

Episode #001 – The Curse of Being Weird

An esoteric podcast for the introspective pagan mind hosted by Chris Orapello
www.infinite-beyond.com

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❖ Show Introduction

- It’s Wednesday January 21st 2009, hello and welcome to the introductory show of “The Infinite and the Beyond,” an esoteric podcast for the introspective pagan mind. Where we explore a variety of topics which relate to life and one’s unique spiritual journey. I am your host Chris Orapello.
- Intro music by George Wood.
- In this episode, I’m going to introduce you to the show by discussing the title and its direction. Later we learn about Aleister Crowley in the regular show segment “A Corner in the Occult.” We address the issues with being an individual and what to avoid if you happen to be one of the cursed. And I take a look into pantheism.

❖ Holidays?

- Happy Belated Solstice and Happy New Year all if you hadn’t noticed and it will hopefully be one full of change, growth, happiness, and possibly a fixed economy, but a Happy New Year to everyone none-the-less!

❖ As of Late...

- As of late, I’ve started the last semester of my graduate program and by May I will/ or should have my Masters in Fine Art and my girlfriend has gotten me into the music of the Decemberists. So far she has gotten me into Nick Cave and the Bad Seeds, The Smashing Pumpkins, The Dresden Dolls, and PJ Harvey and I’ve only managed to get her into King Crimson. Go figure? *Sigh*
- And the other night we were watching a recent documentary about Alan Moore, the well known comic book artist and author. He was the one gave us From Hell, V for Vendetta, The League of Extraordinary Gentleman, Watchman, and many others. The documentary about him is called “The Mindscape of Alan Moore” and it was written and directed by Dez Vylenz it’s available on Amazon.com and clips of it can be found on Youtube. If you didn’t know Alan Moore is apparently big into the occult and magick and the documentary is him talking about his beliefs and views on magick, the world, and on being an artist. It’s a great documentary and since I watched it, Alan Moore has become one of my favorite people in the world as he has some fascinating insight to share. I definitely encourage all comic book geeks, occultists, magickians, pagans, and artists to check it out. If anyone listening has seen it please let me know what you thought of it.

❖ Thank Yous!

- I want to say thank you to Mark my lodge brother who worked with me to record that great vocal introduction to the show. Your voice was perfect that day as a result of having a cold. If you had not agreed to record that intro for me it would have been me introducing myself and that’s not cool because my voice sucks compared to yours.
- Thank you to Hedonsdog from the Pagan Podcast Index which can be found at paganpodcastindex.wordpress.com for contacting me and inviting this show to be among the indexed pagan podcasts that can be found on his website. I also want to thank him for joining the show frappr map which can be found on the mainpage of the show website at www.infinite-beyond.com. If any of you out there would like to be listed on the map just visit the website, scroll down to the bottom, and add yourself, it’s that easy! Let me and others know that you listen to the show and where you are at in this great world.
- Also thank you to Garret, Al, and Gordon of the Haunted New Jersey Podcast and deo and Mandy of deo’s Shadow who have influenced and inspired me to do my own show; I can only hope to provide the same sense of belonging and insight in my own listeners, that you have all done for me.
- **Goodbye to deo’s Shadow:** (adlibbed)

❖ The Show...

- Since this is our first episode, with these shows, I hope to create an atmosphere of personal and spiritual exploration and contemplation as we look into such avenues as religion, science, society, and culture while offering insight and information from personal research and even guest interviews. I am new to podcasting so please bear with me in these beginning episodes, as I will try my best to provide you with regular and quality shows with what little equipment I have at the moment. I hope to do these shows bi-weekly, but until I get the hang of producing them, I will only be doing them on a monthly basis. Feel free to check out the website at www.infinite-beyond.com where you can learn more about the show, locate our forum, and read our blog which contains all our show notes and other show related information. Feel free to find me online by checking out the links listed on the ‘About’ page of the show website. Friend me on Myspace, Paganspace, Covenspace, Facebook, or challenge me to a game on Chess.com.
- Actually this is the second time I’m recording this episode. I wasn’t entirely pleased with the first version and though this second version is extremely similar I have made subtle variations in it, not that you would know because no one but my girlfriend has heard that first version. THANK THE GODS! So, this is why it’s halfway through the month and this is finally getting done. Thank you to Hedonsdog once again! Who has already mentioned this show his your website and so I apologize for getting it out this late into the month as I am not one to promote pagan standard time. Sorry about that, I hope the wait was well worth it.

