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ABOUT MY DEGREES AND THE RESEARCH I DO

from P. M. H. Atwater, 8-9-05

Serious attacks have recently been made against me as a researcher and the findings I have made in the field of near-death studies. Two people have done this: a man famous and beloved in the field, and the other a woman who is an authority on children's education and how the process of educating our youth should be restructured. The man claims I am not a true researcher and my work should be disregarded, which is interesting because the bulk of the material he uses was actually work done by others in the field, not him. The woman takes exception to the fact that my doctorate in the humanities was obtained from an unaccredited institution and that my honorary doctorate is invalid, my work a sham. She has threatened to expose me. Since I am already exposed and always have been, I am at a complete loss to understand her motives. Both of these people are dear to me, and always have been. The woman especially I have gone out of my way to support, promoting her work in several of my books and with her written permission, and in every way imaginable lauding her ideas and her expertise. Since the fields in which we work are different, my work does not impinge upon hers.

I have learned over time the appropriateness of criticism and challenge. This is a function of research and is to be expected. Debate and testing are how we ascertain validity. My book, *Children of the New Millennium*, for instance, ignited a furious argument about my research methodology - the controversy is carried on my website at www.pmhatwater.com in the Article Section. Anyone can read pro and con and arrive at their own opinion of merit or lack of it themselves. This is the way I do things - openly and fully - without personal attack. Since my head is once again on the "chopping block," perhaps a reminder of who I am, what I do, and why would be timely.

I have been a full-time researcher of near-death states since November of 1978. During that time, I have averaged a six-day work week, between 8 to 12 hours per day. My research methodology is not "self-styled" as some claim, but is based on police science in the sense of police investigative techniques. I was trained to do this work by my police officer father, beginning when I was nine years old. His thought was that we were playing a game. But, because I was frightened of him at the time (he is my step-father), I took his every word and gesture seriously. What I learned from him stead me very well throughout my growing years and into adulthood, and became the protocol I used in the sessions I held with near-death experiencers. Contrary to what many believe, police investigative techniques, if adhered to correctly, are very strict and demand individual-initiated language, alertness to non-verbal cues and body postures, and

constant rechecking and cross-checking until validity can be ascertained. In many ways this method of research is more thorough and difficult to conduct than the standard double-blind studies with a control group - which tends to lean heavily on questionnaires. Never could what I do simply be called "good journalism," although there is no real line of demarcation between investigative journalism and scientific inquiry (both use each other's methods to a large extent); and, with over 70% of all medical procedures based on the type of observational analysis I do, well, I have never felt my work was "less than" or inferior to anyone else's - because it isn't.

Of my work with adult experiencers which numbers well over 3,000 people, I can estimate that 60% were found quite by accident, 30% came to me because of talks I had given, and 10% preferred questionnaires via the mails rather than participating in one-on-one sessions with me. Time constraints and the need for privacy were the most common reasons given for the questionnaire requests. Caucasian Americans, Europeans, and Arabic people constituted 80% of experiencers participating in my interview/observation sessions. I did not encounter any Orientals originally, but did later on. The remaining 20% were of the Black race; 15% African American, the other 5% divided between those from Kenya, Haiti, and Canada. Further details are contained in my book *Beyond the Light*.

Of the 277 child experiencers of near-death states who qualified for my study, about half were children at the time of our meeting, the other half were either teens or adults who remembered such an episode. My overall racial mix was 12% Blacks (American and Canadian), 23% Latinos (Hispanics, Argentines, and Colombians); 5% Asians (Malaysian and Chinese), and 60% Whites (American, Canadian, French, English, and Ukrainian). Further details are contained in my book *The New Children and Near-Death Experiences*.

My research has stood the test of time and rigorous scrutiny. Some of my findings have been verified in clinical studies, including the clinical prospective study done in Holland and published in *The Lancet* medical journal, 12-15-01, and since in studies done in Florida at Medical Centers (refer to my website for details). Yet the greatest verification I have received of my work comes from the uncounted thousands of near-death experiencers who are vocal in naming my books "the bibles" of the near-death experience.

My research began a year after recovery from what I went through because of my own three near-death experiences, and as a direct result of "The Voice Like None Other" which spoke to me during my third episode. The Voice said and I quote: "Test revelation. You are to do the research. One book for each death." Book one was not named, books two and three were. I was shown what was to be in each book but not how to do the work or how long it might take me. I am alive today because I said "Yes, I will do this." My touch-in to the Guidance that has directed me since my experiences with death is through prayer and meditation. This source has consistently energized me, kept me on track, and enabled me to bless what has appeared hurtful, knowing that sometimes our greatest gifts and best teachers come to us through the guise of hate and deceit. Always the question is: what can I learn from this?

After years of doing the research requested of me, I was given an opportunity to go to Montreal, Quebec, and study for a humanities doctorate in the field of Spiritual and Psychic Studies through the auspices of the International College of Spiritual and Psychic Studies (Spiritual Sciences

