

## **Marilyn Evans and Jonathan Hutchins**

Interviewed by Diana Brown

July 20, 2014

Transcribed by Jake Waters

**Abstract:** Oral history interview with Marilyn Evans and Jonathan Hutchins conducted by Diana Brown on July 20, 2014. This interview took place at the home of Marilyn and Jonathan in Kansas City. Marilyn edited and Jonathan was on the staff of the second incarnation of The Rune, a Pagan magazine published under Marilyn's editorship from 1995 to 2001. In this interview, we talk about The Rune, and Marilyn and Jonathan's experiences with Paganism in Kansas and Missouri from the 1980s to today. This interview was conducted for the Religion in Kansas Project as part of a summer fieldwork internship funded by the Friends of the Department of Religious Studies.

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0:00

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: Google it.

DIANA BROWN: So you should repeat everything you just said.

MARILYN EVANS: Yeah really.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: I'll just go back and try to remember it all. Besides bulletin boards and message relays, chat rooms essentially, beginning to pull together a national community of Wiccans and Pagans, the other big thing was Pagan Spirit Gathering which was up there in Milwaukee I believe.

MARILYN EVANS: It's moved around places.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: It was the first national gathering of Wiccans and Pagans that we know of.

MARILYN EVANS: One of my early forays into supporting the Pagan community, I was always very active in this, I had been a very active religious person before I was a Pagan, it was just a part of my religion that I support community and help other people have access which was kind of the opposite of what a lot of people were in the early days of Wicca, especially some of the old Gardnerian sect. It was all very secret and very private.

1:22

DIANA BROWN: Yeah.

MARILYN EVANS: But there were so many people looking for so much that you kind of felt obligated to help out if they came looking. I and a few other people helped financially with The Rune when it was first getting started and just made some monetary

contributions. They had a party to kind of thank people for helping out and it was a picnic. We were all moaning and complaining about how we can't afford, we can't get the time off, we can't get the money together to go to PSG. So someone uttered the incantation, let's have our own Pagan festival which we thought was going to be like a Pagan pasture party. Different people started getting involved through Westwind out of Lawrence and I knew Starhawk and it was all of a sudden like woah, Starhawk.

2:26

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: She was at the time probably the biggest public figure in Paganism.

MARILYN EVANS: Very well known public figure, writing books and stuff like that and most people had heard of her. So between the Internet, before it was the Internet, the fighternet? and bulletin board stuff, and through The Rune and advertising and book stores. Book stores were a big social interaction, quite like...

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: Magic Lantern.

MARILYN EVANS: Well before Magic Lantern existed, what was the women's book store? It was before the Phoenix, it was called something else.

3:03

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: Phoenix was its rebirth.

MARILYN EVANS: Yeah, Phoenix was its rebirth, anyways it was a women's study...

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: Feminist study.

MARILYN EVANS: Feminist book store.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: Book store.

MARILYN EVANS: And then there was also House of Hez, House of Hezekiah, which I think is actually Phoenix Herbs now. There's a lot of phoenixes around here.

DIANA BROWN: I saw the advertisements in some of the issues I was looking through for House of Hezekiah.

MARILYN EVANS: Yeah and through all these different businesses we were promoting this festival and we thought we would have twenty-five people in a pasture some place.

DIANA BROWN: Yeah.

MARILYN EVANS: The Pagan pasture party. Then we thought that there might be fifty and then it ended up being, I don't think it was quite a hundred but it ended up being more than we expected. People came that we were not expecting and some of them we had not even heard of that were very famous in the Pagan community. The guy who wrote the herb book, I can't remember his name.

DIANA BROWN: Scott Cunningham? No, it would have been...

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: Scott was...

4:01

MARILYN EVANS: Scott and Raymond Buckland were two guests for our second festival.

DIANA BROWN: Oh.

MARILYN EVANS: This was, I can't think of his name, he's written a pretty famous book on magical herbs.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: Peter Soderberg.

MARILYN EVANS: Peter Soderberg, the blue fairy was there. He was awesome. Amber K...

DIANA BROWN: What was that?

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: He was a folklorist who collected a lot of chants.

MARILYN EVANS: Yeah, he was quite the chant recorder.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: But this was...

MARILYN EVANS: And then Amber K showed up and she's quite awesome. There were all these amazing people who heard that there was a festival in Kansas and they just showed up and it was like woah this is so cool.

DIANA BROWN: Yeah.

MARILYN EVANS: It was really great but we lost our site the second year and we had Scott Cunningham and Raymond Buckland and a whole bunch of other people who were going to be coming.

DIANA BROWN: Yeah.

MARILYN EVANS: And we didn't have a site and I'm walking around shell shocked like where are we going to have this thing? We ended up finally having it and after the second year we decided to step out of the way and let other people run it. We decided we had never been to a Pagan festival except our own, so we went off to...

5:11

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: Dragon Festival.

MARILYN EVANS: No, no, the first one.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: The one in southern Indiana.

MARILYN EVANS: What was it?

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: Elf Fest.

MARILYN EVANS: Elf Fest, Elf Fest, that was really fun.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: They were springing up all over the place after Pagan Spirit Gathering had been going for a few years. The eighties were...it started in 1980.

DIANA BROWN: Ok.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: So it had been going for five or six years before we started ours. And it sort of was...it's when Wicca went public really. Although there had been stuff in the hippy days of the sixties and seventies, it was kind of a background thing back then or that's how I remember it. In the eighties, Starhawk published her book which crossed over between feminism and psychology and Wicca. Not much longer...not too much longer after that Margot Adler did a survey of Paganism throughout the United States called *Drawing Down the Moon*, which is still considered the reference of Paganism in America.

6:20

MARILYN EVANS: Have you read *Triumph of the Moon*?

DIANA BROWN: I have.

MARILYN EVANS: I actually have a few issues with the author. I've seen some interviews with him. I lived in England for a couple of years. It was an American witch in my holy land, it was the greatest thing in the world. He's looking at it from the point of view of a historian.

DIANA BROWN: A cultural historian.

MARILYN EVANS: He keeps talking about how this isn't written down so it must not exist and I'm thinking well, you know for an historian that may be true but if you're looking at it archeologically and anthropologically, no not so much. So, yeah, I have a few issues with him taking a strictly historical historian's view that has a lot of verbal tradition and now that we have so much stuff that is captured on the internet, I'm hoping it won't be lost quite so readily. The idea that things can be handed down verbally and can continue, you know, that's been demonstrated over and over again to be the case. So to say that there can't be any antiquity associated with it, I think is probably ill-informed at best. It's not impossible.

7:37

DIANA BROWN: I think it's not impossible, I think it's sort of like where would he have got that information and concluded that people he wasn't associating with probably wouldn't have been the people who had that.

MARILYN EVANS: Yeah, that'll do it.

DIANA BROWN: I mean, you never know.

MARILYN EVANS: You have to look at some of the older survival stuff like...names, names are leaving me, Fairy Faith and Celtic Countries.

8:10

DIANA BROWN: Oh what is it, Wentz?

MARILYN EVANS: Evans Wentz, yeah, Evans Wentz. Yeah and the things that survived. When I was living in England, I was looking for what's Pagan and what's not. It's interesting that Paganism is so deep in the bones of England that people don't even notice it, but if you're coming there from somewhere else and you're a foreign Pagan it's just everywhere, it permeates everything. No one thinks anything about it. You have Bonfire Night, you call it Guy Fawkes but it isn't really, and you have Bonfire Night and you do it because your parents did. You do it for your kids because your parents did it for you and it's so down to the bone Pagan that you know, you've always done it and you don't think anything about it.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: One of the things that struck me was there was a small village craftsman, handyman, and he found a spell bottle in a wall, knew exactly what it was and he wasn't a Wiccan or anything. He would occasionally show up at the church.

9:16

MARILYN EVANS: Yeah.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: But he knew exactly what it was and why it was there.

DIANA BROWN: Yeah.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: And people just notice stuff there.

DIANA BROWN: Yeah, I mean I think a lot of the sort of actual, practical, magical practices, I mean yeah they're drawn from actual customs.

MARILYN EVANS: It's interesting that you would find so many Pagans that are healers and technologists.

DIANA BROWN: Yeah.

MARILYN EVANS: What is magic but technology that we haven't quite figured out yet. We haven't figured out how the mechanism works and how many of the healing herbs are medicinal and many of the modern drugs are derived from them. It looked like magic when you took this thing and put it in a cup and you felt better. It looks like magic but it isn't really necessary.

10:06

DIANA BROWN: Yeah.

MARILYN EVANS: He's a computer person and I've worked in pharmaceuticals for decades and witches are nurses or librarians or anything to do with knowledge and all of these things. It's just natural to go into that as I think probably...witches is an interesting word, you could call us as regularly shamans and medicine people and witch doctors and priests and priestesses or whatever word you pick has a charge on it. Yeah, you know you got some preconceived notion or gut reaction that you have to various words so we just call ourselves people. We're just people.

DIANA BROWN: Oh, really? So you wouldn't just call yourselves witches?

MARILYN EVANS: I actually call myself a witch because I'm a public witch and I'm a promoter but you'll notice that we have a convention in The Rune and I always capitalize "Pagan" because it is a religious group to me and "Gods" is always capitalized. I always capitalize Wicca and Wiccan because if other people can than why can't I? My religion is no less than theirs.

11:26

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: There is a school of thought that is supported by *Triumph of the Moon* but there's some subtly in *Triumph of the Moon* that takes away from that too. The school says that Wicca did not exist until Gerald Gardner invented it out of ceremonial magic and that all modern witchcraft is derived from Gardner and didn't exist until the 50s. If you read carefully in *Triumph of the Moon*, and see that he did find things in America that contributed to how he conceived Wicca.

12:06

DIANA BROWN: Yeah.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: One meaning of Wicca is what Gerald Gardner invented but clearly there were other survivors of the tradition that we considered witchcraft that existed in England and American before Gardner. I was initiated by a traditionalist

coven in Boston before I came out here and one of the things that they emphasize more strongly than anyone does these days is secrecy. I never knew who any of the other coven members were. I knew them only in coven.

DIANA BROWN: Yeah. So you didn't know who they were in terms of what they did or their real names?

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: What they did, where they lived, anything. We met in public spaces.

DIANA BROWN: Okay.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: It just...you didn't ask, you didn't tell.

DIANA BROWN: Why was that?

13:02

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: It goes back to the persecution of witches, mostly in England, where you had to keep it secret because you might be a lord's son, you might be a magistrate, or you might just be a farm and you didn't want people you know to come after you because you were a witch. Witchcraft remained illegal, I think some parts of it into the seventies in England but definitely into the fifties and you could be prosecuted for claiming to be a witch or even for being accused of being a witch.

MARILYN EVANS: Certainly there are still parts of the world where that is the case. One of the interesting things that happened because of the Heartland Festival because we were so visible and because we were so public, there were people who were starting to come out of the broom closet as it were and they showed up. A few people showed up at the festival and one of them was, at least one of them, several of them were kind of venerable elders who got persuaded to come by some of their younger conveners. They said, come on and check this out because they were a lot of fun. There was clothing optional, there was lots of drumming, there was dancing, huge bonfires, workshops, music.

14:25

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: It eventually became a big party festival.

DIANA BROWN: I was going to ask about what you guys thought about...

MARILYN EVANS: One of the things that happened was that some of these elders from a lot of different traditions and some of these traditions didn't even have names...

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: They were just a family of community traditions.

MARILYN EVANS: They were a family of tradition and some people that had remnants of family stuff and they didn't know what to call it. They didn't know it had a name and they said wow this sounds a lot like what my family's been doing for generations and generations. Maybe I've got one of those faces but people seem to want to tell me this stuff and I'm sitting there listening to these people and going holy mackerel, this stuff is awesome and I'm wishing I was taking notes but that would be rude. They're telling me these things and some people got together and decided that it was wrong to discriminate among us as people of different traditions and stuff.

15:33

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: To people who were doing Heartland and were coming to Heartland were largely Neo-Pagans and post-Gardnerian, although they did follow other traditions besides Gardner's.

DIANA BROWN: Is that how you would personally use the term then, because I've never been sure when to use Neo-Pagan versus Pagan or why Neo-Pagan developed.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: Neo-Pagan is the revival, it's the revivalist tradition.

MARILYN EVANS: Let me finish this because this was kind of a wow moment for me. At the Boy Scout Festival, whatever year it was, some of these elders and founders; it's kind of hard to say founder of a tradition. Yes it's an ancient tradition that's twelve months old.

16:28

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: Principles of...

MARILYN EVANS: Leaders of these various groups or people who were kind of elders of them decided to have a ceremony or ritual in which they would recognize the founders of the tradition. Elders and founders is how they termed and they invited people from all of these different groups that they identified and had a ritual in which they recognized elders across cultural...

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: Really recognized as initiates.

17:00

MARILYN EVANS: Yeah.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: As fellow initiates.

MARILYN EVANS: And accepted each other in saying my tradition recognizes your tradition. We acknowledge that you are traditional Pagans and we will share information with you and will accept you. It was very progressive.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: It was mostly along old family traditions, there weren't sure what to do with the Neo-Pagans.