- I realize the show title “The Infinite and the Beyond” may sound a bit general and not exactly pagan. For example if you happen to only hear or read the title you’re not going to know that the show is pagan until you listen to an episode or read a description of the show somewhere online like on Podcast Alley or the Pagan Podcast Index. But let me assure you that this is a pagan podcast and what will be discussed should interest the pagan community in some way or another. I do intend on responding to listener feedback or questions, and would love show suggestions as far as topics and segments are concerned because
- When I was trying to establish the show theme, I began to realize that most of my primary interests were focused on the greater reality of life and existence. For example, being a Thelemite and a pagan this concern is obvious for one of the things that religion offers the practitioner is an explanation of existence and a means to comprehend and dwell within it. Being an artist it was only natural for me to question, analyze, and approach the world from a unique perspective. Being a paranormal investigator, yes I said it, a paranormal investigator, wondering about, investigating, and documenting anomalous phenomena, and the unseen world, was only another facet of my pursuit of the infinite and the beyond. When I acknowledged my various interests I realized that I actually did not need to shed any the layers of who I was to accommodate a podcast, but that I could incorporate each of my interests into the show because they relate to each other in some way or another as they make me the individual that I am. In short, the title of the show is a reflection of my personal fascination, pursuit, and acknowledgement of the worlds of the infinite and the beyond. So, this show will be a collective of my various interests and activities and the information provided in each episode will also reflect those interests, offering what I hope will be a unique and fresh perspective on paganism, magick, life, and the world.

❖ Who am I?

- When I first began planning this introductory episode my original intent was to focus on me by introducing you, the listener, to who I was as a person and as a pagan. I thought about doing this by listing and discussing my various interests and activities, not like I just did, when discussing the show theme, but to go more in depth into who I was and by going over my background, but then I realized that this is why the show has a website and a blog... so happy reading.
- No, but seriously, instead of boring you in this introductory episode with who I am, I decided to allow who I was to simply become known over time as the show developed. Making my personal revelations in more a contextual and show specific manner. One of today’s topics is going to be about something which my girlfriend has so referred to as “the curse of being weird” and it actually grew out of an issue I have that always occurs during the holiday season. The issue in question is nothing new and it may be something which most, if not all pagans, have experienced at one time or another or may be something some of you have to deal with on a regular basis. It’s just one of those things that can be frustrating and disheartening about being pagan or just

someone of an alternative lifestyle. Stay tuned to find out just what I’m talking about and to find out if you are one of the cursed... But first, it’s time for a little educational segment I have called “A Corner in the Occult.”

❖ **Segment: A Corner in the Occult**

- (Background Music: “Piano Quartet in g 3rd Movement by Mozart” performed by Linda Holzer)
- Hello and welcome to “A Corner in the Occult” Where we will focus on one part or person from the history of occultism. In these regular segments, I hope to introduce and touch upon many aspects of the occult and I hope to offer you something new or at least something to think about. There is a lot in occultism that one may never choose to look into, and here you have the opportunity to learn about something that you would have never bothered to investigate. And oddly enough there a lot of people who may not be that aware of who today’s topic is on...
- Aleister Crowley, also known as The Prophet of the New Aeon of Horus, Frater Perdurabo, The Grand Master Therion, and The Great Beast, came into the world on October 12th 1875 in Warwickshire, England and was born into a wealthy family. His birth name was Edward Alexander Crowley from which Aleister is derived. Crowley was the son of a brewer, who having since retired from his previous occupation, became a preacher of a Christian religious sect named the Plymouth Brethren, who were a conservative Evangelical Christian restorationist movement which began earlier in the 19th century. Young Aleister was a part of this movement until his father’s death in 1887 which subsequently caused his faith in Christianity to wane.
- In later years, Crowley attended Trinity College of Cambridge where he initially pursued a degree in Moral Sciences which he later changed to English Literature. And like many such young people who pursue a college education, new interests took a firm-hold on Crowley which would shape and determine the rest of his life. Some of these interests were his love for poetry and chess. It was also during this time that Crowley began accepting his bisexuality and had one of his more memorable relationships with one of the other male students. After a year of college Crowley’s interests in occultism began to take root and around 1898 Crowley met Samuel Liddell Macgregor Mathers and joined the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn. The Golden Dawn was an esoteric society which focused on the occult magickal arts and one’s personal spiritual development and practice. It was headed by Mathers who answered to a mysterious council only ever referred to as the Secrets Chiefs who allegedly over saw and held all authority over the Order and its members and Mathers was the liaison between the Order and this alleged council.
- After only being a member for a couple of years Crowley would become the reason for the Order’s splintering as a result of his closeness with Mathers who, unlike many of the members, liked Crowley and who was later shunned for his favoritism of the Great Beast. It would seem that some of the members of the Order were not able to accept Crowley’s bisexuality and felt that he did not deserve to continue through the grades of the

