

Q and A with P. M. H. Atwater, L.H.D., Ph.D. (Hon.)

An in-depth look at the near-death phenomenon

September 2004



P. M. H. Atwater, L.H.D., Ph.D. (Hon.), is one of the original researchers in the field of near-death studies, having begun her work in 1978. She is one of the very few top NDE researchers who have actually had a NDE. [Her website](#) is filled with very interesting NDE research information and articles of hers.



Her contribution to near-death studies is considered to be one of the most important as her first two books, [Beyond the Light](#) and [Coming Back to Life](#), are deemed the Bibles of the near-death experience by researchers and a multitude of experiencers and enthusiasts. Using her firm understanding of police investigative techniques as a protocol, she has specialized in original fieldwork and research that also included sessions with significant others. Her findings are contained in six books (see right). Some of her findings have now been clinically verified. Her research is referenced in the distinguished Lancet medical journal, December 15, 2001 ([the landmark Dutch study by Pim van Lommel, M.D.](#)).

For more information about Dr. Atwater's contribution to near-death studies, [download her press kit here](#) in PDF format. You will need the Adobe PDF Reader installed on your computer to read the file. If you don't have the Reader, download it by pressing the Adobe Reader icon provided on the right.



ANNOUNCEMENT: [Focus Worldwide Network](#) has now finished reformatting [As You Die](#). The audio presentation is now available in: audio cassette, CD, video, and DVD. Prices are low, since Focus is non-profit and totally devoted to returning the mystical to churches, especially the Catholic church. I feel very privileged and honored that they have taken over the production, distribution, and sales of this important work. [As You Die](#) is the only presentation on earth that talks a person through physical death as he or she is dying, and the soul's separation. It has been field tested for over a decade with hundreds of people, demonstrating that it really does help to alleviate the fear of death, and makes it easier and quicker for someone to die and die at peace. I am amazed at how many families play the presentation after their loved one has died, sometimes long after, so they too can be at peace. To obtain a copy and for more information, contact: Focus Worldwide Network, 106 Metairie Lawn Drive, Metairie, LA 70001; (504) 840-9898; website [www.focusvideos.com](#).



QUESTION: I saw a news article on the Internet recently about a monkey that had a near-death experience and afterward it would no longer walk like a monkey, but, instead, would walk like a human. It seems to me that this is a clear demonstration of how the NDE is a catalyst for evolutionary change. I know that you have written extensively about NDEs and their nature to produce evolutionary change. I was wondering what you believe are the ramifications of this news. Thanks a bunch. -- *Mike*



ANOTHER QUESTION ON THE SAME NEWS TOPIC: Thinking of NDEs as the lightning in our primordial soup, or a catalyst for our own continued evolution, the simian who suddenly started walking upright after a near-death experience should very much be studied. But in this case, walking upright would not be a 'step forward,' evolutionary speaking, for an individual primate. A monkey walks on all fours because its pelvis is the wrong shape to continually stand upright. If it isn't already, doing so will become a painful, debilitating problem for this poor creature.

If, as you speculated, the next generation does mutate because of her possible NDE, then that generation would have to have both a newly shaped pelvis as well as the impulse to stand erect. A significant genetic difference from their forebears. Assuming all change via an NDE is beneficial gets one embroiled in questions of comparative 'good' outcomes for both the individual and its population. I could argue that evolving into a more 'human' being might not be the single, best scenario for a species living for generations to come in the environment of a zoo.

But, it does beg one other question: is an experiencer genetically different from what s/he was before? Does having an NDE leave a genetic as well as spiritual/mental marker? Have there ever been DNA-based comparisons made before and after someone's NDE? Just a thought. -- *Steff*



PMH Atwater's reply: It is rare that I receive two questions on the same subject at the same time. That is why I have carried both of them in this edition of the newsletter. Most of you, I'm certain by now, have seen the news clipping about what happened to the monkey in question and photos of it walking upright afterward. News copy said the monkey had had a near-death experience and that its sudden change in walking habits might in fact be an example of the fabled "missing link" in evolution from monkey to human.

First of all, and I want to be very clear about this - how could anyone, including the reporter, know whether or not this monkey had a near-death experience? Perhaps a psychic might venture such a possibility, but no one, I repeat, no one can really know. What I think happened here, is that the reporter took creative license with word choice or simply made a mistake in how words were used in the story. What I think the reporter meant to say was that the animal had a near death experience. Notice what

I did? Remove the hyphen and meaning changes altogether - from labeling a particular phenomenon to simply acknowledging that the animal nearly died.