DIANA BROWN: I see.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: Which as I said, the majority of the festival Pagans were Neo-Pagans but these people had come to them and seen that okay this is not quite our family tradition but very clearly it's related and we don't necessarily accept that you having found this and decided to become one are the same kind of person we are but we can see in each other, the ones who had this as an inherited family tradition, we can see that we have a commonality and we recognize each other as initiates. They eventually, because we were the medium through which they communicated, pretty much accepted the Neo-Pagans.

18:07

MARILYN EVANS: Yeah.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: I think I would define the Neo-Pagans, well it's hard these days because I think there's been at least three generations since we've been involved.

Someone who inherited it as a family tradition or a community tradition, rather than someone who adopted it out of knowledge.

MARILYN EVANS: Yeah, we have a friend who says she found tread because she initiated her mother.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: She initiated her mother and her grandmother.

MARILYN EVANS: She initiated her mother and her grandmother and that made her family.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: It's her mother and her daughter.

MARILYN EVANS: Her mother and her daughter.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: So it became a family tradition.

MARILYN EVANS: That was funny.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: Initiate is a touchy term because as Paganism went public, as we had books like *Drawing Down the Moon* and *The Spiral Dance* come out and people began to pick up the books and become Pagans on their own, everybody was an initiate because they newly dedicated themselves to the study or to the faith. We've never really come up with a term beyond initiate to recognize someone who has come into the faith through whatever tradition, through whatever path. Part of that is we believe that we're all still learning.

19:28

DIANA BROWN: Yeah.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: We're always becoming aware, we're always finding new things about the religion. Gardnerianism has degrees and other traditions have as many degrees as the Masons do. My tradition doesn't have degrees. You are an initiate or you are not.

DIANA BROWN: I see.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: Generally, a Wicca initiate is someone who has studied for a year and a day under the study of someone who is an initiate and is then recognized by the group as a member of the faith.

20:08

MARILYN EVANS: The way that I sort of recognize it...I've had people accuse me of being Gardnerian although I am not. I was never initiated into a Gardnerian coven although one person told me that I was more Gardnerian than the Gardnerians are. I'm not sure about that either. A lot of people who say Alexandrian Gardnerian because they're kind of globed together although...anyway it's all very confusing but I don't really call myself any particular tradition. I have had to work out a lot things logically and for me the three degree system is useful in that if you are a priest or a priestess in your own right and no one stands between you and the gods and you speak on your own behalf than you are a member of your faith and you are what I would call a first degree initiate. To me, a second degree, you would take a degree, you would take certain training and it qualifies you to be in service to the community so you would do



handfastings and child blessings and remembrance services and marriages, marrying and burying. All of those things and a certain level of counseling, all of those things that you would expect of clergy...

21:32

DIANA BROWN: Yeah.

MARILYN EVANS: Because you are being in service to your community and to me, something like a third degree...and most people don't ever want to be in service they just want to be their own person.

DIANA BROWN: Yeah.

MARILYN EVANS: So they don't need or want what I would call a second degree and the third degree is when you teach teachers and it is at that point that you take on the responsibility of being an elder or a crone or something. You would teach teachers and some people don't ever want to do that either. So for me that is a functional working way that I have dealt with the whole idea of degrees and I'm almost ready to add a last one and that is get away from me I'm in retirement now.

22:20

DIANA BROWN: Really a fourth degree.

MARILYN EVANS: The fourth degree is I'm a hermit now, go away.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: One of the biggest changes we've seen is before Wicca was really public and before Paganism was really public, there were different ways of running covens. In my coven, it was a coven of equals. Everybody, if you were an initiate, you were a priest or a priestess. You could run the ritual, you were expected to contribute by helping out and doing rituals when they needed to be done. There was no real hierarchy although there was a high priestess who was the nominal head of the coven because you do need some structure and organization in your group or complete anarchy usually devolves into dictatorship. There was that degree of hierarchy but it was very low. Other covens were founded by one or two other people, a priestess and sometimes a priest. They were always the leaders, they always did the rituals, they always led the rituals as high priest or high priestess and that distinction of high priest and high priestess being the leaders of the coven, that has become the more prevalent model these days. We have evolved what I call congregational Wicca, where you have a group of people who may or may not be initiates but do not ever act as priest or priestess.

23:56

DIANA BROWN: Right.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: And then you have a core group, sometimes one or two, sometimes several who are the high priests and high priestesses or priests and priestesses even of that group. They're the initiates; they're the ones that teach, they're the ones that do the rituals.

DIANA BROWN: That mirrors my experience for sure.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: Yeah, it's much more common these days. It's kind of how the army runs their Wiccan services.

DIANA BROWN: Oh really?

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: It's easier for a Christian culture to understand, ok the priests and priestesses are in front...

DIANA BROWN: The laypeople, yeah.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: Yes, exactly.

MARILYN EVANS: Yeah, but there are other groups who have what we might call a lay ministry. No one person is the leader. It kind of depends on the group. Groups form a lot of different, I've been in a lot of different groups that have been run a lot of different ways and it's kind of dependent on who's in it and their level of comfort and how they're doing it. We have one where we kind of rotated who were priests and priestesses. I don't know if you have done many Skyclad rituals...

25:09

DIANA BROWN: None at all actually.

MARILYN EVANS: Oh really?

DIANA BROWN: Yeah, but I'm a relative newbie to actually doing anything.

MARILYN EVANS: Many people are just solitary forever and don't interact with many groups unless maybe something like Pagan Pride ay.

DIANA BROWN: It only happened for me in the last year, ever since I moved here that I started getting involved with other people.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: If it's the tradition I come from, you are fully equipped as a solitary witch to do your own circles and worship and everything, just completely all by yourself and you get together with others with similar interests. Whereas, the more modern model, you have someone who knows how to do the rituals and stuff and they take care of it. Individuals aren't as...it's less common for members of the religion to be full priests and priestesses capable of doing their own rituals without others.

26:19

MARILYN EVANS: It's an interesting thing that can happen. I was re-reading some of the old Rune articles and Jimmy wrote the article about, Jason is the name the article is under, wrote the article about his experience doing a solo ritual and it's fairly hilarious. It's pretty funny because of the way his room is, he's trying to walk around the circle and he has to walk on his water bed and it makes him sea sick. It's very cute but one of the things that sometimes happens is that people who are used to working alone, they go to a public ritual and this happened at the first Heartland, oh my God, we fired a priestess because all of these people were used to working alone.

27:00

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: Or with a very small group.

MARILYN EVANS: Or with a very small group and they don't understand the power and when you get about a hundred people together and they put a lot of power in it. You can end up with sparks shooting off your priestess and it's a bad thing.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: I had a young priestess, she was maybe only nineteen...

MARILYN EVANS: I don't know, she was about that.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: And hadn't really been a priestess for that long and never worked with...none of us had ever worked with a large public group like that.

MARILYN EVANS: Yeah, and the energy can be just woah and you've got to figure out a way to sink it and ground it.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: And we worked very hard at trying to...

MARILYN EVANS: Sending it where it needs to go to do what you need to do and yeah we had been in a couple of rituals where it was like oh my God.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: You get used to having to work so hard to raise energy and you work that hard in this huge group and everybody in the group is pushing so hard because they're in the same situation, you raise a huge amount of energy and people weren't really prepared to deal with all of it. They would do their spell and still have plenty of energy left. So we worked a lot after those experiences on training people on how to ground, how to make sure you're not still walking around charged up to do a spell or something.

28:21

DIANA BROWN: Yeah.

MARILYN EVANS: Of course it hints that eating something, sharing the piece of it helps you ground, it's essential to do that. Man, I had students...we used to do a Wicca 101 class and then we did a Wicca 202 and then one night they wouldn't go home so I ended up doing a training coven out of these four people who wouldn't go home. Three people I guess. Was it four or three?

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: It was four.

MARILYN EVANS: Yeah, four. Yeah, four sides only. Pure vision that they gave me. Yeah, they just wouldn't go home and I ended up with this teaching coven and they blackmailed me. But I completely lost my train of thought.

DIANA BROWN: Public, yeah.

MARILYN EVANS: Oh yeah it's just different energies for different things and how you do these things. The reasons I brought up skyklad is that one of the groups I was in, every once in awhile we would do a skyklad. We loved our clothes and we loved all the toys.

29:17

DIANA BROWN: Yeah, the stuff.

MARILYN EVANS: Yeah, the stuff. I used to joke that we're the opposite of the Catholics because you start out and maybe you have your missal and maybe you'll have your rosary but by the time you're Pope you've got these palaces and clothes and

everything. Witches are like the exact opposite, we start out like oh tools and stuff and clothes and jewelry.

Jonathans: Props.

MARILYN EVANS: Props.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: Posters.

MARILYN EVANS: Stuff and things. When you're down to using your finger for an athame and just ground by your feet and you just don't think anything about it. You just live it and don't have anything but in our group periodically we would do a skyclad ritual, remind ourselves of the roots and also because the energy is quite different. The toys are fun but sometimes they're distracting and we've done some kind of fun rituals. We did one where we didn't say anything, it was all a silent, completely silent. We've done other ones, we've done all kinds of stuff. We did...ah the Betty Crocker ritual, that was fun. The men were outside doing what men do, barbeque and the women were all inside making apple pie. We talked about our grandmothers and our female ancestors and our aunts and all of the people who had done these things. Our measuring cup was our chalice and the wooden spoon was our wand and the stove of course was our flame. It was so cool, we figured out that you can have a bunch of women in the kitchen at the same time because we know where our hips are at any given moment so we don't run into each other. We created this apple pie as a tribute to our grandmothers and we called it the Betty Crocker ritual. It turned out to be a pretty cool ritual even though it wasn't officially a ritual but it really was. It was quite fun making an apple pie.

31:15

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: None of the things that we went through, we realized that there are many philosophical, religious and magical traditions that work with the model of, let's call it a Gardnerian circle. It's very similar to the Order of Mass. You can substitute, there have been covens all over the United States that have substituted Egyptian gods and goddesses or the Celtic gods and goddesses. They've substituted Asatru gods and goddesses from the Norse, although that had, rather than become Wicca with Norse gods, what that became its own tradition because they recovered some of the magical traditions of the Norse and it really became a distinct thing. To the objection of some people, it's been done with Indian gods and goddesses and demigods. Some people feel it's disrespectful for white people who didn't grow up in those traditions to be calling those names and using those spirits. Most of that was a passing thing I think. The Wicca as Egyptian, although the Egyptian lore was very strong in Gardnerian circles and brethren.

32:45

MARILYN EVANS: Partly because that is ceremonial stuff and the Egyptian was quite strong ...but the old gods and the Egyptian gods are quite powerful and connecting to them is easy. You get a lot of bang for your buck when you're speaking.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: They're fairly accessible to the Europeans.

MARILYN EVANS: Yeah and we know, we grew up with that. We know a lot about them. The Celtic gods are more obscure.

33:05

DIANA BROWN: I was going to say I feel much less familiar with Celtic gods ultimately.

MARILYN EVANS: If you are lucky enough to read things like the Mabinogi and all of these other things. You can connect to them a little bit better.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: What Gods do you feel familiar with or comfortable.

DIANA BROWN: I don't know if I feel comfortable or familiar enough with them just yet.

The one I feel the most comfortable with is my old standby from Judaism, which is what I grew up with, and I haven't really found something or somebody that I am as comfortable with. So I've been tending to kind of keep it on a sort of animism sort of level, either dealing with trees or animals.

MARILYN EVANS: I always found it interesting in the Old Testament how they say again and again and again, don't worship goddesses, don't worship goddesses, don't worship goddesses and I thought you know they wouldn't keep saying this if it didn't keep happening.

34:00

DIANA BROWN: Oh yeah, of course.

MARILYN EVANS: They wanted to worship goddesses.

DIANA BROWN: Absolutely. Any time they say don't do this, it's because someone has been doing it.

MARILYN EVANS: A lot, actually.

DIANA BROWN: I mean sometimes I'll connect with a Mother Earth type of thing, I feel comfortable with that. Any specific names, I can't really so far. I don't know. It was such a long time before I could even call myself Pagan and let myself do this because I do have this sort of loyalty.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: Some people believe that the names and the symbols are the things that have the power and that there's one system and you need to use these symbols and these names for it to be good. There are so many of those that you kind of have to conclude that it's not the names and the symbols themselves but it's what we put into them and what we believe about them. For a lot of people in ceremonial magic, the Judaic Kabbalistic symbolism and mythology, the angels and such, those are what they use and they can see the symbols in nature and read things from them. There are newer Aquarian systems of symbology that were put to use as magical systems and the people who follow those are just as comfortable. One of the biggest differences among standard Wicca covens is does your circle start in the north or does it start in the east?

35:51

DIANA BROWN: Yeah I just recently became familiar with that.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: And along with that is which element is in which quarter.

36:00

DIANA BROWN: Right.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: Because they vary. Some people will tell you water is in the west because of England because that's what is to the west of England is water. And they will tell you that in America, that was reversed because the colonists were all living on the east coast and water became east.