Order. Mathers, on the other hand had no problem with Crowley or his sexuality and saw no reason why he should be denied advancement. Mathers had Crowley travel to Paris where he could personally advance Crowley to the grade of Adeptus Minor. As a result of Mathers’ actions by advancing Crowley, the Order split, and thus began the downfall of the original Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn.

- After leaving the Golden Dawn, Crowley’s magickal pursuits, funded by his inheritance, carried him to many corners of the world. As he traveled he carried with him a sense of regard for Mathers who he thought of as a mentor. What Crowley also carried during this time was a lingering doubt in who he was as a person and magickian. Even the questionable reality of the Golden Dawn’s infamous Secret Chiefs haunted Crowley for years after his ended involvement with the Order.
- During his honeymoon in Cairo in the spring of 1904, Crowley experienced a pivotal moment in his life. One day in March, Crowley was instructed by an unknown being through his wife Rose, to sit alone in his temple space on the 8th, 9th, and 10th of the month of April. On each day during the period of one hour a book was dictated to Crowley by Aiwass, a prater intelligence, that will come to be known as Liber Al vel Legis or The Book of the Law. Compiled of three chapters, The Book of the Law will come to prophesize the New Aeon of Horus and the philosophy of Thelema, or that of the Will. The primary tenant of the Book would be “Do what thou wilt, shall be the whole of the Law.” (1:40) A quote which is often followed by another, “Love is the Law, Love under Will.” (1:57). The interesting thing about the Book of the Law is that it is forbidden for one to interpret the text for anyone else; however, friendly discourse has been known to occur over the Law and its true implications.
- In time, Thelema and such related writings of Crowley were later incorporated into the Ordo Templi Orientis, one of the more well known orders that Crowley organized, despite Crowley himself possessing doubt over the reality presented by the Book of the Law, which was an issue he dealt with during most of his life, it would none-the-less be an important part of his legacy as a western occultist and magickian.
- Throughout the rest of his life Crowley continued being a teacher, writer, and mentor for others and was even a bit of a spectacle as he was often a focus of the tabloid media. Crowley’s life continued until December of 1947 when he was released from his worldly duties.
- Years after Crowley’s passing, he continued to influence and affect religion, art, and culture some of which continues to this day. The Ordo Templi Orientis still prospers and has representatives in many major cities in the United States and throughout the World and Crowley has been mentioned and sung about in many different songs. Not to mention his appearance on the cover of the Beatle’s “St. Pepper” Album, David Bowie references Crowley in his song “Quicksand” and Ozzy Osbourne focuses on him in his aptly titled song, “Mr. Crowley.” Crowley also became the basis for many film villains and television characters. Dean Stockwell’s character Wilbur Whateley from The Dunwich Horror and Uncle Fester from the Adam’s Family were both based upon Crowley in their own respects and appearances.

