

Voices of the Vampire Community (VVC) Public Meeting – April 27, 2008

Attendees (18):

Anshar Seraphim – House Lost Haven
Camille – House Kheperu
Deacon Gray – House of the Dreaming (HotD) & Graveyard Press
Gabriel – House Lost Haven
Gypsy – House Scarlet Moon
Kai – Bit Nibiru
Khan – The Dark Nations & Independent Representative
Lady CG – Smoke & Mirrors Messages Board(s) & Vampire Library (SL)
Lady Slinky – Vampire Community Message Board (VCMB)
Merticus – Atlanta Vampire Alliance (AVA) & Suscitatio Enterprises, LLC
Michelle Belanger – House Kheperu & MichelleBelanger.com
NyteMuse – House Rosa
Sanguinarius – Sanguinarius.org
sarasvati – Echoes of Night & VCMB
SphynxCatVP – SphynxCatVP Real Vampires Support Site
Sylvere ap Leanan – Real Vampires Community Alliance (RVCA)
Wreckmaster – PsychicVampire.org
Zilchy – Independent Representative

Discussion Agenda:

I. Meeting Information

Welcome to the first public meeting of Voices of the Vampire Community (VVC) for 2008. If you have not attended a VVC meeting before or are reading this for the first time please briefly take note of how this meeting will be conducted. The transcript from tonight's meeting is being logged and will be made publicly available.

Topics will be presented in the order they appear on the agenda (VVC members may refer to the forum or their e-mail for tonight's schedule). Please do not skip ahead and please do not suggest discussion of items not on the agenda until at the end of each major discussion topic.

Feel free to speak your mind on any and all topics in a civil manner and offer any supporting information, links, or material as needed. Thank you for coming and now let's begin!

II. Background & Introduction

VVC was founded January 2006.

The purpose of the Voices of the Vampire Community (VVC) is to develop friendly relations among the various Houses, Covens, Orders, organizations, and individual leaders of the vampire community; to encourage cooperation in solving community related problems and in promoting respect for the views, ideas, and opinions of others without seeking to establish a unifying or governing body; and to be a center for harmonizing the actions of groups in attaining these ends. – August 8, 2006

Voices Of The Vampire Community (VVC) does not assert itself as the exclusive organization of leaders or notable persons in the vampi(y)re community nor do we view ourselves or our actions as legislative or authoritarian.

The members of the VVC are representative of multiple groups, Houses, Orders, paths, beliefs, and segments of the vampi(y)re community who meet and are able to put aside personal differences to work together to discuss, suggest, implement, and support projects, ideas, and other intellectual works that help to improve the overall community.

For more information please visit our web site at:

<http://www.veritasvosliberabit.com/vvc.html>

We are available to answer questions through the community feedback form available at the site above.

III. Discussion

As a departure from the specific matters we discuss in business meetings, tonight's meeting will take a broader and more relevant approach to the vampi(y)re community. Opinions offered from members of the VVC who are unable to attend tonight's meeting will be posted first after the asking of each question. All present members please allow time for this to occur prior to posting your own response. Just as a reminder, conversation is to be kept civil, statements or claims backed by example where necessary, and in cases of insuperable disagreements; a concession between parties to respectfully agree to disagree.

- a.** Why do you devote your time and energy to this community – why are you here? In your estimation what are the current areas of growth, shifting, or retraction within the community?
- b.** If you had to point to one positive or defining characteristic of the vampire community what would it be and why do you feel it's so important?
- c.** What do you consider to be the single greatest inhibitor to productive conversation or continuing education for those who are part of the community? What can we do to change this and why have we fallen short in the past?
- d.** What steps are you personally taking to support the community or aid in the education of others about vampirism?

e. What are current projects or gatherings designed with the community in mind and what can we do to support these initiatives and encourage others to attend?

f. Other topics you'd like to bring up for discussion?