DIANA BROWN: Yeah, oh I've never heard that one.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: Some will tell you that water is in the south. Few will tell you it's in the north.

DIANA BROWN: And how do you work?

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: I'm fairly flexible, to me Earth is in the north.

MARILYN EVANS: Partly because we have all of Canada up there.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: Air is in the east, fire is in the south and water is to the west.

DIANA BROWN: That's how I work too.

MARILYN EVANS: Yeah and that's kind of...well I'm perfectly happy with working in other systems. It's kind of like when you're using divination, my most favorite deities are Roman and not the Greekized Roman. I mean the stuff that the Greeks sort of overlayed on the Romans.

DIANA BROWN: Right.

MARILYN EVANS: It's the old, old, old Roman stuff which is like Pomona, the goddess of the orchards, the trees. The apple tree is like my thing and Pomona is my goddess in very many ways. When I created circle, it's more of a (unintelligible) or a sacred boundary than a circle. I'm just used to that, I like it and I work that way but I can do anything with anybody because I'm pretty flexible.

37:26

DIANA BROWN: Yeah.

MARILYN EVANS: When Romans did divination, they would sort of say here are the rules and they would lay out the rules and the gods will work with you.

DIANA BROWN: Yeah.

MARILYN EVANS: They'll say just tell us what you want and we'll figure it out.

DIANA BROWN: Yeah.

MARILYN EVANS: If I see a bird flying left to right within the next half hour and I'm looking this direction and the bird flies one way, that means one thing ok?

DIANA BROWN: Yeah.

MARILYN EVANS: If you're standing one way and the bird goes the other direction, you go hmm, I guess that means no. So you set up the rules and you go with it and once you do that divinatory tools will work that way and I think most things want you to come to an agreement.

38:11

DIANA BROWN: That's pretty much how I was taught to read tarot. Here's the system or whatever. Basically just talk to the deck or talk to whoever and say alright this what I'm doing and this how I would like you to show me.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: They're symbols that are supposed to trigger your own intuition. It's not the cards, it's you.

MARILYN EVANS: I can't read cards for myself because my deck likes me and it tells me what I want to hear. So I have to have other people do readings for me. I can read for other people, I just can't do myself.

DIANA BROWN: Interesting, I do hear that from people sometimes, yeah.

MARILYN EVANS: The cards lie to me because they want me to be happy.

DIANA BROWN: So you feel like it's the deck that's talking and you feel like it's you.

MARILYN EVANS: It's both.

DIANA BROWN: It's both.

MARILYN EVANS: I've done charity fundraisers where I'll do readings for people. I only took money from a reading once and it was a major mistake because the person would not listen and paid no attention whatsoever and I was trying to warn her. So I can't and I use divination as a counseling tool for the most part. Sometimes I will do fundraisers and I will do readings for fundraisers and people will say remember when you, and I will have no idea what I've told them when I'm doing a reading because I'm in a zone and it's got nothing to do with anything I'm paying attention to. It's just happening and I can't remember them and I don't want to remember them because it's very private.

39:38

DIANA BROWN: Yeah, that's very interesting. It's like hearing confessions.

MARILYN EVANS: I used to do palm readings just for fun and I was at this party. My friend drove me to this party and it was out in Colorado. She drove me to this party and I knew no one there except for her. So they started to say, oh Marilyn reads palms and I was like oh God. So I started reading palms and I was saying wow this is so weird. Everyone here's got this same thing, this is really interesting. It turns out they were all cops, and then they put a palm in front of me and it's like suddenly I've been reading Spanish and someone puts Portuguese in front me and I can't make sense of this at all. It turns out she was a nurse and it was like suddenly...I had been reading all of these cops' palms and suddenly I've got this nurse palm in front of me and I can't get my brain switched around to a different direction. Later, I was able to write something out to tell her what it was but it just side-tracked me and they were just standing around laughing because I had no idea that they were all cops. They were all cops and military police and things like that.

40:39

DIANA BROWN: Yeah, huh it's very similar.

MARILYN EVANS: It was like huh the results are all the same.

DIANA BROWN: I wonder why.

MARILYN EVANS: It was very bizarre.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: One of the things that helps with the different beliefs, even if they're rigidly held, is logic. Because I believe that ritual and magic work because they make sense to you, because they draw you through the object of the ritual by making sense to you. That's why things are done in a certain order. You can't consecrate a circle before you've cast it, although you can consecrate the space you're going to cast the circle in. You can't bless the circle before you've cast it. You can't work with the watchtowers until you've summoned them. You summon first and then you bless them or ask their blessing. I can work with the different cardinal points of the circle because most Wiccans, including me, having a feeling for the north and that the altar faces north. Some it faces east but for most it faces north and for me you start the casting in the north and the first watchtower you acknowledge is the east. So you come back around to the north. You don't start in the east and end in the north because then you have an open quarter.

42:13

MARILYN EVANS: But traditionally the northeast is supposed to be the weakest point.

DIANA BROWN: Why is that?

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: It's the traditional gate to have at the entry way.

MARILYN EVANS: It's the traditional place to bring people in, it's the weakest point. I have a theory that's a little different. I do some things differently than some people for some very bizarre reasons. Earth in the north and water in the west is goddess, goddess. Fire in the south and air in the east is god, god. Earth is passive goddess, water is active goddess. Air is passive god, fire is active god. So you have, if you bring them together in the middle you have active god, passive goddess, active goddess, passive god. So you're creating this and then everything comes together in the middle and you've got this thing. And if you have passive, passive, this makes it a weaker point in the northeast.

43:17

DIANA BROWN: I see.

MARILYN EVANS: So your strongest point would be active goddess, active god but if you have two really strong male and female characters you may have some conflict there. So some people like goddess, god, goddess, god but that's because if you don't split up the boys and the girls, they gossip and fight, or something. I don't know. Anyways, another thing I do, a lot of people will cast a circle deosil, clockwise because you're drawing down earth...sky energy. Some people only go deosil and they will not allow you to go widdershins in the circle. To me you're cutting off half your power because if you cut off Earth energy, it's real different if you're used to dealing with sky energy. Sky is very god energy, very male-oriented for the most part and if you're drawing down, drawing down, always drawing down, of course you're drawing down the moon as well, which is also female goddess but if you don't ever draw up Earth energy,



you're missing a bat because it's low, it's slow and it's very powerful. It's like an earthquake as opposed to a thunderstorm. It's a very different type of energy. When I close the circle, I tend to go widdershins to erase the circle but also to draw up Earth energy to neutralize the sky energy and I ground them out together.

44:57

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: The deosil-only tradition, which mine was...my original tradition was, is that it's with the forces of nature. You're working with the course of the sun, the moon, and the stars. You're doing positive, forward good things. Going backward is doing negative, resistive, contrary things. So you never do that.

45:22

MARILYN EVANS: Which I find to be a villainization of female energy.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: Who knows? Who knows, but you're careful if you turn in circles, you always turn clockwise. You never turn to the left, you always turn around the right.

MARILYN EVANS: I've seen circles where this is carried to the point of craziness.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: It can get ridiculous, especially if people slip and try to correct themselves. That just kind of breaks the whole thing. Isaac Bonewits, Marilyn and I, Isaac lived in Kansas City for awhile...I think he actually married a girl from Kansas City, then moved east. We used to have some fairly late into the night sessions of the theory and logic of magic.

46:08

MARILYN EVANS: It's pretty hilarious.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: Why certain things should be done in certain orders. Things like that.

MARILYN EVANS: We used to have lot of really fun intellectual conversations like that with people. Sometimes we'd just get drunk but you know.

DIANA BROWN: It often starts out that way or ends that way.

MARILYN EVANS: So I don't know, we have lots of stories.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: What questions do you have?

DIANA BROWN: Well, are you both from Kansas City originally?

MARILYN EVANS: He's from upstate New York originally, I'm from Missouri.

DIANA BROWN: But you've been here a long time.

MARILYN EVANS: Yeah, I've been here...I moved here in '72.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: And then I did in '77.

DIANA BROWN: And you were saying that you had some religious background.

MARILYN EVANS: Yeah, I was raised Baptist before all the Baptists got crazy. Back when your conscience was your strongest thing and people weren't telling you [what you] were supposed to be thinking and doing. I was a very good little Baptist girl. I was a church camp counselor and a bible school teacher. I was in the Baptist Student Union Enquirer when I was in college. When the Baptists started to get crazy, there was

actually a teacher who gave a sermon that evolution was impossible because monkeys look funny when they sit up and stuff like that. I was so insulted that I got up and walked out because I've always been a scientist. I was kind of flirting with Paganism then too. I had a mad crush on Julius Caesar when I was in junior high and I learned Latin and loved all the Roman gods and all this other stuff. I tried being Catholic for awhile and that was interesting. I don't like the pope, well this pope is ok.

47:55

DIANA BROWN: He's good with the PR.

MARILYN EVANS: Yeah but I liked the ritual of it. One year during or once during Lent, I said the Rosary every day. I would go to Mass first thing in the morning and say the Rosary every day.

48:13

DIANA BROWN: It's a good experience.

MARILYN EVANS: I liked the concept of confession in that here are the things that are bothering me about myself and it's like okay your sins are forgiven. I was like yeah that's the whole point wasn't it, you're not supposed to wallow in guilt and feeling horrible and all that stuff, you're supposed to acknowledge that it's okay. There was a purpose for all of this. That was okay but after your second divorce it's kind of hard to pass yourself off as a Catholic. I was groping around and actually ran into Mike Nichols's lectures and was like woah, this all the stuff I used to you know. I know this stuff, this is good. So I started working with various people and got involved with, uh, Temothion [phonetically spelled]. He and I formed a group, we called it the Temple of Pomona. He was mostly into Tibetan magic so we would alternate between Tibetan and Roman things and we really had quite a fun time. Everyone thought we were a party coven because the only time we allowed people to come to our things was during celebratory things. All of the rest of the time it was very private, all of the workings we did were quite closed and no one else was invited. I think we only had like at the maximum we only had five people in our group. Eventually it fell apart because we got busy in other stuff. I've been in several other groups. I was in an Athena coven for awhile with Kacey for awhile which was quite fun.

50:00

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: It was a very good experience for several years.

MARILYN EVANS: Yeah, other things happened and that went apart. God, we were in...we've been in a lot of different groups. Actually, right now there were two ladies from Topeka that I work with and we're all writers or are trying to be. We meet either here or there and when your coven is in Topeka it's kind of hard to get to but we only meet almost every full moon. We're not even meeting every month.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: They try for every month and manage to make it every other month.

MARILYN EVANS: We also go to [unintelligible] down to Elysium, south of Harrisville because they have a beautiful grove that you can actually see it from satellite photos.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: We used to live just a few blocks over from here. They're kind of a survival of what used to be Linda Bennett's coven which was very strong and organized, very hierarchical. They were the ones who took over Heartland and then ran it for several years. Linda moved out of town, got divorced. Sam's still here, I don't think he's as involved in the coven at all. Kind of fell out of their favor when they split up. [unintelligible]

51:32

MARILYN EVANS: Joyce, yes you're right, Joyce. Yes, he's enjoys [unintelligible].

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: A lot of the remnants of Alaric's coven which became Rhiannon's coven, which became Layne and Cheryl's coven or joined Layne and Cheryl's coven and it's not a very formally structured coven anymore. We all know what we're doing, we get together for rituals, if somebody doesn't they're probably studying formally or informally with one of us and we'll take them down there to have a public ritual.

52:06

MARILYN EVANS: They're kind of low-key, they're high holidays that help get used to powers and various things.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: Are you familiar with the term high magic?

DIANA BROWN: I am, I mean I associate it with things like ceremonial types of things.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: The purpose of high magic is to bring you in closer touch with the gods, to open communication between you and them. Whereas, by contrast to what you would have to call low magic is magic done as a means to mend.

DIANA BROWN: Okay, that makes a little more sense as a distinction than simply more formal, less formal.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: Ceremonial magic, its stated goal is to perform high magic and there was a lot of high magic in the mix of what Wicca was through the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. As we've got into the more congregational, more modern practices, there's less magical practice and more religious worship I think you would call it.

53:25

MARILYN EVANS: It's interesting that in the earlier days of my involvement, everyone would say let's do magic, let's do magic, now I'm hearing worship. That was kind of a strange concept to some people because the whole point of being involved in this was to do magic. I thought that there's nothing I want and nothing I need. Maybe we could do a healing for somebody, maybe a job spell or a money spell for somebody. I'm here to worship, that's my stated goal and purpose.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: One of the things that kind of evolved out of people communicating in covens, knowing about each and people seeing different practices was a great paranoia about interfering with the will of another person.

54:00

DIANA BROWN: Yeah, I've seen a lot of that.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: That discourages a lot of different types of magic. Weather magic has been discouraged because if you've got a lot of different people pulling in different directions, you're going to get chaotic weather and if you're doing a no rain spell because you're doing an outdoor ritual this weekend, you may be causing a drought that's affecting someone else.

DIANA BROWN: It's such a traditional type of magic that maybe you shouldn't be doing it for that purpose but if you're a farmer.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: It was the fourth year when we were down at the Bartle Scott Reservation and we had Janet Farrar, was Stewart with her?