- As you might have guessed, Aleister Crowley is more complex than I could divulge in this short segment on him and I do not mean to ignore some of his other accomplishments and pursuits. Aside from being an occultist, magickian, author, poet, and prophet he was also a mountain climber. Several biographies have been written about him for those who wish to learn more and it is highly recommended that one do so, due to his heavy influence on modern western esotericism and occultism.
- Suggestions for A Corner in the Occult are welcomed and encouraged so please be sure to contact me online via the show website or on our forum.

❖ Pagan Podcast Bumpers

- Geek Witch
- Thanks Tahlea for making that bumper for your show available on your website and congratulations on turning 21!

❖ Pagan Podcast Shout Outs!

- I would also like to give a shout out to some of the pagan podcasts out there.
 - Darkly Fey from the Darkside of Fey
 - Dee and Heather from Pagan FM
 - Emerald Deepwater from Pagan Living
 - Greywolf from A Pagan Heart in Maine
 - Mojo and Sparrow from The Wigglian Way
 - Tommy Elf From the Edge of the Circle
- What you all do for the pagan podcast community is awesome! Thank you so much and keep podcasting!

❖ Segment: “The Curse of Being Weird”

- Hi we’re back and now, let’s get into the curse of being weird....
- (Background Music: “spaces” by 3vr3n)
- Unlike many people in the world, there are some who think. They think about many things, such as life, existence, and their place in the world. Some of them even think too much and one day after thinking more than before they begin to shed previously instituted values and beliefs for what can only be referred to as their own. As a result of their long period of contemplation and wonderment, the thinkers begin to reinstitute themselves with new ways of thinking, new values, new beliefs, and an overall new perspective on life. Some of the exterior effects of such transformations can be seen in dressing in ways that are different than the majority. Like wearing one’s hair or make-up differently; listening to different types of music; and even adopting a new

form of spirituality, shedding what they were guided to become and believe in for that which they choose for themselves. Many of us in the pagan community have walked this path. We know what it's like to not go along with the crowd, to think differently, to question, and to look upon the rest of society as if it were separate from us, as if it were strange, as if we didn't belong and were perhaps misplaced. We also know what the “look” is, you know, the look you get when you reveal a non-conventional aspect of who you are to someone who is more in-line with the majority. The look they give you is unmistakable. It tells you, that you crossed a line, that you just ventured into a place that they had never been, it tells you that you are different and that they have just realized this about you. The “look” is awkward and in some respects condemning, it makes you realize “oh no, I've done it again...I've uncovered a boundary, by not only revealing who I am to them, but also by uncovering who they are to me.” In some situations the “look” appears more like a mental shutdown indicating the breakdown of a conversation. This form of the “look” is similar in appearance to when a simple “hello, how are you?” is followed by an unexpected literal response instead of the common cultural response of “I am well.” Over time you learn what to say and when not to elaborate on a topic. You learn where the boundaries are that trigger the “look” and begin to avoid those boundaries. But the more you are able to re-function among those who are so different than you is when you begin to realize that not saying anything to keep the peace and to seem normal, actually makes you miserable. After all, you have so much to say and no one to listen and may be forced to, at times, to listen to those who have nothing to say, but insist on saying it, is when the curse of being weird begins to show its true nature. The next phase of the curse is when we begin to give the “look” to others. This is when the real curse manifests; when you become the person you tried to avoid; when you begin to treat others as outsiders, as if they are not worthy, as if they are the strange ones. When instead of being ostracized by others one instead withdraws from the world, and ostracizes themselves. It is important to not let this happen and to not perpetuate your difference or separation with others. We are all different and have different paths to walk in the world and this goes for the strange and the stranger as well as it does for the friend and the foreigner. As the Book of the Law states in chapter 1 verse 3, “Every man and every woman is a star”. We all have our own separate paths of light to follow. Our own course and destination. We are each the centers of our own Universe. Though not everyone in the world recognizes this, we as pagans know this all too well. We know that it's ok to be different and it's actually healthier to be different than insisting on fitting into a mold by denying the self and refusing to question and explore a world full of tastes and experiences that can tantalize and challenge the mind and invigorate the soul. So, the next time you get the “look” instead of conceding to its gaze, pause for a moment and inform the individual that they have something stuck in their teeth.