IV. Business Reminders

- <Merticus> <<<<<< BEGIN MEETING LOG >>>>>>
- <Merticus> Voices of the Vampire Community
- <Merticus> Public Meeting – April 27, 2008
- <Merticus> I. Meeting Information
- <Merticus> Welcome to the first public meeting of Voices of the Vampire Community (VVC) for 2008. If you have not attended a VVC meeting before or are reading this for the first time please briefly take note of how this meeting will be conducted. The transcript from tonight's meeting is being logged and will be made publicly available.
- <Merticus> Topics will be presented in the order they appear on the agenda (VVC members may refer to the forum or their e-mail for tonight's schedule). Please do not skip ahead and please do not suggest discussion of items not on the agenda until at the end of each major discussion topic.
- <Merticus> Feel free to speak your mind on any and all topics in a civil manner and offer any supporting information, links, or material as needed. Thank you for coming and now let's begin!
- <Merticus> II. Background & Introduction
- <Merticus> VVC was founded January 2006.
- <Merticus> The purpose of the Voices of the Vampire Community (VVC) is to develop friendly relations among the various Houses, Covens, Orders, organizations, and individual leaders of the vampire community; to encourage cooperation in solving community related problems and in promoting respect for the views, ideas, and opinions of others without seeking to establish a unifying or governing body; and to be a center for harmonizing the actions of groups in attaining these ends. – August 8, 2006
- <Merticus> Voices Of The Vampire Community (VVC) does not assert itself as the exclusive organization of leaders or notable persons in the vampi(y)re community nor do we view ourselves or our actions as legislative or authoritarian.
- <Merticus> The members of the VVC are representative of multiple groups, Houses, Orders, paths, beliefs, and segments of the vampi(y)re community who meet and are able to put aside personal differences to work together to discuss, suggest, implement, and support projects, ideas, and other intellectual works that help to

improve the overall community.

<Merticus> For more information please visit our web site at:
<http://www.veritasvosliberabit.com/vvc.html>

<Merticus> We are available to answer questions through the community feedback form available at the site above.

<Merticus> III. Discussion

<Merticus> As a departure from the specific matters we discuss in business meetings, tonight's meeting will take a broader and more relevant approach to the vampi(y)re community in general.

<Merticus> Most of us realize that reaching a consensus of opinion proves either difficult or impossible. Instead of debating the merits of our individual interpretations of vampirism, let's take a moment to lend our personal views on the community – the thousands of individuals who use some of the resources our members provide via the web, print, or other media.

<Merticus> For the benefit of those who may not be familiar with you or your group/projects please briefly describe your relationship with the community (online and offline) prior to answering the following questions:

<Merticus> **a. Why do you devote your time and energy to this community – why are you here? In your estimation what are the current areas of growth, shifting, or retraction within the community?**

<LadySlinky> I devote my time and energy to the community in order to be informed and able to help those who seek my support..

<Sphynx-NotHere> Because someone needs to be the voice of reason and common sense.

<Sphynx-NotHere> People need to be reminded that not all of their problems are vampiric related - medical checkups ARE necessary, medical investigation of any personal health issues ARE necessary (even if treatment is declined - sometimes you can manage things better yourself if you can just find out what's going on), and so on.

<Sphynx-NotHere> Especially for teenagers, not all "new problems" are caused by vampirism - sometimes they need to be reminded that some new things they are experiencing are caused by puberty, growing up, environmental, or - especially these days - prescription medications that have known side effects. A little basic research on any medication or health issue can be found online more easily than even most doctors realize, and should be a first start for anyone wi...

<Cammeey> A. Because I believe there are some really legitimate people out there who really could use the resource. It can be rough dealing with even the possibility of vampirism, let alone the often impractical reality. I try to make sure there's material out there which is a little more grounded than some of it can be... (as, let's