MARILYN EVANS: Yes.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: Yes, Janet and Stewart Farrar.

MARILYN EVANS: Janet and Stewart were both there.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: Very well practiced, strong, traditional Gardnerian witches from England. We started drawing energy and they pitched in and the clouds started going fwoooooooooosh. We backed off considerably.

55:11

DIANA BROWN: Unintentional weather magic.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: Yeah, we're not sure what they were going to do but decided that we probably shouldn't, without it being deliberate.

MARILYN EVANS: The funny thing is for a living I'm a scientist for the most part, although I do quality assurance for the most part now. Pretty much all my life I've been a scientist and I don't believe any of this stuff works and yet it constantly works. It works over and over and over again. One of the spells Bertha Lan taught me, the very first Heartland I lost my car keys, and she said quiet your mind and call to them and then go walk and they'll be there. I did because the first thing you do is panic and I quieted my mind...and here's this huge area and my car keys could be anywhere. I quieted my mind and walked straight to them, picked them up and no problem. I still do this often. I can't find something, I quiet my mind and I walk right by it because I don't really believe it could be there. I walk by it three times and I go no it's really here, ah there it is. I don't believe any of this works and yet it does over and over and over again so the evidence is there even though it's weird evidence. You can't pretend it doesn't work, although we do pretty often. I don't believe in magic yet it keeps happening. So obviously it's something I haven't explained yet by scientific means. Scientists are arrogant jerks and we all think we know everything but there's so much we don't know. We think we understand things because we have some theory and we have a bunch of formulas, we have a bunch of statistics and everything but somebody in ten years is going to come along and prove we're a bunch of fools who didn't really know what we were doing after

all, we just thought we knew. Knowledge is infinite and our understanding of it is kind of a little bit sort of [unintelligible]

57:13

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: One of the things that came out of covens being aware of each other, bumping into each other, was witch wars.

MARILYN EVANS: Ahhhh, witch wars, they're so fun. We love witch wars.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: With a little less consciousness and paranoia about influencing other people's wills, some covens fought with each other. They had a conflict, either individually or imagined, and they started casting spells against each other. Of course, when they were casting negative spells against another coven, terrible things happened to them which they of course assumed was from the other coven casting spells but were frequently their own magic reflected back at them. We knew people on both sides of a feud up in Carolton, Missouri.

58:03

MARILYN EVANS: No that was in Maryville.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: Maryville, the college, that's right.

DIANA BROWN: It's so crazy to me that people would do that.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: You know, it's a social thing.

MARILYN EVANS: It's a sad comment on the world at large when you have to develop a spell that would keep you from hurting anybody and keep anybody from hurting you because you know people used to say oh you need a mirror spell to reflect it back on them. Yeah but then they're going to assume that they're being attacked because it's their own thing reflected back on them. So we had to create the Dead Black Wall spell. Where you actually surround yourself with a dead black wall where nothing goes out and nothing comes in and that way it's all neutralized and I thought that we even had to come up with this spell is sad. But religion always gets people excited.

59:00

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: I think it speaks well of Paganism and Wicca that there is no persistent disagreement, war or schism among us.

DIANA BROWN: Do you think that's really true though? I feel like I see so much.

MARILYN EVANS: You probably see a lot more young people than we do. We're old farts now.

DIANA BROWN: Maybe everybody's relaxed a little.

MARILYN EVANS: When you're young and you're turned on and excited and enthusiastic and someone comes along and says that ain't right, you're going to react badly to it. It's understandable; you just have to talk people down out of their tree you know and get them to calm down.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: If they're passionate, there's going to be passions. There's no long term feuds that we are aware of. There are people that don't get along with each other, there's covens that don't speak to each other but they're not out to actively hurt

the others. They're not actively propagandizing against them or community. Mostly they've seen that the [unintelligible] law is true. Just chill.

1:00:14

DIANA BROWN: It's hard to say, if you really believe that this stuff works then why would you do it?

MARILYN EVANS: I have had to tell people, students, that you are not a victim. You do not have to lie down with a shirt that says welcome on it and let people walk all over you. You have the right to defend yourself as long as you aren't attacking anybody.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: You have the right to withdraw.

MARILYN EVANS: You have the right to withdraw, you have the right to defend yourself. If your ex-husband is coming after you with a gun, threatening your children and all of that stuff, call the cops and do the protection spell and do whatever it is you need to do to protect yourself because you are not a victim and don't have to be. So if you would call the cops, do magically what you would do in the real world. So light the candle, take the aspirin. Always use both means.

1:01:09

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: Most Wiccans come into Wicca from Christianity. It's the prevalent faith in America. Catholics feel very comfortable with it because it's a familiar ritual.

DIANA BROWN: I mean a lot of ex-Catholics...

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: Some would say they stole it from us. In the Midwest, a lot of people were raised in fundamentalist Christianity and think it's insane and reject it but because of this, some people bring Christian attitudes into Wicca. One of the things we found in the early festivals is some people really wanted to be persecuted. They wanted to see Wiccans under attack and being persecuted and being discriminated against. This gave them energy and made them want to fight back, of course. This caused some problems because one of the attendees at the second festival which was at a Boise...no that was at a campfire camp...campfire organization up in Parkville. He felt that they had somehow questioned or slighted him for being Wiccan and so he wrote a very angry letter back at them which caused us not to be welcome there anymore. I think we had soothed over the differences but because of that letter, we weren't welcomed back again and that's how it ended up in Bartle.

1:02:45

MARILYN EVANS: That was like the fourth, no third year though.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: That was the third year.

MARILYN EVANS: Yeah, I don't exactly remember the chronology though.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: It was the second into the third and after the third year, they decided they didn't want to deal with us anymore and also that I had been the liaison and by the third year I was no longer in the organization.

1:03:05

MARILYN EVANS: It's a wonderful thing now though that there is Pagan land. It is owned by Pagans and we will never be kicked out because it's land that is owned and used by Pagans.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: Part of that was because [unintelligible]

MARILYN EVANS: Which is kind of fun because it was originally a nudist camp and then it was a church camp or something like that and now it's another kind of church camp.

DIANA BROWN: That land has seen many types of groups. In general, it seems like there are bad things that can happen but it's good to not expect them.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: A very recent new issue has come up because Gaea and Heartland have been operated by the same group of people for so long, there was of course initially great loyalty to the group so that the land could be paid off, so the expenses could be met and so they could have the place.

1:04:05

DIANA BROWN: And now it's done.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: It's been held for a long time. The people who run Heartland have some problems with political in-fighting within the group and someone said to heck with this, we're just going to start another festival.

DIANA BROWN: I was just reading about this the other day.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: Kacey just posed something on Facebook about it. She raises some legitimate points, is this divisive to just do your own thing? Is it attacking Gaea because you want to do something that's not at Gaea? I much agree with her on that. That's how Heartland started, it wasn't anti-PSG, it was let's do our own. It was let's do one the way we think it ought to be done.

MARILYN EVANS: There has been, down in central Missouri, a big...I don't want to call it a witch school so much but there's some kind of conference center that does these kind of...

1:05:05

DIANA BROWN: Is that Diana's Grove?

MARILYN EVANS: Yeah, Diana's Grove. I don't even know if they're still around anymore. I used to get all of their mailings all of the time but I never went there.

DIANA BROWN: I think they're still around, I was looking for various things the other day and came across their website.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: There's this thing that you want to be teaching people about Wicca, but there's the idea that you're never supposed to be taking money for doing magic or for teaching. You're supposed to share your lore willingly. I'm kind of of that school.

MARILYN EVANS: Yeah, we're kind of of that school but I wouldn't condemn someone for making a living off of being a witch but I think that way has some potential for some

things that people can't resist. There's some kind of temptation for not corruption but I don't know.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: It also becomes a legal question because a lot of the anti-magic, anti-witchcraft, anti-gypsy laws are aimed at people who take money for fortune telling or money to cast a spell to fix something. That is still, in some places, against the law.

1:06:21

DIANA BROWN: Do you think that's simply a case of those laws should be overturned? Or do you think that...

MARILYN EVANS: There are some pretty bad people out there who do pretty bad things and it's nice to be able to prosecute them because there are some pretty unethical people out there who prey on people

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: They use the fortune telling or divination to convince you that there is a spiritual or magical problem.

DIANA BROWN: And if you pay me an x amount of dollars, I will remove it for you.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: And it's not trivial, it can be the absence of dollars. Because that happens there needs to be some sort of tribulation and I think what we did with the original Heartland policy, we had merchants coming and if it was something that you made we were ok with you selling it or if it was something physical you could sell it but we did not want to sell readings or a massage or any magical thing like that. We encouraged people to come and share their knowledge and teach those skills and I think that helped encourage people who weren't very mercenary about it, who really did it because they loved it and they believed in it.

DIANA BROWN: It's not an expo.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: Right, and if there was some way you could be paid for your time or compensated somehow, the gypsies would sell cards or books instead of selling fortune telling, then that could be legitimate but charging for teaching Wicca, that could put it in a different light. It becomes less spiritual, it becomes academic, it becomes easier to discard it and not believe in it and not take it seriously as a religious pursuit but a knowledge based academic pursuit.

1:08:19

DIANA BROWN: Why do you think that is?

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: I think it becomes a commodity instead of a reality.

MARILYN EVANS: I think the other thing is that if someone feels that they are qualified for teaching, it implies that they are the authority, the expert and I don't think that's true. There is no single expert, it is experiential and it is personal.

DIANA BROWN: Yeah it seems very antithetical to the ethos of the whole thing to set yourself up as...

MARILYN EVANS: It is between you and the gods. I don't know if you've ever heard the goddess initiated, have you ever heard that term?



DIANA BROWN: The goddess initiated?

MARILYN EVANS: People who are goddess initiated.

DIANA BROWN: Oh, people who are goddess initiated. I have heard that term.

1:09:03

MARILYN EVANS: You can usually tell them because they're the people who come out of the woods with their hair on fire. They're like woah. Yeah, I've seen a few of these, they go to a festival and go hey this is all pretty interesting. I kind of like all of this. Then they'll go off into the woods and spend the night around a fire. Oh, what's his name? The Canadian cop.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: Carol.

MARILYN EVANS: Carol Hoolah, he saw his wife or the woman who would become his wife walking naked out of the woods and he goes, it's the goddess and he just like fell apart. He was like oh my god, here's the goddess incarnate and it just decked him. Some people have where suddenly they get it and you can see it. You can see it on them like man you don't need to be initiated, the goddess already did. It happened to you. Those folks are like they're noble and don't ever question that or don't ever try to sell them something.

1:10:08

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: Wasn't it his wife that had been struggling to get her third degree for a long time?

MARILYN EVANS: It was second degree, somebody wanted her...there was no one who could give her...she felt she needed a second degree because these students kept showing up.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: She was teaching.

DIANA BROWN: She wanted her credentials.

MARILYN EVANS: She felt like she needed a credential of some kind.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: She was in an area where it was mostly Gardnerian groups where if you haven't received your first degree from them, they weren't going to accept you unless you studied for a year and a day or more with them so you could become a second degree. She couldn't find anybody who would initiate her second degree.

MARILYN EVANS: She kept having this dream about this athame and she was like if I could just find this athame, she would know what to do and know what the answer is.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: My degreeless tradition heard her agonizing over this around a campfire and I said this is ridiculous. I went and got my athame and did a second degree initiation.

1:11:13

MARILYN EVANS: And she looked at that athame and went this is the one I've been dreaming about. That's what I keep dreaming about and she had been looking for that athame, she decided that if she could just buy it and she was looking everywhere and it was the last day of the festival and she was like I didn't find the athame, I don't know

what I'm going to do. He just did it and she was like my god that's the athame I keep dreaming about.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: It's like a magic feather, once she had that, she believed she could do whatever she needed with it.

MARILYN EVANS: It is a personal thing, we have a thing we share a lot among my...I have kind of an internet coven too with a friend down in Tucson and two in Topeka and we all email a lot about a lot of things, religious things among other things, we have this thing where it's a third degree secret and it's not that I can't tell you...it's not that I won't tell you, it's that I can't tell you. There's no way to convey this, you can only experience this.

1:12:19

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: I can tell you everything there is to be said about it, and unless you get it...

MARILYN EVANS: It's a mystery, it won't make any sense. Yeah, that's why it's a third degree mystery. I can't tell you, it's impossible. You can say something like, the goddess loves you and it's like oh yeah cool but all of these things have been happening to you during a ritual, during the perfect day or a festival or something and then suddenly you think the goddess loves me and you break down into tears and it all makes sense. You go woah and suddenly you get it. The mystery has been presented to you and it makes sense. In its proper place and properly prepared, something like that. Fully prepared or something like that or as dear Dr. Leary would say, Timothy Leary, it's set in setting. So it has to be the right thing at the right time.

1:13:19

DIANA BROWN: I'm going to get up to use your bathroom and then I'm going to ask you both about how you feel about clergyization.

1:13:23

[Random Noise and Chatter]

1:15:42

[Discussion Resumes]

MARILYN EVANS: So, about that question?