What happened, though, does bring up intriguing questions about evolution and why this specific monkey is now walking upright. We'll know much more months down the road if the animal continues to prefer upright postures. The more time elapses, the more intriguing this will become. For myself, I would be most interested to see x-rays of the animal's skeletal structure taken at two month intervals with comparisons made. If differences showed up, well, that would be most exciting!

But as Steff noted, the whole affair causes one to question evolutionary changes with actual near-death experiencers. No one to my knowledge has done any DNA research on before and after possibilities of gene mutation with experiencers, or even just of afterward and then compared that with the population at large. Some doctors, however, are beginning to move in that direction. One of them I know, a chiropractor of some expertise, has discovered that when using needles for acupuncture treatments, he can only use gold needles with near-death experiencers. Using the regular needles short-circuits or nullifies acupuncture treatments. He has found this anomaly to be so dependable, that the individual does not have to say anything that might indicate he or she might have undergone such an experience in the distant past. Not even hint that anything of this sort ever could have happened. All the individual has to do is show up for an appointment, and, bingo, right away the effect shows up. No doubt. Something definitive, physical, and evolutionary has happened to that individual. The doctor merely says, "You had a near-death experience at some time in your life." The surprised patient replies in utter shock, "How did you know?" The needle is proof.



When you examine the pattern of physiological and psychological aftereffects, you recognize all kinds of "markers" that strongly suggest the body-mind complex is being either slightly, significantly, or radically altered by near-death states (depending on the intensity of the experience). Read any of my books, better yet simply access my website at [www.cinemind.com/atwater](#). I have articles posted about this. For a quick summary of the patterns, access the [Eight Filers](#). These are charts which summarize various aspects of the findings I have made in 26 years of research. There is a chart (filer) for the aftereffects. The three of my books that go the most in-depth about these aftereffects are: [Beyond the Light](#) (for adults, and especially details electrical sensitivity), [The New Children and Near-Death Experiences](#) (for children and gives lengthy suggestions and resources of what to do next), and, finally, [The Complete Idiot's Guide to Near-Death Experiences](#) (which gives you details but, more importantly, enables you to have a larger perspective about the phenomenon).

I thank you all for reading the the columns I write and for asking questions. This exercise helps all of us.

Many blessings,
P. M. H. Atwater, L.H.D., Ph.D.
[www.cinemind.com/atwater](#) & [www.pmhatwater.com](#)

Contact P.M.H. Atwater

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"We cannot keep the life we have on the earth realm, not our possessions or attachments or relationships. What we can keep is our memories and our feelings of what we have integrated into our heart of hearts from the experience of being here, plus the love we have shared with others." - Dr. P.M.H. Atwater.

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Books by PMH Atwater



[We Live Forever: The Real Truth About Death](#)

by P.M.H. Atwater

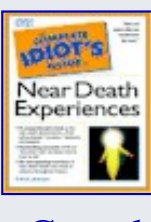
Based on Atwater's 25 years of research, personal stories, and her own NDE in 1977



[The New Children and Near-Death Experiences](#)

by P.M.H. Atwater

An expansion of Atwater's original book "Children of the New Millennium" taking it to another level.



[The Complete Idiot's Guide to Near-Death Experiences](#)

by P.M.H. Atwater

This is the "encyclopedia" of the NDE and the most complete book done in the field of NDE studies.



[Beyond the Light](#)

by P.M.H. Atwater

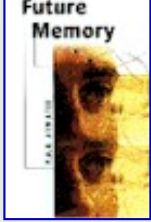
An in-depth study of the NDEs of over 3,000 adult experiencers.



[Coming Back to Life](#)

by P.M.H. Atwater

Looks at all aspects of the NDE and its aftereffects including possible changes in the brain.



[Future Memory](#)

by P.M.H. Atwater

Deals with the transformation of consciousness and what that might portend to future memory.



[Children of the New Millennium](#)

by P.M.H. Atwater

An in-depth study of child NDEs and a how these new children being born today.

Videos by PMH Atwater



[Beyond the Light](#)

featuring P.M.H. Atwater

Dr. Atwater shares her testimony of three life-changing NDEs with host Mary Lou McCall.

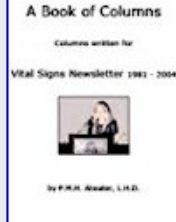


[As You Die](#)

featuring P.M.H. Atwater

Available in CD, DVD, VHS formats! Atwater leads people through the wonderful journey which begins as one lays hovering between life and death, then leads them away from any fear and despair towards a peace and unconquerable hope, knowing that as we die ... we live forever!

Ebook by PMH Atwater



[A Book of Columns](#)

by P.M.H. Atwater

This ebook contains all of Dr. Atwater's columns from the IANDS newsletter "Vital Signs" from June of 1981 until 2004. Proceeds go to support IANDS and its mission.