

## Does the Supernatural Give Life Meaning? [VIDEOS]

Written by D.J. Grothe

Friday, 23 November 2012 00:00

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Chris Johnson, who is spearheading the multimedia project [The Atheist Book](#) has involved both Randi and me in the effort, as well as Michael Shermer, Sean Carroll, Patricia Churchland, and many others.

While the JREF is [not an atheist organization per se](#) , many of the organization's staff, volunteers and supporters do tend to lack belief in a god or gods, in addition to their thoroughgoing skepticism of ghosts, psychic powers and other paranormal beliefs. Possibly this is because many of the same methods of inquiry that lead one to be skeptical of ghosts or psychics or other paranormal claims may be applied to religious claims, resulting in a sort of no-nonsense religious skepticism.

As part of his book project, Chris Johnson is producing video interviews of its contributors. He interviewed me last week in Los Angeles regarding some of the existential issues related to religious skepticism. The same sort of realizations that I think make life meaningful in a universe without God also have implications for those who turn to the paranormal for meaning and purpose in life, rather than accepting the world for the way it is: devoid of any good evidence for magical entities and realms.

When people turn to the supernatural or the paranormal and reject the real world, their lives are diminished. This goes for those who live in an imaginary world populated by the ghosts of deceased loved ones, or psychic forces that variously act on their behalf or against them, those who turn to occult explanations of coincidence and of painful life-events, and those who believe that there is a supernatural "secret" to attaining one's most ambitious desires.

Here is a short clip from my interview with Chris Johnson.

Randi also did an extended interview for the book at his home outside of Ft. Lauderdale. A great clip from that interview can be found here:

***D.J. Grothe is president of the James Randi Educational Foundation and host of the interview show [For Good Reason](#) .***

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