DIANA BROWN: I wanted to ask you guys about the professionalization about people wanting to go to seminary to be Pagan clergy.

1:16:01

MARILYN EVANS: When I worked at St. Wick's Hospital I became very aware of their chaplaincy program. Chaplains rock, they're like so cool.

DIANA BROWN: Yes, they do.

MARILYN EVANS: Chaplains are just great and to me, a Pagan would make a great clergyperson, I mean a great chaplain because they have an instinctive...I don't know about instinctive but there's a lot of empathy involved and non-judgementalism involved and going beyond the religion to reach the person.

DIANA BROWN: Yeah and what's your experience with this [unintelligible] like?

MARILYN EVANS: Yeah and I feel like Pagans would make great chaplains but there's training and all this stuff and it's a big commitment and it can kind of be emotionally grueling too and if you're an extremely sympathetic person, it can get hard on you after awhile. I think that there can be a place for professional clergy that are Pagan but not in leading a church. I think there are other kinds of professionalism within the clergy that could be suitable paths for Pagans.

1:17:23

DIANA BROWN: But not congregational.

MARILYN EVANS: Not congregational, we're just not that type of people but there are people who write books about Paganism and make a living that way. There are people who have shops and [unintelligible] and things like that. There was a time when I thought that you should never take money for anything that a priest or priestess would do except you have to be spending your time somehow and if you could be spending your time earning a living instead of tending to the needs of your conveners, then maybe some kind of compensation is fair. I am not comfortable with it, I would never personally be comfortable with it. That is not to say some people...I don't know, I can't judge other people on that. I love the idea of a Pagan chaplain though, you know some things like that.

1:18:24

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: There is also an ethic that I heard Judaism shares that the priest should be in and of the community. They should be a member of the community, not someone who is exemplary, exception, not someone who is raised above the community but they should be working as the members of the community do.

DIANA BROWN: It's the [unintelligible]. It seems to not be so in contemporary times in the sort of liberal denominations it's not really true, like yeah you're hired by the congregation and that's your job but you know the principle is there.

1:19:02

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: In the ideal of all coven members being equal, that's much more appropriate than having someone who's the full time priest or priestess, it's not right. It happens even in the most egalitarian covens, somebody's got the best house for the ritual. Somebody has the knack for organizing and calling people and keeping people straight. The other thing is, who has the authority to teach canonical Wicca and there really isn't anybody. There's two variations on the faith and there's a pretty good agreement among most of them that it's between you and the gods and whatever you come up with, that's your faith. It's a revelatory faith that you can connect spirituality with the deities. You talk with them, you know what's right with them, it's not something somebody tells you how to do. Somebody else can give you the tools to make that connection and to learn but you learn the faith yourself from your experiences. So no, I

don't think there should be...I don't think these schools of Wicca, these schools of divinity that will give you a doctorate in Wicca, I don't think that's Wicca.

1:20:27

MARILYN EVANS: I can understand and a lot of Pagans I know have gone to college to become...or a university and have got doctorates in religious studies.

DIANA BROWN: Yeah but that's not getting a doctorate and being like I'm going to minister to you.

MARILYN EVANS: Yeah, exactly and that's just because our brains are hungry and we want to know things all the time, everywhere. Then if you use that knowledge to teach, or to write, or to run a store, there are plenty of occupations that are appropriate Pagan occupations anyways. Any occupation is appropriate if you're a Pagan because you can be conscious. If you're a Buddhist you can be doing what you're doing consciously. There is a concept in Buddhism about there being a rightness in the way in which you earn your living, you don't do things that are unethical or immoral or harmful like that.

1:21:26

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: What you do, you do with your full faith and spirituality you're involved with.

MARILYN EVANS: And your religion is an extension of you. If your religion becomes all you ever are, I think you need to get grounded. I knew a guy who was proud of his temple. He had this fabulous temple and he lived in a one-bedroom apartment and his temple was spectacular and he slept in a walk-in closet and I thought, you know I got problems with this. He was all about ceremonial magic.

DIANA BROWN: Your sleep and life are important to.

1:22:06

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: A few of the things that I've done in my magical life is if there was something I wanted to do magically or to understand magically, I learned everything I could about it in the real world. Fire, metal and forging, I learned to fly partly because that was a magical desire. I can fly airplanes, I'm still not too good at flying without them. The other problem is that there is a tendency that I've seen from other people who wanted to just be a Wiccan priestess for a living, to become parasitic, to start expecting money, expecting donations, to start promoting ideas that would support revenue.

DIANA BROWN: It becomes all about getting that money.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: Yeah and it begins to feel like you're trying to live off the community and the community is trying to support itself, is trying to make their own living and here you are not making your living but expecting us to support you. I've seen that happen a couple of times.

1:23:10

MARILYN EVANS: If you can find 500 people that...

DIANA BROWN: That want that.

MARILYN EVANS: Yeah, that want that, they'd be out of work but a 500 person coven is just not going to work well.

DIANA BROWN: Yeah, I don't know, it doesn't seem like a religion that's set out to have that kind of infrastructure.

MARILYN EVANS: Up to thirteen because the group dynamics get too crazy.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: It's interesting that psychological studies of group dynamics have supported that number which is an ancient tradition. The thirteen disciples.

MARILYN EVANS: Yeah, thirteen has been around but seven is really about right. That works really well. If you can get as few as three or four like some groups I've been in, it kind of starts to...if some of our energy levels are low it kind of starts to peter out because you haven't got enough people who are constantly doing okay that can sustain it when it starts to droop a little bit.

1:24:16

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: It's funny because there was one period, and it was when the second or third-tier of books about Wicca were being written when it almost seemed like a pyramid scheme.

DIANA BROWN: Well, it's very...yeah.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: You got initiated, you hived off, you started drawing new people to your coven and they got initiated and when you hit thirteen, they hived somebody off and started another coven. That worked for a little while with the more hierarchical Gardnerian and Alexandrian covens.

DIANA BROWN: That's where it sounds like that came from.

MARILYN EVANS: Yeah, it seems like covens can be really organic. They'll start for who knows what reason, some of them came out of classes, some of them came out of study groups. The first festival we had, some people came from Arkansas and they thought that they were the only Pagans in Arkansas and they discovered each other at the festival in Kansas and so they ended up starting a group down in Arkansas. They had to drive a little bit but it was great. They'll start for a lot of reasons and sometimes they'll start because they're desperate and you'll pull together some people who really shouldn't be working together but they're desperate and they try to make it work and they work for awhile. Some groups start for a specific reason and they go along for a little while and then the reason has ended and they just kind of go away. They're kind of organic, they're born, they live, they die or they may transform into something else like Elysium has.

1:25:50

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: In the mid-80s, as festivals were becoming more common, as people were becoming more aware of each other, as people were going from being solitary Wiccans and solitary Pagans, to being group operators, one of the nuclei that covens grouped around was Narcotics Anonymous. People from the fun-loving 70s who did a lot of drugs found that they needed help cleaning up and yet they had rejected

Christianity for whatever reason and rejected society and sincere spiritual discovery. They formed groups that were non-Christian Narcotics Anonymous that became covens. We knew several of those, kind of weird.

1:26:46

DIANA BROWN: Well I do sort of feel like there's this contemporary attitude that [unintelligible] are bad or not necessary or whatever it is. I wonder if any of that can be traced.

MARILYN EVANS: Anthropologically speaking, the purpose of the drugs for journeying, it's a road map. It shows you how to get there, once you know how to get there, you don't need a map anymore. So when drugs are used in initiation to induce a trance or to induce some kind of altered state, that's just to get you there the first time. After that you shouldn't really need it anymore because you already know where you're going, how to get there, what it feels like, that sort of stuff. So then the other problem is if you use it religiously, you don't use it recreationally. They're completely separate.

1:27:41

DIANA BROWN: Right, completely separate.

MARILYN EVANS: Except wine, I love wine. I'll drink wine any day. Wine is my exception.

DIANA BROWN: Yeah, I was going to say. There's [unintelligible] and then there's all the other wines. There's something about that one.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: As you become an adult, long term use of psychoactive substances becomes much more problematic.

1:28:04

DIANA BROWN: It's hard on you, yeah.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: It can be hard on you if you have to work a job around it, if you're drug testing at a job. If you just have to be...if you're at a job that requires physical coordination and focus and that you will be sober for most of the time, being not sober at that job becomes a problem. Being hung over or having residual hallucinations or whatever. Not something you really want to be driving a truck with and if you have to drive a truck, you have to drive a truck. That's just what you have to do.

MARILYN EVANS: Yeah and there are so many ways to induce trance, you don't need...I mean drugs are lovely but you don't need them. There are other things. You can use chanting or dancing.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: That means that things like Heartland become, okay, I'm in my own space with safe people now. I don't have to deal with the functional, rational world. This is where I can cut loose and do hallucinogens.

1:29:02

DIANA BROWN: Yeah, this is the time for them.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: That's how some people come to see Paganism as partying.

DIANA BROWN: Interesting.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: You get together to party and call it Paganism. That's how some people see Heartland.

MARILYN EVANS: Or other festivals as well and it may or may not be the case. Some people want to journey and they want to do it under safe conditions and in a spiritual religious environment and they may use drugs to do it, they may do dancing and drumming to do it or they may do really loud music to do it or they may just sit in the night and watch the fireflies and the stars. There are a million ways...maybe not a million, maybe 999,000 ways to induce trance and communicate with the gods and the whole purpose of it is to you know become one with your deities on a different level of your spirituality. I have friends who do shamanic journeying and they work hard at it and they take it very seriously. It is something that you have to have the time to do and the willingness to do and you're very focused on what you're doing. This is not fun and games, this is serious spiritual work for them. Anyone can think drugs are fun but you're going to do it for fun or you're going to do it for yourself. But like anything else you have to pick.

1:30:29

DIANA BROWN: Go in with an intention.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: One of the things they did for many years at Heartland, I don't know if they still do it, is spirit quest.

MARILYN EVANS: Yeah, spirit quest, spirit journey.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: Stations of spiritual journey and enlightenment. Kacey used to organize that a lot and work on them. They can be something...there is definitely an indigenous spiritual tradition of taking that kind of journey spiritually but not physically. Here, we've got the Western European ritual tradition of setting up the symbology and using the symbology to prompt your mind to take the spiritual journey. This can obviously be combined with psycho-suggestive drugs which helps and it focuses your psychoactive experience then or it can just be done spiritually.

1:31:33

MARILYN EVANS: The hero's journeys or spirit quests or all of the things they've called them can be pretty fun. Sometimes they can be like going down to the bottom when they do the fun houses or the horror houses on Halloween but sometimes they can be carefully laid and carefully thought out stations to help you understand the steps in a hero's journey.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: The one person who has gone in just for the giggles and for something to do has come out thinking wow.

1:32:05

DIANA BROWN: She did a great one for Samhain actually this past year that I came out of thinking that it helped me.

MARILYN EVANS: She was always very good at that, she does good ones and spirit quests.

DIANA BROWN: She knows how to sort of cast people too.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: Again, you need to know what most of the symbolism you're going through is. You need to have been learning for awhile for that to mean something to you. There are abstract things that are out of our culture and you'll have an automatic connection with them anyway, but to really get the full benefit out of it you need to know who the goddesses are, who Hecate is, who the various characters in the journey represent. It helps a lot.

MARILYN EVANS: That's one of the things that's nice about being at circle is if you're going to do a ritual, having as many cues as possible, you know the smell, the sight, the sound, the touch. Whatever thing that is pushing you in the direction that you want to be focused on.

1:33:12

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: That's one of the differences between solitary practice and group practice. The props, the chants, the calls, it's helped to synchronize, they get everybody at the same point in the ritual at the same time. You all know what is supposed to be happening when the towers are being called and so you're all focused on that thing at that time and your energy is synchronous and works together. Whereas, when you're doing it yourself, you need far less of that, wherever you happen to be at the time is where you are. You don't need to represent it externally.

DIANA BROWN: I was going to ask you actually what the sort of deities were that you [unintelligible].

1:34:04

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: I've gotten probably more agnostic toward atheistic. I did not come from a strong religious tradition in my family. My mom had had an epiphany in comparative religion in college.

DIANA BROWN: Uh-oh.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: And didn't dabble at all but was a very free thinker and my dad was willing to accept that and be one himself. So we went to the Presbyterian Church a little bit but not much and not really Sunday school. So unlike Marilyn, I was not deeply into the rituals, tradition and knowledge of a specific faith. I sampled many, I had Jewish friends but didn't really have many non-European faiths represented. But I sampled as many different Christian denominations as I could. Until I hit the newly [. . .] televangelical born-again revival of the 70s. At which point I ran screaming and talked to God and said, "God, people are doing this in your name, I can't do this anymore. You're gonna have to go look for somebody else." I felt a very strong affinity for the Celtic and for the sort-of blended European goddesses that are common in Wicca and I felt a good connection with them. I devoted myself to Aphrodite who is Greek and not Celtic at all, although you can draw parallels and have mostly abstracted that. The names are not important to me at this point in my life.

