

Recent Publications of Note 6(1)¹

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Anomalous Experience

Aparicio-Terrés, R., López-Mochales, S., Díaz-Andreu, M., & Escera, C. (2025). The neurobiology of altered states of consciousness induced by drumming and other rhythmic sound patterns. *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, 1550(1), 55–70. <https://doi.org/10.1111/nyas.15403>

A narrative review of an important topic marred, however, by a too broad lens and lack of consideration of the probable effects of experimental demand characteristics and individual differences. Nonetheless, it can lead researchers to important references.

Cardeña, E., Berkovich-Ohana, A., Valli, K., Barttfeld, P., Gomez-Marin, A., Greyson, B., Kumar, V. K., Laureys, S., Luhrmann, T. M., Newberg, A., Preller, K. H., Putnam, F. W., Tagliazucchi, E., Walsh, R., Carter, O., & Yaden, D. (2025). A consensus taxonomy of altered (nonordinary) states of consciousness: Bringing order to disarray. *Psychology of Consciousness: Theory, Research, and Practice*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1037/cns0000431>

A multidisciplinary expert group presents a new taxonomy of altered (nonordinary) states of consciousness based on their experiential/behavioral cardinal aspects, rather than on induction procedures, as is common practice.

Greyson, B., & Pehlivanova, M. (2025). A neuroscientific model of near-death experiences reconsidered. *Psychology of Consciousness: Theory, Research, and Practice*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1037/cns0000448>

This is a response to a recent paper in which a group of researchers (see below) pro-

¹ This regular feature summarizes critically recent papers of interest. If you want to recommend a paper, please send a note with bibliographic information to etzel.cardena@psy.lu.se.

posed a mostly physiological overarching model of near-death-experiences. Greyson and Pehlivanova conclude that the model is admirable yet fails to account for explanatory gaps and observations inconsistent with it. The original model is presented in: Martial, C., Fritz, P., Gosseries, O., Bonhomme, V., Kondziella, D., Nelson, K., & Lejeune, N. (2025). A neuroscientific model of near-death experiences. *Nature Reviews Neurology*, 21(6), 297–311. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41582-025-01072-z>

Herrero, N. L., Corfdir, Y., Vázquez-Chenlo, A. A. Capurro, L., & Forcato, C. (2025). Exploratory study of non-ordinary states of consciousness during sleep show distinct electrophysiological features from wakefulness and canonical sleep stages. *Scientific Reports*, 15(33586) (2025). <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-025-18748-7>

This study compared the electrophysiology of lucid dreaming, sleep paralysis, out-of-body experiences (while asleep) and false awakenings, concluding that they share characteristics with S1 and REM sleep stages, but not wakefulness.

Lindsay, N., Tassell-Matamua, N., O’Sullivan, L., & Gibson, R. (2025). Trauma or transcendence? The relationship between near-death experiences and dreaming. *Dreaming*, 35(1), 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.1037/drm0000278>

The authors evaluated whether there is evidence of the often-claimed higher incidence of ostensible precognitive dreams and other unusual dream phenomena following a near-death-experience (NDE). The study compared NDErs, people who came close to dying but did not have an NDE, and a group of those who did not come close to dying. The first group differed from the other two on reporting more lucid, problem-solving, and precognitive dreams, as well as more out-of-body experiences. The authors speculate that NDEs may give access to expanded awareness while awake or asleep.

Anomalous Cognition

Greyson, B., Long, J., Holden, J. M., Jourdan, J-P., King, R. A., Mays, S., Mays, R., Rivas, T., Tassell-Matamua, N., van Lommel, P., Woollacott, M., & Tressoldi, P. (2025) The veridical Near-Death Experience Scale: Construction and a first validation with human and artificial raters. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 16:, 661390. doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2025.1661390

A group of experts, led by the author of the most widely used Near-Death Experience (NDE) scale joined forces to create an instrument to evaluate the strength of evidence

for reports of apparent anomalous cognition during NDEs. Eight topics (e.g., third-person verification, cardiac arrest or cessation of brain activity) comprise the scale. They also tested the agreement of human and artificial raters. The scale is published as an appendix. This is an important step forward in this area.

Wainstock BC, Gomide M, Silva J, Moreira-Almeida A. Investigation of mediumistic letter: A deceased son supposedly writes to his parents. *Transcultural Psychiatry*. 2025;0(0). doi:[10.1177/13634615251357998](https://doi.org/10.1177/13634615251357998)

I highlight this item for two reasons, one that it was published by a mainstream journal, the other that it is a later careful study like the ones that the Society for Psychical Research used to do a hundred years ago or so and which deserves revisiting.

Walleczek, J., von Stillfried, N., Schmidt, S., Wittmann, M., Kirmse, K. A., Moll, J., & Kekecs, Z. (2025). Metascientific replication project with the advanced meta-experimental protocol of the transparent psi project procedures for testing the precognitive effect claimed by Bem. *PLoS one*, 20(11), e0335330. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0335330>

This very large ($N = 420,472$) 3-parts study continues a recent pattern in which large studies have found null or mixed results using Daryl Bem's reverse priming paradigm. In this case, although the main effect was not supported, an effect in the opposite direction of that predicted was observed in study 1, replicated in confirmatory study 2, but not replicated in confirmatory study 3. Although the authors sought to control for confirmation bias in their study, they show their own biases. For instance, they write very arguable statements such as: "The results of Study 2 represent a rare example in psi research of the successful replication of an exploratory result," without providing evidence for their encompassing statement. They also write that if true psi "defies known physical laws," an idea that some eminent physicist in the past and the present would not agree with (see <https://psi-encyclopedia.spr.ac.uk/articles/eminant-people-interested-psi>).