❖ **Theme wrap up:**

- I know that segment sounded a little dramatic, but allow me to elaborate. It’s interesting how Crowley’s life and sense of self doubt relates to this issue. Believe it or not this wasn’t intentional and I only realized this connection when I began reworking this episode to make it more cohesive. Crowley, like many of us, dealt with the inadequacy of being different by having his difference held against him. In my limited understanding of who he was as a person it would seem that he managed to rise above the conflict he experienced in life to enable him to be a stronger individual and to not allow those conflicts to interfere with his goals. We can all learn from this example, by not letting the discouragement of others to control or bind us and our own unique development. It's important to not let the disapproval of others to interfere with something that we love, enjoy, and choose to pursue even if such a path may at first seem to be a path of isolation. One thing I have learned in life is that there are always others in the world who believe and walk as I do and that just because I can’t see them at first does not mean that they are not there. There are no paths of isolation. There is always a community that one can be a part of, no matter the path. Even if finding this community means establishing your own home base, like by forming your own group, which is something I did back in 2000 with the Marlton Witches’ Coalition. It was through the MWC that I was able to find my current group of friends and even my girlfriend who I’ve been with for nearly 8 years. In my case, I couldn’t find what I needed in my local community so I made it. Though, starting your own group doesn’t have to always be the case since it can be a huge undertaking and quite demanding, but it’s an option and can be a very rewarding one at that despite the demands and responsibilities it may require.
- In regards to being different, I usually use this to my advantage. Meaning, I don’t hide anything from people, but at the same time I don’t wear who I am on my sleeve for the world to see. For me, who I am is not a big deal and so I don’t treat it like it is. People tend to be more confrontational about things that are presented as being confrontational. Like the rule says, like attracts like and like produces like. If I want people to treat me as normal then I act like I am normal. Me being pagan is not a big deal, it’s just another religion as far as I am concerned.
- So, I am honest about who I am and almost use the truth of who I am as a social filter. Because after all, if who I am as a person is not enough to make someone look beyond the fact that I am a pagan then why would I care what they thought about me? I often use this when it comes to general social occasions like with potential friends or girlfriends.
- Essentially I am a person first, as we all are, and then I am a pagan, or paranormal investigator, or artist, or freemason, or whatever the case may be. But there are always exceptions given the particular situation and it’s important to realize this as well. I can talk about my interests with my parents, but there’s not really a need to and I don’t need the wholehearted approval of my relatives though it is appreciated and welcomed. And my boss doesn’t need to know because my interests have nothing to with my job. I don’t need to piss on every tree

in my life, marking it with who I am, it’s just not necessary and plus sometimes that tree could be on someone else’s property and if that’s the case, then what do you do?

- It can be tough being different, but it’s more difficult to be different when you are unsure how to deal with it. This understanding comes in time, but what comes immediately is the world around you so be mindful of it. Not everyone is going to agree with you, that’s no big deal. You won’t be able to talk about every part of yourself with everyone and that’s ok too, why waste the good stuff on anyone who will listen? Why not save the great parts of yourself for those who really matter in your life?

❖ Segment: “Could I Be A Pantheist?”

- (Background Music: “Ethereal” by 1)
- I was on-line the other day looking up a definition to explain general paganism as a basis for a show segment, but what I found was a website describing a spiritual philosophy that is along the lines of paganism, but with distinct differences in what it regards as sacred and in what it believes. The spiritual philosophy in question is called Pantheism and the website I came across was World Pantheism and can be found at www.pantheism.net. Now I've known people who have referred to themselves as pantheists and from what they explained to me it sounded interesting, but being a bit of a Thelemite, I never looked any further into pantheism as it did not seem to be in alignment with my Will, but for the sake of the show I decided to look into it to see how it paired up with my own beliefs.
- On the World Pantheist's website they list nine beliefs which describe the World Pantheism Movement. Let’s see what this is about shall we?
- **1. We revere and celebrate the Universe as the totality of being, past, present and future. It is self-organizing, ever-evolving and inexhaustibly diverse. Its overwhelming power, beauty and fundamental mystery compel the deepest human reverence and wonder.**
- **2. All matter, energy, and life are an interconnected unity of which we are an inseparable part. We rejoice in our existence and seek to participate ever more deeply in this unity through knowledge, celebration, meditation, empathy, love, ethical action and art.**
- Hmm...
- **3. We are an integral part of Nature, which we should cherish, revere and preserve in all its magnificent beauty and diversity. We should strive to live in harmony with Nature locally and globally. We acknowledge the inherent value of all life, human and non-human, and strive to treat all living beings with compassion and respect.**
- Sounds good to me, so far, so good.