1:35:57



MARILYN EVANS: I did what I call the pre-millennial lecture series and I think Kacey's friend Michael has most of those recorded.

1:36:05

DIANA BROWN: Oh really? Okay.

MARILYN EVANS: They're kind of fun and then somebody talked to me at Crescent Springs proprietor talked me into doing a lecture a month for one year on all different types of religious topics. I did one on the European goddess and I took three as far apart as I could possibly get them. I had Brigid from Ireland, Hecate from Greece and the BVM, Blessed Virgin Mary. I compared them and was amazed as I was doing research for them for this lecture, they're so much alike that there's almost no distinction between them. This is Mary as she's worshiped, not as she's written about. She's actually worshiped the living goddess as people treat her day to day. There really is not much difference between them, they are...the goddess is who she is in Europe. She may be different in Africa or Australia or China but in Europe she takes care of children and looks after animals. Even if you are completely unlovable, she will love you anyways. It was pretty interesting; those were a lot of fun.

1:37:25

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: There are distinctions. Mike used to teach a lot about parapsychology. He was a part of the parapsychology wave and that's how he got into magic. He taught a lot about the experience that show how people can shape an external reality, an external spiritual reality according to what they believe in. One of his favorites was a group that got together who decided to create a ghost and succeeded, much to their own surprise in creating not just an illusion of a ghost or an agreement of a ghost but something that seemed to have its own independent existence. I believe that may have a lot to do with gods and why there are different gods in different places instead of one god that is universal. We've been down to Cancun and I think down to the Mayan ruins.

1:38:28

MARILYN EVANS: The big, tall pyramid.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: Yeah, that is a very, very different energy.

MARILYN EVANS: Yeah and more than one person that we know of who is Pagan and somewhat sensitive has said that you reach out and touch them and they're like, "we're not for you."

DIANA BROWN: That's something else.

MARILYN EVANS: Yeah, you're not for us and we're not for you.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: My friend who lives down in the desert southwest as well as others who have visited the southwest has had that feeling. Some of these gods are not meant to be yours.

1:39:09

MARILYN EVANS: It is interesting, I have had for instance someone I knew who was very active in voodoo and he said, "You don't play with these gods. They've been fed blood for hundreds of years; thousands of years and these are not gods that you play with." They're pretty serious deities and yet through him kind of being a tour guide, my experience with them, I found them fairly accessible and kind of recognizable, partly because I think in the American voodoo...

DIANA BROWN: They're disguised as saints or melded into it.

MARILYN EVANS: Well, like Bun and all the others, they're kind of filtered through North American experiences whereas if they came straight to me from Africa, I might not be as familiar with them, they might not feel as comfortable. I don't know, I never tried to directly access the African ones but the Himalayan deities that Timothian and like the groodas [phonetic spelling] and all this other stuff and spirits, I found them somewhat accessible too but they felt kind of high and airy. They had a very different feel to them but again they felt kind of accessible. I think in part because they're so ancient and my ancestry is so Indo-European or whatever and there is a kind of accessibility and antiquity of it. The Native American deities I've never been able to feel comfortable or connected with them, which is weird because I live...they live you know...

1:40:43

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: This tradition of western Europeans being able to connect with and feel those spirits that go back to the late 19<sup>th</sup> century...the tradition of the British people taking up these deities and worshipping them.

1:41:03

MARILYN EVANS: The Romans were notorious for stealing gods from everybody so you know maybe that's my Roman precocities coming through there. I'm trying to steal others' deities.

DIANA BROWN: I don't know, maybe because some of them are living traditions, they have their own communities already still and they're not necessarily super into you or to me except from faraway back.

MARILYN EVANS: Some of them were more attractive to me than others, I love Brigit, I think she's awesome and of course Pomona is my personal favorite. It is an interesting thing. I love Odin, I think he's awesome. I think he gets villainized a bit but I think he's cool. Of course, Jupiter.

DIANA BROWN: He always strikes me as very intimidating.

1:42:01

MARILYN EVANS: Who?

DIANA BROWN: Odin.

MARILYN EVANS: It strikes you as what?

DIANA BROWN: Very intimidating.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: Good, good. You should be intimidated by him, yes.

MARILYN EVANS: He's all about the law, yeah, he's a complicated character.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: Certainly not a snuggling god.

MARILYN EVANS: No, no.

DIANA BROWN: Serious, he-man like attributes.

MARILYN EVANS: Yeah but looking for a personal version of the god Thor, there are many that I like a lot. I think that Mars is the most abused deity of all time and I'll tell you about Mars in a minute. What I actually ended up doing was I thought of my personal god who when I was a small child would comfort me when I cried. This was supposedly the Christian god but this was the god of my childhood and the god of my grandfather and I thought that I'm reclaiming my god. To heck with all you people and all the crap you put on him. He's my god and I'm taking him back. So I reclaimed my god and I took Pomona and she took me and together we're quite happy, the three of us. We're just delighted together. So we get along great but yeah Mars is horribly abused. Stewart Farrar once said, "Some gods should just be retired like Mars," and I said, "wait a minute." I had an argument with him and I said Mars, not the Greek god Ares but the Roman god Mars, was the protector of young men as farmers and as protector of their people. To me, anyone that stands between death and the people is a warrior or a priest of Mars and that includes policemen, firefighters, and paramedics, anyone that walks into danger and protects the people. That's Mars's purview and Jupiter is the government, heads of the family, the guys that have to make the hard decisions and the women who have to make hard decisions. Juno is the women of the household who make hard decisions on a daily basis as well. Vesta is the protector of young women and all of the things that women protected which was the household goods, the ancestors and then Mars was for the young men who were laying in on the line. To me, those deities are still very viable and I believe they deserve their place.

1:44:54

DIANA BROWN: What are some of your sources of information about these gods?

1:45:01

MARILYN EVANS: Oh my God, everything, everything, everything. There are these shelves of books at the UMKC library that are translations of ancient writings. There's like everything there and it's the oldest stuff. To me, the world was Pagan up until about 2000 years ago. Of course, skipping Judaism which was a monotheism, the world was for the most part for a really long time has pretty much been Pagan. So there's a lot of stuff out there to read.

DIANA BROWN: So you think of Paganism as a more generic term then?

MARILYN EVANS: Yeah.

DIANA BROWN: That kind of describes that whole...

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: To me, Pagan means agrarian nature and Earth based gods.

MARILYN EVANS: There are lots of different kinds of Paganism. Anything that's not a monotheism I would call Paganism for the most part but that's just my narrow

interpretation, many people would argue differently. I had a person who wanted...it was a second degree initiation because she was teaching and she wanted to teach. We did a year and a day training on the responsibilities and how to be a teacher and all this other stuff. When it came time for her initiation, I asked her what deity she wanted to be dedicated to and she said Isis. Isis was very much her deity in every way, so I went "woah, I'm not really familiar with Isis on a personal level." So I went and found some original prayers to Isis by people who worshiped her and spoke to her on a regular basis. I thought, "well, I'll borrow her word and get a sense of their flavor and that way I know I will be treating her with respect and not being rude and I will invoke her on behalf of this person who's dedicated to her using the words of people who were dedicated to her." That seemed the most appropriate way to do that. I read every day. I read it, I experience it, I do it and to me, you get to a point where you just...reading is all right and well. You can read everything, there's always enough stuff to read to last you forever. My Nook has 487 books on it and I've been walking around with this mini-library. You can never read enough to really be an expert so you have to at some point live it.

1:47:50

DIANA BROWN: Just do it.

MARILYN EVANS: And just live it daily. Pagan is so in my bones that I don't even know what's Pagan and what's not. Every once in awhile I'll come across it. I mean, I live in a Christian world, I'm aware of it and I was raised Christian up until I was 23 or something but I've actually been Pagan longer than I ever was a Christian so I'm aware of the things that you do and don't say in polite society but it's how I live. The offering you make and the way you acknowledge the morning. The sun in the morning and the moon at night.

1:48:40

DIANA BROWN: You talk to things.

MARILYN EVANS: The trees and all energies. The animals are people too. It's just respect for everything.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: You researching Isis reminds me of the phenomenon we saw coming from the online community was people for whom it wasn't a spiritual reality, it was a social thing. It was something you talked about discussed the theory of and chatted over and do things like that. Sort of following along that and the congregational aspect of the faith these days are people for whom the first source of knowledge is not books but is film, video or comic books. There are perhaps people out there for whom a comic book Isis is what they think of.

1:49:49

DIANA BROWN: Based on the familiar character.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: For whom the Thor of the theater is the Norse god and I must confess to some snobbery, for them it is a shallower faith.

DIANA BROWN: I think it's just the inspiration that gets them.

1:50:11

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: Sometimes, sometimes it's the beginning.

MARILYN EVANS: It can be a jumping off...jumping on place where you can think about and I think if you do your personal explorations there, you may do more research or you may just say here I am, talk to me.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: I did know about the Norse gods but the Thor comic books did get me more interested in going back and learning more about them from books. That was something...I had known mythology from very early on in my life and learned about it formally in high school in junior high and stuff like that, so for me it felt very reasonable. After discarding Christianity as no, that can't be it, because everything was beginning to look like that's how things worked I think. My own theory is that the Greek, the Roman, the Norse and to some extent the Celtic deities that are very anthropomorphic, I think that is the pattern that humans impose on the cosmos so that they can communicate with it and understand it. I think that's more true than that those are original primary entities that pre-date man. I think man has imposed humanity on to the powers of the universe and perhaps focused them.

1:51:43

DIANA BROWN: At my most Agnostic I guess and this relates back to that ghost creation experience too, I feel like it's a matter of sort of invoking certain experiences into your life basically. Intentionally calling things into reality for you.

MARILYN EVANS: I have to say it's nice to have that hand to hold on to though because that part of the universe that looks like Aphrodite and is not Hecate and is not those other things is only this energy, that is why I want to talk to you right now because if you're dealing with pure raw elements and pure raw energy, that is like woah. It's nice to get it down to a bite-sized piece that you can deal with because you stand at the edge of the ocean or you stand at the edge of a volcano and see that power, your brain has a little trouble getting around that. It's a nice thing to get it down to bite-sized.

1:52:41

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: One of the things shared by the Romans and the Celts are the spirits of the place. The wells, the springs, the fairies, the naiads, the dryads, the way that you can have a spirit or a thing or place that is only there. It's not pan-Atlantic.

1:53:01

DIANA BROWN: It's not everywhere.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: It's not all of Britain, it's this one well.

MARILYN EVANS: If you ever have a chance, if you ever get a chance to go down to south Missouri, along the river there are some springs. It's fed by springs and here's this water coming out of the Earth. One of our most ancient religious things is water coming out of the Earth, the goddess waters all the great rivers and almost all of them were named after goddesses. The water that comes up and flows is the fertility of the Earth

like the menstrual blood is the fertility of the woman and the Earth becomes fertile because of the water that flows over it and all that other stuff. If you go to any of those springs and see the water coming up out of the Earth, it's this powerful blue awesome amazing event and it's freezing cold and awesome and it makes you feel like there's something going on here. You just have a feeling that something amazing is happening here and to this day, a lot of the springs are dedicated to Mary.

1:54:17

DIANA BROWN: There or just in general?

MARILYN EVANS: In Europe, the springs that are dedicated to Mary. What is the place where you bathe and you get all...

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: Lourdes.

MARILYN EVANS: Lourdes, that's it. Brigit Wells in Ireland and all that kind of stuff.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: St. Brigit now. I've been around longer than she has.

MARILYN EVANS: You can feel that there's something going on there. It really feels like something real.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: There's some anthropologists who work with apes in Africa who have documented what appears to be a worshipful state of awe among some species of animals.

1:55:01

MARILYN EVANS: Jane Goodall was talking about that. Someone actually asked her that during a lecture I went to. They said, "Have you ever seen apes exhibit anything like religion?" She said something like "I can't speak to that necessarily but I have seen them...there was a place where there was this really amazing waterfall and they would go there and they would not be playing and they would not be fighting and they would not be gathering food." They would just go there and would stand in what she described as a state of awe and just stand and look at it. It was hard for it not to seem like that was a deeper experience for the apes. Chimpanzees were having something going on that was not feeding and breeding. Something else, so I thought that was pretty cool. Older than humanity probably.

1:56:01

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: So you are planning on digitizing the whole lot of this?

DIANA BROWN: I am, yeah, so.

MARILYN EVANS: There might be more of it. I have to warn you that you'll see Artemis Lupa and you'll see Shewolf in both of those. The reason we did that is I didn't want anyone to know that we had so few writers. There were times when it would be like, oh my God, we're a page short. We need one more page of text.

DIANA BROWN: You got to write something else.

MARILYN EVANS: I ran home and frantically wrote an article so that I could end up with...that's how Hounds of Hell ended up being an article in that because I had to quickly research something and come up with an article. There are issues before...

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: We seem to be...as I said earlier, we seem to be missing this series.

DIANA BROWN: Which one is it?

MARILYN EVANS: That's the only color cover we ever did. We hand colored every one of them. It is I believe, six, seven, I think it's eight.

1:57:07

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: Anyway, like I said we suspect that Kacey may have had that one.