Fellowship), operated by Drs. John and Marilyn Rossner. My L.H.D. was an earned degree: took several years, cost me several thousand-plus dollars plus the additional cost of establishing residency for several weeks and two years running, committee review of my thesis, defense of my thesis, and the presentation of my thesis before several hundred people as part of the testing process. Even though the College is unaccredited, I found the program it offered to be rigorous and to cover the material and skills I needed to further my work. My thesis, by the way, regarded the phenomenon of Future Memory (now a book). My degree was granted in 1992. Shortly thereafter, the College lost its Canadian Charter in a move by French Separatists in the province of Quebec. They are now chartered through The Open University for Complementary Medicines in Sri Lanka (also unaccredited but well-known in the field of alternative health-care). It is through them that I was awarded an honorary Ph.D. in Therapeutic Counseling in 2004 in recognition of a lifetime of important achievement and unquestionable ethics. Receipt of my diploma was delayed, however, due to the tsunami that struck Sri Lanka after Christmas Day, 2004. I received it in the Spring of 2005. I cannot vouch for how others have used or abused the educational opportunities offered through Spiritual Sciences Fellowship (in its various "incarnations"). But I can say I earned what I received and I earned it the old-fashioned way, and I am proud of the diplomas I have been given. No apologies need be given for my degrees or what I went through to qualify for them. My focus has always been and still is on research. Degrees to me are subsidiary to the process of objective inquiry, not a determinant of it. I honor how others may differ with me on this point, nonetheless the stand I have taken works for me.

In September of 2005 my book, *Beyond the Indigo Children: The New Children and the Coming of the Fifth World*, debuts. I know I will "catch it" from both sides with this book: from those who insist on standard scientific measures, and from mystics and channelers and psychics and visionaries who may be taken aback by the objectivity I bring to a subject they have staked "ownership" to. This work combines science, objective research, native traditions of prophecy, visionary revelations, and time-honored predictions of root races (our genetic stock as humans) and planes of consciousness and the comings and goings of the great ages of humankind and about the great shifting or ascension (acceleration) of energy now occurring. It's a giant of a topic all in one succinct but sassy book that seeks to give a clear-eye to that which seems so confusing. I give ample credits and recognitions and referrals, even to creating a page on my website titled "Beyond the Indigo Children EXTRAS," as a way to extend and complement the material in the book. We must look at this subject objectively, for the information now out about our new children breeds "clubs" of exclusive specialness based on labels that run counter to what is really happening and how these children seem geared. I wrote the book with a sense of duty, like I owed the children this book; I owed them and their parents an opportunity to back up and take another look at the hype and the mystery they deal with as daily fare.

Who am I to dare entreat upon psychic and mystical understandings and channelings? Well, I was psychically aware and alert as a child, was trained by the Spirit Keepers of Idaho's deserts and canyons, have always had a strong sense of knowing about things, became an astrologer/numerologist/past-life regressionist/visionary counselor back in the late sixties, initiated Idaho's first non-profit metaphysical corporation (Inner Forum) in the seventies, worked with people by the thousands producing talks/workshops throughout the Northwest and conducting experiments to determine truth from falsehood, underwent extensive studies of Eastern religions and mystical traditions and altered states of consciousness, became a meditation and sensitivity trainer, helped to establish the first Council of Edgar Cayce Study Groups in Boise, Idaho and surrounding areas, investigated accidents that resulted in death to determine if the deceased had somehow "known" about his or her death in advance of its occurrence, went

door-to-door with churches to allay their fears about the purpose and intent of Inner Forum, had a large clientele and reputation as a visionary counselor, intuitive leader, and creative innovator - before I died in 1977.

I lost everything at death, everything but my body. My task when the trauma was over was to relearn how to stand, walk, crawl, climb stairs, run, hear and see properly, tell the difference between left and right, and rebuild all of my belief systems. Between doctors and health-care practitioners and endless rounds of exercise and classes, I managed to reclaim my life yet it took years before I could understand how my mind now worked and what I could do with it. In many ways, doing the research I did with near-death experiencers helped me more than it did them. It enabled me to see what others went through and how they dealt with it. It enabled me to see myself through the thousands of eyes that looked back at me. This humbled me beyond words, and perhaps explains why it was so difficult for me during the early years of my work to understand why I was being attacked so often and by so many in the field of near-death studies. My perception was I was just doing what I was told to do, presenting facts as I found them, fulfilling my mission as was revealed to me during my third near-death episode.

Never was there any grant nor monies given to me to accomplish what I did. To begin with I paid for my research by serving as a psychic reader over the very first Psychic Counselors Network 900-Number Nationwide Program. I was featured in their first two informercials. I turned to this route for money as it guaranteed me flexible hours. Standard employment proved impossible because I could do whatever work I was assigned in a fraction of the time it took others, with no errors and a smile on my face. I was always happy, which irritated fellow employees, and I could easily see "through" whatever problem presented itself. It got to the point that no one would hire me. They said I was too good and too happy to be employable. Thus, I continued with the research I was doing, earning what money I could from giving readings and talks and workshops - for more people than I can count for nearly three decades. While employed once for Universal Systems Inc. (an interconnect telephone company specializing in commercial installations before the diversification of "Ma Bell"), I was known as a psychic analyst because I could use both right and left brain hemispheres equally. Truly, I am no newcomer to things spiritual or psychic or visionary. I downplay this because my emphasis has been and still is research. I live my life according to the Russian proverb which states: "Trust, but verify."

To all those who consider my work and my degrees and my reputation a sham, take a look in the mirror and see where you're coming from. I hold no ill-feelings toward you. Debate with me if you will but confine yourself to the topic, know your facts, and keep personal attacks to yourself. I have no need for them and will not respond if that is your propensity. I stand on a lifetime of rigorous investigations and extensive personal experiences. This does not make me any better than those who rely on scientific studies for their information base, nor does it make me any less. The world needs both types of research if we are ever going to rebuild what needs rebuilding, if we are ever going to progress as humans who possess both a heart and a mind. Let us step forward in honor and accomplish our tasks honorably.

Thank you, P. M. H. Atwater, L.H.D. and Ph.D. (Hon.)

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