- **4. All humans are equal centers of awareness of the Universe and nature, and all deserve a life of equal dignity and mutual respect. To this end we support and work towards freedom, democracy, justice, and non-discrimination, and a world community based on peace, sustainable ways of life, full respect for human rights and an end to poverty.**
- So far, these first four, seem to be in line with most forms of paganism and appear very earth centered and focused on the physical and societal qualities of life with the intent of promoting a system of harmony and respect for nature, the earth, its animals, and other humans. I don't read anything in these first four that contradicts my understanding of Paganism and Wicca although so far nothing has been said of the divine.
- **5. There is a single kind of substance, energy/matter, which is vibrant and infinitely creative in all its forms. Body and mind are indivisibly united.**
- Hmm, this statement, with its reference to energy/matter seems to be where a notion of a greater reality creeps into the physically based philosophy of the pantheists. Elsewhere on the website in an article which provides an interpretation of certain elements of the beliefs statement, "matter/energy" is meant to be read as matter and energy interchangeably. Also in the same article "matter" is separately defined and implied **to include all physical objects, forces and fields that have been or may in the future be detected by the senses or extensions of the senses, or that may reasonably be deduced as existing by established scientific methods, procedures, and evidence.** Most of what is being described in this definition of matter, is what is referred to as being paranormal by parapsychologists and paranormal investigators. The paranormal is simply phenomena which science is currently unable to explain, meaning that what is currently referred to as being paranormal will one day hopefully be understood by science as being normal. This then goes to include the potential notion of an afterlife, since energy cannot be created or destroyed, but can only be changed. If living beings are energy, then upon death where does this energy go? Though the pantheists associated this website do not seem to acknowledge an afterlife, apparently it is taken into account from a paranormal perspective by their emphasis on science and by defining 'matter' like they do.
- **6. We see death as the return to nature of our elements, and the end of our existence as individuals. The forms of "afterlife" available to humans are natural ones, in the natural world. Our actions, our ideas and memories of us live on, according to what we do in our lives. Our genes live on in our families, and our elements are endlessly recycled in nature.**
- This is a very practical position. Since no afterlife can be proven in the eyes of science, the view of death in the eyes of the pantheists is very nature and socially based. But what of the idea that **energy is infinitely creative in all its forms** which is from number five? Does energy have consciousness? If it does not have consciousness then how does it know itself and therefore create? Since science cannot prove what consciousness is, is there an acknowledgement of consciousness in pantheism? If **body and mind are indivisibly united** then when one dies

so does the other, but what about energy? Science says energy cannot be destroyed what about the part in the belief statement which says that **all matter, energy, and life are an interconnected unity** does this then imply that energy can die if life dies? Or does life continue beyond death because it is united with energy and energy cannot be destroyed? I guess I need to know what they mean by referring to life. Is life thought of as an inherent force within the body? I like to think so, after all what are the differences between a living person and one who is deceased? What starts or keeps the heart pumping. What makes the cells in the body regenerate? And, upon death what has caused all this to cease? What is no longer present? I don't think I would be too far off to assume that this is how the idea of the soul came about for what else could it be that makes a body live and prosper or the opposite to stop living, physically break down and decompose? And from a paranormal perspective it is believed that consciousness exists and can exist beyond death. Though this can't be proven we have an inclination of this potential reality from the capturing of EVPs (Electronic Voice Phenomena) through which anomalous voices are found within a recording when no one else was present during the time of the recording. The EVPs seem to convey consciousness as they are often found to respond to the individual doing the recording as the individual asks questions to the empty room and interacts with the space. Though we can't prove the origin of these voices we know they are voices because audio forensic studies have shown this to be the case. But we don't know if they are an indication of life after death. However, it is something to consider and may reveal that there is indeed more to death than the memories of the deceased by those who continue to live.