DIANA BROWN: She gave me a stack of them so I might have it.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: If you're going to be digitizing them all, we can recover a copy of that one.

MARILYN EVANS: It's toward the end. This one is one of my favorites.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: Alaric is online, he's in Pennsylvania but we can probably get you in touch with him if you want to talk about earlier Kansas City.

MARILYN EVANS: It's volume ten, issue three.

DIANA BROWN: That would be great.

MARILYN EVANS: Volume ten, issue three is missing.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: I'll ask Lynn and Cheryl what they know about the early thing. I don't know Av DeDannan's real name but I am really curious because oh, that's right. We weren't the first to discover Wicca, were we? And see what he knows of the earlier times. I'm very interested in that myself. We'll get you in touch with Layne Lambert who was one of the people.

1:58:17

DIANA BROWN: An early editor.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: Jolan Walsh was...Layne Lambert and Jolan Walsh started The Rune and ran it for many years.

DIANA BROWN: So this was in the 90s pretty much.

MARILYN EVANS: Yeah, they actually ran it...I was editor for seven years but they actually only published it for three or four years and then there was a big hiatus in between.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: And then Layne actually began publishing it again.

MARILYN EVANS: She started it again and I was writing for it and then she got fired and I became editor. This is...I don't know if you've noticed these yet but I'll just pull one off the end.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: This one says volume six.

MARILYN EVANS: These were our staff boxes.

1:59:02

DIANA BROWN: Oh yeah, I remember seeing that. I was like huh, I wonder if it's that same Jonathan and I was right I guess.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: How convenient.

MARILYN EVANS: The staff box is different every month, I think we duplicated them.

DIANA BROWN: The titles?

MARILYN EVANS: The titles of the staff and I had a lot of fun with those.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: So volume six is when...

MARILYN EVANS: I took over.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: You were completely in charge of it.

MARILYN EVANS: Well she was...Layne was still doing layout because that was her favorite part but she hated being editor. She was sick of being editor. So I took over as editor and she was doing layout and then I ended up doing a lot of it with help from other people.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: The first three or four were here and Jolen and the next three or two were Layne as editor and various people including you were helping.

2:00:1

MARILYN EVANS: And that was the only piece of completely original art we ever had for a cover.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: Layne had a real knack for finding public domain pictures that were appropriate for the articles.

MARILYN EVANS: And then I bought some clipart and we did a lot with clipart.

DIANA BROWN: How did you solicit articles? Was it just from people you knew or could anyone do it?

MARILYN EVANS: Anybody who wanted to print and publish and I was constantly saying write for The Rune, write for The Rune. One of those was by a guy I met at a Dragonfest in Colorado. He was a guy from Canada and he wrote one for us. It was on male spirituality and male witches and it was pretty interesting.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: It partly became its own self sustaining community because the people who knew The Rune and did The Rune, were The Rune but we tried to get outside contributions and interests. I think I got one person to submit an article. Yeah, Patrick submitted an article I think to the online version but that's why the online version stagnated because we could not find people who were interested in contributing. Those who were were probably already contributing to Wren's Nest, Witch's Voice.

2:01:26

MARILYN EVANS: Yeah, Witch Vox is such an effective online magazine that it didn't seem like it was worth in any way trying to compete.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: The Rune is a poorly optimized search term too.

MARILYN EVANS: The other thing that was kind of fun about it but very frustrating and very time consuming was trying to put a calendar in because nobody would send you the information and we were constantly trying to find out if anything was going on. Are there any classes or public groups, is there anything going on? We worked hard at that and it was a lot of work.



JONATHAN HUTCHINS: It was frustrating because they should have been interested in promoting their own events but we couldn't get them to call and tell us.

2:02:00

MARILYN EVANS: But we still managed to do a pretty good calendar for most months. There's the very last page of the very last one, there's an obituary for The Rune. I did an obit for The Rune. This was...the alphabetical pharmacopeia, Jonathan and Chris and I, the friend who lives out of Tucson now, we were lying around being drunk in front of the fireplace on the carpet and we were trying to come up with a poison for each letter of the alphabet and the rules were it had to be organic in some way. It had to be from a plant or an insect or something like that and so it was our alphabetical pharmacopeia of poisons because it was a Halloween issue, why not?

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: Some of our best work.

MARILYN EVANS: Some of our best work happens when we're drunk in front of the fireplace. And that symbol for The Rune...that runic symbol for The Rune was created by Carol Matthews who was...she was Asatru and then she got her PhD in religious studies and now she's Jewish I think.

2:02:23

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: Got her PhD from KU.

DIANA BROWN: Oh, okay.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: Kind of faded from our kin.

MARILYN EVANS: Yeah, she doesn't live here, she lives far away now. She's still online, I Facebook with her periodically.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: Really? Didn't know we were back in touch.

DIANA BROWN: I wonder, I didn't realize at one point...because now we only have a master's program in religious studies.

MARILYN EVANS: Oh it may have been a master's. It was probably a master's.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: Well she may have put together...

MARILYN EVANS: She may have went somewhere else.

DIANA BROWN: She might have done it in another...

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: She may have done a...

DIANA BROWN: They have American Studies, anthropology; they have places where you can do something like that.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: At various times they've had do-it-yourself degrees for the graduate degrees where you can combine disciplines. Find advisors for different disciplines and come up with your own.

2:04:08

MARILYN EVANS: Her thesis for her dissertation was on a kind-of comparison of angelic visitations and alien abductions and how similar, how completely similar the experiences and descriptions are. It was very interesting.

DIANA BROWN: That's great.

MARILYN EVANS: Yeah, pretty strange. Yeah, we had a lot of fun putting this together. That cover was like a composition of four different pieces of art.

DIANA BROWN: Oh really?

MARILYN EVANS: It was something, it was very funny. It was one of Layne's better ones. She did a lot of really cool art stuff.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: She'd buy old books from garage sales and stuff that had illustrations in them and were out of copyright and use them for that. Most of it pre-online too.

MARILYN EVANS: Yeah and how many hours did we spend at Kinko's? That white cover, because it had to be on heavier paper, we had to hand feed every one of them into the copier. Oh my God, hours and hours and hours of photocopying.

2:05:14

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: This one doesn't say year or date anywhere. Not on the front spaces. Oh, back issues that are available. So that kind of implies a date.

DIANA BROWN: Oh, this one says copyright 1995. I wonder if maybe that one has it.

MARILYN EVANS: This would have been autumn of 95' and this would have been winter of 95'. But volume one was always in autumn.

DIANA BROWN: I was talking to people for a class on communes in the spring and some people that I was doing some interviews with, some guys who made some political magazines and had a printing press and things like that. Just the amount of work that you used to have to get into.

2:06:08

MARILYN EVANS: Much harder. It's so easy to publish stuff nowadays. Oh communes, did you do East Wind? I wanted to live in East Wind but I could never let go.

DIANA BROWN: Where was East Wind?

MARILYN EVANS: It's down in Tecumseh, Missouri. Not too far from Table Rock. Not Table Rock...

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: I know nothing.

MARILYN EVANS: Anyways, East Wind was a wonderful place. They had a nut butter business and they made hammocks.

DIANA BROWN: Oh, I've heard of this place, yeah.

MARILYN EVANS: I loved East Wind, I spent a week down there because I had a friend who was living down there, actually two friends who were living down there and oh I so wanted to go there. That's where I wanted to live but I just couldn't let go of my stuff.

DIANA BROWN: Yeah, that's the hardest.

MARILYN EVANS: I always wanted to start a Pagan commune but I would have to have people I liked.

2:07:00

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: There are the inevitable disagreements.

DIANA BROWN: I guess Kacey effectively ran a Pagan commune but it seems like it would be difficult.

MARILYN EVANS: How many people are living there now?

DIANA BROWN: I guess there are four people there now. Numbers seem to go up and down.

MARILYN EVANS: The most I knew of living there was five but I think it was uneasy when there was that many.

DIANA BROWN: Yeah, she seems to think and everyone there seems to think that four is a really good number. Specifically the four people they have so it seems like they've had a lot of turnover over the years. It's been difficult.

MARILYN EVANS: You know, Jonathan, Chris and I lived together, I mean it was a commune of only three people but we lived together. We called it a triad. We lived together for...

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: 10ish years.

MARILYN EVANS: 10ish years, yeah it was a pretty longstanding group but that was about ten years ago. We were together a long time. When it was good it was perfect but when it started to fall apart you kind of had to let go. It's tough, it's tough. You hate to let go when it seems like they work so well but when they stop working you just have to let go.

2:08:24

DIANA BROWN: It doesn't work so well, yeah.

MARILYN EVANS: Hanging on to them just makes things not that good.

DIANA BROWN: I actually just recently broke up with my boyfriend and he moved out yesterday.

MARILYN EVANS: Oh no, you poor thing. That's a congratulations and an, oh dear you poor thing.

DIANA BROWN: Yeah, basically, yeah. Yeah, it seems like the right thing to do but it's sad.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: I had a friend who did that and because his name was on the lease, she ended up moving across the hall.

DIANA BROWN: Oh no, that seems not conducive to moving on somehow.

2:09:03

MARILYN EVANS: My first husband had the decency to move to Germany so that made things easier.

DIANA BROWN: He's moving to Chicago so that will work out.

MARILYN EVANS: Just leave town.

DIANA BROWN: Exactly, although we get along just fine so I don't know.

MARILYN EVANS: When it's over, it's over.

DIANA BROWN: When it's over, it's over.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: We're certainly interested in your project, we'd like to see the fruits of it.

DIANA BROWN: I'll keep you updated and obviously I will get these back to you as soon as possible.

MARILYN EVANS: That would be awesome. That would be great.

DIANA BROWN: By the end of the...is there a date in which you would like to have them back?

MARILYN EVANS: Before I die would be good so I can pass them on to somebody else.

DIANA BROWN: Okay, well I will keep that in mind. Just let me know when you're really ailing.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: If you can give me some kind of an idea...have you been doing this much?

DIANA BROWN: I haven't.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: So you don't know how long this is going to take you.

DIANA BROWN: I don't. My thought is by the end of the summer but that is completely abstracted from experience.

2:10:03

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: That hopefully keeps you away from something that takes you away from it. If you could keep me posted on figuring out when you're going to do it and how long it's going to take and when you think you'll be done with it, that will help set a deadline. Keep a boundary on it. You're welcome to deconstruct them, you'll need a deep throated stapler to staple them back but you can deconstruct them. You're welcome to use anything from the online Rune if it's salvageable. It's not in a text format on the website, it's in a database so it's not easy for me to just dump it to text for you or I would you're welcome there but you're probably better off using a consistent process and using the paper copy.

2:11:00

MARILYN EVANS: It was a lot of fun and a lot of hard work. We would sit on the couch and staple these damn things together for hours and hours. I think the part that I liked least was actually going around to the stores.

DIANA BROWN: I was going to say, how did you distribute them?

MARILYN EVANS: We actually had a person who was a pretty good salesperson who was able to talk people into letting her come into their stores but then she got busy with other stuff. So I had to go to do that and I am not a salesperson at all but they were already in the stores so it wasn't too bad.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: By the time Marilyn was doing the writing, the editing, the layout, the printing, the collating of the stapling and the delivery to as far away as Topeka herself, that's why it came to an end.

MARILYN EVANS: Yeah because other people were writing and it was like man, this is way too much work. Because for a little while we had them up in a shop in St. Joe, and we had them in a store in Topeka, any place where it looked like it would be a Pagan interested store and then we also had them in Barnes & Noble and what was the other big book store?

2:12:04

DIANA BROWN: Borders?

MARILYN EVANS: Borders I think, Barnes & Noble and Borders around here and then Aquarius and White Light and there was another place out there that was like that. Something Chalice, Crystal Chalice I think was the name of it, they would advertise.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: Crescent Springs.

MARILYN EVANS: Crescent Springs, we tried to have them in any friendly Pagan store or book store of any kind. I think...did we have them? I'm trying to remember if we had them in Whole Foods. I can't remember.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: Of course we had subscriptions.

MARILYN EVANS: And of course we had subscriptions. Subscriptions, actually it was better for us to sell them on a newsstand because mailing them got a little expensive and we had to put them in an envelope and all that stuff. If I could just be like, oh drop by the house and pick up your copy of The Rune, that was the best way to do it.

2:13:03

DIANA BROWN: Were you able to break even or make a little bit of money?

MARILYN EVANS: Yeah, yeah we actually made a tiny bit of money but I always plowed it back in because we needed to buy the long stapler.

DIANA BROWN: So you were pretty much just looking to cover your costs?

MARILYN EVANS: So mostly the advertising covered the cost of the publishing and the mailing and all of that stuff and most magazines nowadays, they essentially sell it for nothing and advertising pays for everything. The only reason they charge you for a subscription is to prove you really want it which makes the advertising more valuable. So it's a nominal thing.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: We learned a very good lesson from doing the festival. We had an excellent accountant and basically anything someone proposed doing, who's going to do it and where's the money going to come from because it was all coming out of the pockets of a dozen or so people who were the organizers or if it was an expense that could be incurred at the festival than it was coming from the revenue from the people paying for the festival. All of us being fairly impoverished at the time, we were trying to keep the cost as low as possible because that was the whole point of not going. If we were going to spend as much as PSG then we might as well go to PSG. So it led to some interesting things, most of the guests had someone pay for their admission for them. Yeah we would be glad to invite that really cool Pagan who you think should be speaking here, you're going to pay their admission or come up with a

way to pay their admission. We can't let them in free because the only thing we're charging is costs.

