

Dear Editors,

We would like to bring to your reader's attention an unfortunate instance of mischaracterization of our views on spiritual and religious content in dreams. The mischaracterization occurred in a paper by Paquette in his recent paper in IJoDR (Paquette, 2018). On page 89 referring to Bulkeley's work on mystical dream content Paquette writes that "This characterization of dream activity is solidified in a later paper co-authored with McNamara where spiritual dreams are described as 'religious delusions' (McNamara & Bulkeley, 2015)."

But we nowhere in the referenced paper describe spiritual dreams as religious delusions.

The larger context of the mischaracterization is as follows: "Bulkeley writes that 'It would be more accurate to regard [spiritual experiences] as expressions of a latent prototype in the dreaming imagination that is variably activated according to cultural, psychological, and physiological factors in each individual's life' (Bulkeley, 2009 p. 40). This characterization of dream activity is solidified in a later paper co-authored with McNamara where spiritual dreams are described as 'religious delusions' (McNamara & Bulkeley, 2015)."

Any fair perusals of each of our decades long publication track record on spirituality, religion and dreams will show that we nowhere treat spiritual dreams as mere delusions. On the contrary we have consistently argued against the crude brain reductionism so common in the neuroscience community. We have also consistently called for greater research on the relation of dreams to spiritual and religious experiences. We applaud Paquette for treating spiritual content of dreams as such studies are still pretty rare. It is all the more unfortunate, therefore, that we had to call attention to this mischaracterization of our work in his otherwise important paper.

Patrick McNamara and Kelly Bulkeley

#### References

- Bulkeley, K. (2009). Mystical dreaming: patterns in form, content, and meaning. *Dreaming*, 19, 30-41.
- McNamara, P., & Bulkeley, K. (2015). Dreams as a source of supernatural agent concepts. [10.3389/fpsyg.2015.00283]. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 6.
- Paquette, A. (2018). The interpretation of independent agents and spiritual content in dreams. [Electronic]. *International Journal of Dream Research*, 11(2), 86-105.