- **7. We honor reality, and keep our minds open to the evidence of the senses and of science's unending quest for deeper understanding. These are our best means of coming to know the Universe, and on them we base our aesthetic and religious feelings about reality.**
- So, if science is used as a basis to understand the Universe (reality?) why is there a need to use the senses and science's unending quest upon which to base one's aesthetic and religious feelings about reality, if reality is already dictated by science and the strict observation of the evidence that science produces? If science is so crucial for one to know the “Universe” and reality, should not then science simply be one's religion? It seems like this is should be the case judging from numbers 6 and 7 and if I am not mistaken 6 and 7 almost describes pantheism as being a form of atheism?
- **8. Every individual has direct access through perception, emotion and meditation to ultimate reality, which is the Universe and Nature. There is no need for mediation by priests, gurus or revealed scriptures.**
- So here we have a second version of reality, apparently there is reality and then there is **ultimate reality, which is the Universe and Nature**. Does there really need to be a difference? I thought one's senses and science were one's best means of coming to know the Universe, which was just stated in number 7? Sure we all have senses, but senses play tricks on us, as does the mind. If no priests, gurus, or revealed scriptures are required then

where do Scientists fit? Where do Science Journals fit? Where do studies, theories, experiments, hypotheses, and laws fit according to number 8? If science and its revelations are so crucial in pantheism would not then Scientists actually be mediators between Ultimate reality and the individual? Would not a scientist then play a similar role as a priest or guru?

- Last, but not least....
- **9. We uphold the separation of religion and state, and the universal human right of freedom of religion. We recognize the freedom of all pantheists to express and celebrate their beliefs, as individuals or in groups, in any non-harmful ritual, symbol or vocabulary that is meaningful to them.**
- This last belief seems to then void out and sum up what was established in the previous 8. After all that, be what you like, believe as you like, and practice as you like. So what were the previous 8 for? What does it really mean to be a pantheist? Is there really a means to describe pantheism and how a pantheist believes? Judging from these nine statements I’m not exactly sure. There seems to be a reverence for nature and science, with an allusion to something that exists within a greater unknown, but not being specifically divine in origin or substance. There is no certain acknowledgement of an afterlife as everything about pantheism seems to be based in one’s everyday tangible reality without elaborating on that reality to imply something beyond itself. Pantheism seems to be a very practical approach to a religious life in a sense, but at the same time replaces religion with science almost elevating science to a status similar to organized religion being that of a source of insight and guidance in regards to how one should live and believe. Except science is not really about belief as it’s suppose to be about facts, not to imply that science is infallible, because it’s not, but isn’t one of the goals its pursuit to explain and understand existence imply a desire to achieve a state of infallibility at some point? One doesn’t believe in facts, since by definition facts are unquestionable and belief in anything has to include a suspension of doubt which is what faith is. But is there a room for faith in a philosophy that is inherently dependent upon science?
- This is an interesting issue and not meant to offend any pantheists who happen to be listening. If you do consider yourself a pantheist what do you think of the nine belief statements as laid out by World Pantheism? Do you agree with them all? If so, what do you think about what I have said in response to these statements? If you do not agree with the statements why and if so, as a pantheist, what do you believe?
- In an effort to learn more about Pantheism I found the website of the **Universal Pantheist Society** at www.pantheist.net, and on their site they have a short explanation of what Pantheism is.
 - ***Pantheists do not propose belief in a deity; rather, they hold nature itself as a creative presence.***
 - ***Pantheism reconciles science and religion through ecology leading to strong environmental awareness.***

- ***Pantheists believe in Divine Immanence. To the Pantheist, divinity does not transcend reality; it surrounds, and is within. All share divinity. This leads the pantheist to personal ethics of tolerance and understanding.***
- No proposed belief in deity huh? Hmm... Well, I guess, no, I’m not a pantheist then.

