most objections against this solid conclusion are based on the dogmatic materialism of critics.

Total number of cases in this chapter: 26. Examples: Man with the Dentures, Dr. Lloyd Rudy's patient, Pam Reynolds.

Chapter 4. Telepathy

Paranormal cognition in Near-Death Experiences also involves telepathy. .

The cases in this chapter show that it there can be telepathic contact between the patient and living persons.

Total number of cases in this chapter: 4. Examples: Dr. Tom Aufderheide's patient, George Rodonaia.

Chapter 5. Communication with unknown deceased persons

NDErs may encounter unknown dead people whom they may recognize on photographs after their NDE.

NDEs in which patients encounter unknown deceased persons show that Near-Death Experiences cannot be reduced to beautiful dreams. This implies that the non-physical realm entered by NDErs has an intersubjective quality, which means that (parts of) it can be shared with others.

Total number of cases in this chapter: 5. Examples: Durdana Khan, Colton Burpo.

Chapter 6. Manifestations of deceased loved ones with paranormal information.

Patients may encounter deceased loved ones who give them paranormal information that later on turns out to be correct.

Experiences with paranormal information about deceased loved ones demonstrate that encounters with spirits of loved ones can sometimes amount to real telepathic contact.

Total number of cases in this chapter: 5. Examples: Eddie Cuomo, patient of Elisabeth Kübler-Ross

Chapter 7. Manifestations of the patient to others

During the NDE, patients may appear, as an apparition or through physical phenomena, to others who confirm that they have perceived their presence.

This implies there is a link between some NDEs and cases of apparitions or poltergeists which suggests that some such cases cannot be explained by psi of the living.

Total number of cases in this chapter: 4. Examples: Mrs. Birkbeck, Olga Gearhardt.

Chapter 8. Extrasensory Capacities after NDE

These are cases in which the patient turns out to have developed a psychic gift after the NDE.

In principle, NDEs could lead to an activation of dormant psi faculties. So far, reports of confirmed cases of this type have been very rare. We have only found two examples. There are many vague claims in this context, but apparently, hardly anyone finds it interesting to confirm (or verify) those claims.

Total number of cases in this chapter: 2. Example: patient of Dr. Enrique Vila López.

Chapter 9. "Miraculous" cures

There are serious cases in which a patient seems to have been cured from a physical disease or handicap as a result of the NDE.

It seems that one or more aspects of NDEs may stimulate macro-psychokinetic healing powers in some patients.

Total number of cases in this chapter: 9. Examples: Penny Sartori's patient with claw hand, Anita Moorjani.

Chapter 10. General Discussion

In this chapter, we discuss the evidence for various types of paranormal phenomena in the context of NDEs, and their implications for important theoretical issues such as life after death, the existence of an irreducible psyche, and the relationship between mind and brain. We also respond to common skeptical objections of scholars such as Michael Sudduth who try to reduce all paranormal phenomena during NDEs to psi of the living and deny that NDEs have any relevance for the question of survival.

Furthermore, we mention for what type of anomalous phenomena surrounding NDEs we still need confirmed cases, such as psychokinetic powers after the NDE, and shared NDEs.

In our view, it is the paranormal, anomalous aspects of NDEs that make them so extraordinarily important. Without such aspects, Near-Death Experiences could still be seen as peculiar dreamlike experiences during an Altered State of Consciousness. With paranormal aspects, NDEs have far-reaching implications for the way we view ourselves and the world, and thus also for the way we generally feel about being alive, and the way we live our lives. In our opinion, the findings in this book should not lead to a return to dogmatic religions, but to a spiritual liberation on rational grounds, which combines a rejection of the materialistic paradigm, with a rejection of intolerance.

Chapter 11. The NDE and the absurd skeptical argument

Rudolf Smit gives an in-depth criticism of the skeptical approach to paranormal aspects of NDEs, focusing on the work of specific critics such as Gerald Woerlee.

This long chapter is devoted to the often downright scandalous behavior of (pseudo-) skeptics towards the NDE phenomenon in general, and towards individual NDErs in particular. For example, the chapter begins with a statement by a notorious Dutch skeptic who openly declares that NDErs have a "loose wire in their heads" (meaning: they have gone bonkers).

This bad treatment is further illustrated with an account of the awful reception by such skeptics as Steven Novella, Sam Harris and Gerald Woerlee of Eben Alexander's book *Proof of Heaven* and the now (in)famous article about Dr. Alexander in *Newsweek*. Their arguments are thoroughly analyzed and refuted.

More space is devoted to the refutation of Woerlee's 'analysis' of the 'Denture man' case, and his willfully wrong ideas about the Pam Reynolds case. This is actually a very condensed repeat/excerpt of some articles Titus and I wrote in the *Journal of Near-Death Studies*.

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