2:14:51

MARILYN EVANS: The only...the first two festivals that we were involved in running, the only two people who got in for free, they actually got money for coming, were Starhawk and Cunningham and Buckland. Everyone else had to pay, even people who were doing workshops, people who were doing the musical guests and everyone else. Everyone had to pay or someone had to pay for them.

2:15:16

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: Some of the locals...

MARILYN EVANS: And it was cheap, it wasn't very expensive to get in.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: Some of the local personalities who thought they were fairly important in the Kansas City community felt very harsh about that but our point was that it was a national festival. Our guests were national.

MARILYN EVANS: And the point was supposed to be cross-pollination. The original idea was we will get people who know a lot but are maybe a little burned out and get people who don't know anything who are full of enthusiasm and let them share with each other so everyone gets something out of it. Everybody has something to contribute and we had people volunteering to help stuff and help pick up trash and everything. It was their festival, it wasn't a paid entertainment. It was you are part of the community and you are contributing something and there was lots and lots of workshops and people doing all sorts of activities. Just cool cool stuff. There was one person who said I think there should be day care and I want to do that and we were like okay, fine. You organize that day care, by golly.

2:16:25

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: There were some people who came up with, well I think it would be a great idea if we did this. We said to them, how are you going to make that happen? They said, oh, oh, I can do that and suddenly were very empowered. Whereas they always thought in terms of okay, I will pay someone and they will do this for me in the past. They became the one who did it.

MARILYN EVANS: Someone came up to me and said, we've noticed that the trash cans are full, is it okay if we go and empty the trash cans and put new liners in the bin and everything? Okay, fine, go ahead and do that and I said okay, sure. They're asking permission to participate and I say sure, go ahead. It was fun in a lot of ways and it was also insane in a lot of ways and just exhausting. One of my favorite memories was the very first Heartland and all the things that fell apart and all the things that came together and all the problems and all the woes and all the agony and everything else. I was working the front gate and the rain was coming down and the brochures were going to get wet but I had a little hatchback car and I had my hatch up and I'm sitting with my legs dangling and I had a long tie-dye skirt on and I'm sitting there with my legs dangling

and I'm sitting in the back of my car with the rain coming down all around me and somebody drives up in the mud and I go hi, are you here for the festival? And they go yeah, we're here for the festival. We're going to have a wonderful time and I give them the brochure and the rain's coming down and from then on I always wanted to work the front gate because you're the first person they're going to see. You're the first experience of the festival and if people come and you're crabby and you're mean but if you're loving and accepting and happy and say this is going to be a wonderful experience, we're so glad you're here, it's going to color the rest of the festival for them. So I wanted to make sure that's what they got to see when they first showed up. It was good, it was hard and it was good. It was worthwhile and I'm glad I don't have to do it anymore.

2:18:28

DIANA BROWN: Do you both participate in any sort of festivals that are going on in that space anymore?

MARILYN EVANS: I went two years ago because I was one of the founders, I'm one of the honored guests that comes periodically so they let me come for nothing. I've been a few times, I don't feel like I have anything to contribute anymore. It's been taken over by young people who are brilliant and excited and enthusiastic and know what they're doing. I don't feel like I'm...they don't need me anymore. It's still kind of fun to go because I like to be in a Pagan space with Pagan people. I like to dance and I like the drumming and all that stuff. I like to hear what people have to say and listen to them talk but it's not as electrifying as it was when I was younger and I feel you need to step aside and let the young people take over. I saw a ritual, I think it was the one at Dragonfest, the last ritual they always do is done by the teenagers and by the kids and it just makes you want to sit down and shut up because they're so awesome. They got it under control and there's the future and it's amazing. I go every once in awhile but nowadays it conflicts with a science fiction convention. I'm attempting to become a full time writer because I'm going to be retiring in a few years, in three years I will be 66 so I want to retire and I want to become a full time writer.

2:20:01

DIANA BROWN: How's the novella?

MARILYN EVANS: It's science fiction fantasy, that kind of stuff. I need to go to some of the cons to schmooze a little.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: Comquest is that weekend.

MARILYN EVANS: Comquest is that weekend.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: For me, the transition of power was very acrimonious.

DIANA BROWN: Oh, I see.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: A new group took it over and I felt that there was a significant change in philosophy in why they were doing it and how they were doing it. So I've been far less interested in going back but I did go back for the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

MARILYN EVANS: I think so.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: I think you dragged me out for the 10<sup>th</sup>.

MARILYN EVANS: I might have.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: That is where we saw...

MARILYN EVANS: I think that's when I first came back from England wasn't it?

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: [unintelligible]. I think I went out for the 20<sup>th</sup> but that's all I've been to. I no longer enjoy camping as much and I'm not an extrovert so there's less desirable about festivals to me anymore. I communicate online with people who have a similar philosophy to me and I enjoy that.

2:21:18

DIANA BROWN: So you don't like necessarily going to the alternative for instance.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: We might check it out if we find out about it. I'm curious to know more about it if it exists.

MARILYN EVANS: It might be fun, just to see what's happening. We've actually enjoyed Dragonfest some of the times we've gone. It was pretty fun. You've never been to Starwood, Starwood is a lot of fun. It's not strictly Pagan, it was in upstate New York. I think they moved it to Ohio though. I don't like Ohio, I never go there if I can avoid it. I'm not sure why, I don't like Ohio.

2:22:00

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: Starwood was more of a Woodstock type of experience.

MARILYN EVANS: I got to see, before he passed away, I got to see Timothy Leary at Starwood. That was pretty fun. Starwood was pretty fun.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: I don't even know if Elf Fest is still going on.

MARILYN EVANS: I'm not sure it is either.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: And Dragonfest is the whole logistical operation to go out to Denver and camp. Transfer all the necessary equipment and stuff and goods.

MARILYN EVANS: I've been a few times, I enjoy it a lot. I enjoy the people, it's been...yeah but those are really the only Pagan festivals we've gone. Of course there's PSG, I've gone to PSG a few times. I finally got to go to PSG a few times.

DIANA BROWN: How was it?

MARILYN EVANS: It was great, it was really good. I had a lot of fun. There are festivals all over the place, all of the time. There are still a lot of them going on. I'm kind of surprised the last time which was not this year but the year before when I went to Heartland, it's become very small again. It started out like 100.

2:23:13

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: I think 100 the first year and 300 the second year.

MARILYN EVANS: Yeah, it got really big the second year and then at its peak it was up to 1,000 people.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: 1,500, they capped it at 1,000 after the year it was 1,500.



MARILYN EVANS: It was huge and the last one it was about 300 some odd people. It feels a lot more serious now, there's a lot more focus and it's pretty established in the things that it does. There's always a concert. One year I went, there weren't many workshops, workshop quality wasn't...there wasn't a lot of good workshops. So I thought, oh I will go do some workshops maybe I can contribute something. Now, I think there are enough good workshops that are pretty serious that it's better. I just don't feel like I have anything to contribute anymore.

2:24:12

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: One of the things that's happened is it's easy to put together a Wicca 101 workshop but for the same group of people you can only do that so many times.

MARILYN EVANS: I did my finding your power animal workshop which is always kind of fun. The people have fun with that.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: We had a workshop that we did a couple of years at Dragonfest. We had three I think at Dragonfest called The Agony and the Ecstasy. Basically it was a debriefing for priests and priestesses who were having to manage conveners and trainees.

MARILYN EVANS: It was a chance to share your horror stories and your victories and was your chance to get and give advice. That was pretty fun, that's where we met Bree Foxsong, it was awesome. Yeah, that was fun but people aren't so much interested in that anymore. The community has changed a whole lot over the years.

2:25:15

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: The community seems a little more loosely organized. They don't have tight covens that have designated priest and priestess as much as they used to.

MARILYN EVANS: I actually heard, not too long ago, that people were having a hard time finding teachers and I thought teachers were coming out of the woodwork so I was surprised to hear that. I don't know whether that's true or not. You're probably out in the community more than I am these days. I almost have no contact anymore.

DIANA BROWN: I feel like it happened for me right when I was ready to have it happen. Right when I sought it out. I came to Lawrence and I was like I know what I really want and so I automatically went to the Village Witch and they started having an open tarot meeting group every week. I went to that and just became friends with people and it became a sort of natural thing. Oh, come out to these celebrations or whatever. So I personally never found it hard but it's not like I had ever seen...it's not like it's apparent that there are teachers walking all around before that point but I also wasn't necessarily looking. So I don't know.

2:26:25

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: Kacey teaches, I don't think Aaron does anymore.

MARILYN EVANS: I don't think Rhiannon does anymore.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: I know Aslan was but she's currently not at a place where she can do classes. Somebody...they were in Comuniversity's catalog for so many years. It was somebody doing a one on one class.

DIANA BROWN: There isn't all that much stuff in the spirituality section in Comuniversity for this area.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: It comes and goes. Mike of course did his for many years but when he did the Magic Lantern, he did classes there too and that came to an end.

2:27:00

MARILYN EVANS: I stopped doing the Comuniversity classes when the quality of students got so poor.

DIANA BROWN: Oh really?

MARILYN EVANS: Yeah there were people who it was like they were working their way through the catalog or something. They really had no interest and they would show up at the class and I felt like they were wasting their time and my time. I thought, eh, I don't need to do this anymore.

DIANA BROWN: I wonder if that's sort of related to, I don't know, when you're sort of talking about the cohesiveness of the groups and I don't know, maybe there's some sort of sense like well, this is always available all the time everywhere and there's all these books. You don't have to be that serious about it because I don't know what.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: There's definitely a feeling there that it doesn't require the dedication it did when you had to seek it out. When you had to find the books you didn't even know existed.

MARILYN EVANS: I think a lot of the students that I ended up with were like look, you know I've read all these books, now I just feel like I need somebody to show me stuff and I put a lot of emphasis on the practical end of it. How do you actually ground yourself? How do you raise energy? How do you actually do these things? What does it feel like when you do that? It's harder, especially from books, to do group stuff because it's so different.

2:28:24

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: It's like one of those things where we have horses and both are broken but it's not considered the best practice to have an untrained horse and an untrained rider grow up and go through it together although that happens. It's best to learn how to ride on a trained horse and then know how to ride when you start training them. In public ritual it's like that. It's good to have someone who knows what to do next and how it's supposed to feel and what's supposed to happen. When you have a group of people, none of whom has done it before and none of whom knows how it's supposed to feel, it's hard to tell if you're getting it right or not.

2:29:06

DIANA BROWN: That is a big thing for me, like how it's supposed to feel and what am I suppose to be sensing right now.

MARILYN EVANS: If you feel sick to your stomach, you probably did something wrong.

DIANA BROWN: Not good.

MARILYN EVANS: Some people are like energy junkies and they want to feel really high all of the time. To me, magic is like electricity, you want it to flow through you. You want to be the perfect conduit and it's not supposed to charge you up. That means you're resisting the flow. I mean you want to tap into it enough so you're monitoring it but you want it to flow through you so you're not impeding its course of action. Actually, sometimes I'm such a good conduit and I end up in little sizzled bits around here and I'm like oh God, I should have checked on that. I don't know, it's hard for me. I don't know, I don't even do any of that anymore. Because everything is so perfect, why should I do magic? I love everything the way it is, it's all good and I like it. I don't want to go mucking about with it because life is good.

2:30:13

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: It becomes a moot question of whether you've made your life in accordance with your desires or whether your desires have accommodated how your life has turned out.

MARILYN EVANS: Either way, it's a happy place to be.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: It works out well.

MARILYN EVANS: Yeah, sometimes people say they need prayers for fill in the blank and of course you lend your energy to that. Yeah, life is good. I like my life and I like where it's going.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: I had one group I worked with who was always coming up with someone they knew who needed spiritual power or someone who needed healing and we all pitched in and we all thought that was great and then we had a friend who needed help and oof. Very cold reception. Not welcoming or encouraging at all that we should propose a target.

2:31:06

MARILYN EVANS: Maybe we didn't need to know them quite as much as we knew them before. I think eliminating a lot of people that make you miserable in your life is probably a good plan. That sort of helps towards serenity.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: Edit out the drama.

MARILYN EVANS: Yeah and actually it's a funny thing, once you get over the anger and acrimony and all the other bad things, you may discover the people you hated and thought hated you are all actually humans and you'll all end up actually liking each other. That's always a nice place to end up.

DIANA BROWN: Yeah, that happens too.

MARILYN EVANS: You've got to defuse all that stuff.

JONATHAN HUTCHINS: I'm going to have to excuse myself, I've got some things I've got to do.

DIANA BROWN: Well I will take that as my cue then. Thank you all so much, this has been really great.

2:32:06

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