❖ **Wrap Up**

- If you have any thoughts about this episode or about what I’ve said in one of its segments please let me know by sending me a message through the website. www.infinite-beyond.com simply visit the contact page, fill out the form, and be sure to click the submit button when you’re done. I may even read what you have to say on the air. Or if you prefer a public venue then, visit and join our online forum by clicking on the link at the top of the show website. I look forward to hearing from you!
- If you liked this show and are interested in hearing more, check us out on podcast alley, podcast pickle, on iTunes, or visit our website at www.infinite-beyond.com. There you will find links to our blog and our forum as well as a means to contact me directly if you have any show feedback or suggestions to help make the show better.

➤ **Show credits**

- To find other pagan podcasts please check out The Pagan Podcast Index at <http://paganpodcastindex.wordpress.com/>
- The several music tracks heard in this episode were
 - “Proteus” by composer George Wood
 - “Piano Quartet in g 3rd Movement by Mozart” performed by Linda Holzer
 - “Drum and Bass” by Ted Tunes
 - “Spaces” by 3vrn3n
 - “Eternal” by 1
 - “Universe Inside You” by Persian Paladin
- "Some of the music provided tonight is from the PodShow Podsafe Music Network. Check it out at 'music.podshow.com'"
- Remember that all notes for the show can be found at our blog which can be accessed through our website. And the links for the show can be found on the links page of our website as well.
- The Infinite and the Beyond and its segments are copyrighted by Chris Orapello
- Thanks for listening, Merry Part, Blessed Be, and 93!

Show Notes: Episode #001 – The Curse of Being Weird

❖ **Show Summary:**

- In this introductory episode we introduce the listener to the show by discussing the title and its direction. We learn about Aleister Crowley in the show segment “A Corner in the Occult”. Later we address the issues with being an individual and what to avoid if you happen to be one of the cursed. And we finish the show with a look into pantheism.

❖ **Breakdown:**

- Introduction
 - Music : “Proteus” by composer George Wood
 - Music: “The Eternal” by Lumiloop
- (11:04) – “A Corner in the Occult: Aleister Crowley”
 - Music : “Piano Quartet in g 3rd Movement by Mozart” performed by Linda Holzer
- (18:34) – Pagan Podcast Shout Outs!
 - Music: “Drum and Bass” by Ted Tunes
- (19:50) - “The Curse of Being Weird” by Chris Orapello
 - Music : “Spaces” by 3vrn3n, a soundscape project by M. T. Pierce. Music of the lithosphere.
- (29:50) - “Could I Be a Pantheist?” response piece by Chris Orapello
 - Music: “Eternal” by 1
- (44:15) - Closing
 - Music : “Universe Inside You” by Persian Paladin

❖ **Music:** (in order of being heard)

- “Proteus” by composer George Wood - <http://podsafeaudio.com/jamroom/bands/1454/>
- “The Eternal” by Lumiloop
- “Piano Quartet in g 3rd Movement by Mozart” performed by Linda Holzer - <http://www.ualr.edu/lrholzer/bio.shtml>
- “Drum and Bass” by Ted Tunes - <http://podsafeaudio.com/jamroom/bands/939/ted-Tunes.php>
- “Eternal” by 1
- “Spaces” by 3vrn3n, a soundscape project by M. T. Pierce. Music of the lithosphere.
- “Universe Inside You” by Persian Paladin - <http://podsafeaudio.com/jamroom/bands/2644/>

❖ **Links**

- The Pagan Podcast Index - <http://paganpodcastindex.wordpress.com/>
- Haunted New Jersey – <http://www.hauntednewjersey.com>
- Deo’s Shadow – <http://www.deo-shadow.com>

- World Pantheism - <http://www.pantheism.net/>
- Universal Pantheist Society - <http://www.pantheist.net/>
- The Mindscape of Alan Moore (Youtube) - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QxUP5BQHRE8>
- The Mindscape of Alan Moore (Amazon.com) - <http://www.amazon.com/Mindscape-Alan-Moore/dp/B001BEGB3O>

❖ **Credits**

- PodsafeAudio - <http://www.podsafeaudio.com/>
- Podsafe Music Network - <http://music.podshow.com>