

## ARE NEAR DEATH EXPERIENCES WORTH TAKING SERIOUSLY

Robert McLuhan's book, *Randi's Prize: What Sceptics Say about the Paranormal, Why They Are Wrong and Why It Matters*.

Near Death Experiences are not informative about what happens when you die for they are Near Death not After Death.

He writes that there are NDEs that do not fit the standard perception of what such an experience involves.

AJ Ayer the humanist philosopher reported a near death experience where he saw what seemed to be the River Styx and described being pulled towards a pain inflicting red light and met the so called ministers of the universe.

Here is Ayer's account.

I was confronted by a red light, exceedingly bright, and also very painful even when I turned away from it. I was aware that this light was responsible for the government of the universe. Among its ministers were two creatures who had been put in charge of space. These ministers periodically inspected space and had recently carried out such an inspection. They had, however, failed to do their work properly, with the result that space, like a badly fitting jigsaw puzzle, was slightly out of joint. A further consequence was that the laws of nature had ceased to function as they should. I felt that it was up to me to put things right. I also had the motive of finding a way to extinguish the painful light. I assumed that it was signaling that space was awry and that it would switch itself off when order was restored. Unfortunately, I had no idea where the guardians of space had gone and feared that even if I found them I should not be able to communicate with them. It then occurred to me that whereas, until the present century, physicists accepted the Newtonian severance of space and time, it had become customary, since the vindication of Einstein's general theory of relativity, to treat space-time as a single whole. Accordingly, I thought that I could cure space by operating upon time. I was vaguely aware that the ministers who had been given charge of time were in my neighborhood and I proceeded to hail them. I was again frustrated. Either they did not hear me, or they chose to ignore me, or they did not understand me. I then hit upon the expedient of walking up and down, waving my watch, in the hope of drawing their attention not to my watch itself but to the time which it measured. This elicited no response. I became more and more desperate, until the experience suddenly came to an end.

This is one of the few accounts that show the beings that govern time and the afterlife cannot be likeable or good. No wonder he concluded, " My recent experiences have slightly weakened my conviction that my genuine death, which is due fairly soon, will be the end of me, though I continue to hope that it will be. They have not weakened my conviction that there is no god. "

Fay Weldon found a snobby Heaven that she despised when she had her NDE.

The accusation of fraud against some sceptical investigators is interesting. Some have tried to manipulate debunkings simply because they are desperate for any explanation that seems to fit. But then somebody has come along with the correct way to refute the claims.

The fact remains that that the experiences are too odd in many cases to be taken as informative. At best they show a poorly understood brain generated experience not a glimpse into the afterlife.