- admit it, some of it sucks - in a bad way).
- <sarasvati> I devote my time to the community because of two reasons: 1) the massive amount of help it gave me early on and continues to do so makes me want to give back. And 2) I think I have an educational background not commonly seen in the community that offers an alternative viewpoint
- <NyteMuse> I put my energy towards the community to 1, go outside the bounds of my current knowledge/experience so I can better help folks coming for help and 2, because I believe everyone needs a place to belong, and I'd like to play a part in offering a healthy place.
- <M_Belanger> I've devoted my time and energy to the community largely because my own journey of acceptance and understanding was a difficult one, and I've wanted to make that journey easier for others by providing guideposts. I'm also motivated by a personal belief that I have a karmic debt to the community, and I'm trying to expiate that debt to the best of my ability.
- <LadyCG> I am a Sanguinarian who went through awakening alone, in a time when there wasn't a community. If I have anything to say about it No other vampire will go through awakening alone, and afraid Like I did, as long I can help.
- <Sanguinarius> I do to help guide, inform and connect new and not so new vampires with each other, so they aren't ignorant of how they are and how they should/shouldn't be; won't feel quite so alone and estranged
- <Anshar> I'm Anshar, a representative of House Lost Haven. I devote my time and energy to this community to advance the purposes of self education and collaboration in the vampire community. Self-awareness and objectivity are often lacking in those that are still learning to define themselves and that encourages a lot of mistakes and false impressions.
- <sarasvati> I am here to both learn and teach, since I believe you can do neither without the other :)
- <CammeY> As to the part about current growth/change - I've seen a lot more acceptance within the pagan community, which has been absolutely _wonderful_ to see. I no longer always have to explain everything from square one - that is a huge step, IMHO.
- <zilchy> I'm zilchy, an independent vampire and the creator of "Vampire Q&A" on YouTube. I devote my time and energy to the VC because I feel that it's important to let people know who/what we are and what we're all about. Maybe we can find better ways to cope with symptoms with the added input of others both inside and outside the community. I'm here because of a very strong and omnipresent vampiric tendency, as well as a desire to increase my ow
- <NyteMuse> I agree with CammeY...I seem to find less issues trying to

convince non-vamps that vamps exist, and more just fine-tuning and finessing details.

<Merticus> I devote my time to the community because I'd like to further the understanding of vampirism from a research or case-study style approach and to network with others who share similar viewpoints, abilities, etc. I believe there is a lot to be gained through offline/online interaction with one another - I'd like to propagate that as much as possible.

<Sylvere> The RVCA (Real-Vampires) was founded as a place for "real" vampires -- as opposed to folklore and fiction enthusiasts and lifestylers -- to find support from like-minded people. We are also open to donors and those who want to gain a better understanding of their friends/loved ones who identify as vampires. We began as a social group and eventually branched out into the realm of support group. We also work to dispel common myth

<sarasvati> Growth: More acceptance in the general population. Retraction: More cases of "everything that happens to me is because I am a vampire"-ness... :P

<M_Belanger> I've seen the community change recently, particularly in online participation. I believe we're witnessing a current drop-off in "elder" participation in the OVC while many newbies are flooding message boards and lists. The cacophony from all these new (and sometimes immature) voices is unfortunately lending to a feeling of burn-out among older members of the OVC. I'm not sure how that will resolve itself.

<LadyCG> the community is becoming better known publicly, thanks to a lot more publicity over the past 5 years or so.

<NyteMuse> It seems to me that the problem no longer is "do vampires exist" but the very widespread divisiveness in the community and almost a "vampier-than-thou" vibe

<LadyCG> Some of us are getting burned out

<Anshar> Areas of growth or retraction.. I would say that as more and more people enter into the vampire community with a better idea of what vampirism is as a consensus, but as to whether or not those ideas are the best ones is a matter left up to discussion. Since the community originated around a lot of misinformation, I think it's easy for the larger whole to adopt a consensus that may not be entirely accurate or personally true.

<Sanguinarius> the older vamps NEED to stick around and present strong presences in these places

<Sanguinarius> give the newbies guidance, role models and keep them from going crazy or spreading false ideas and notions.

<LadySlinky> Many are tired of the abuse from being a strong presence

<NyteMuse> And also lack of retention...new folks drowning out the voices of experience on the boards so that the "old farts", or at least the

wiser voices, are throwing up hands in frustration.

<M_Belanger> I've also seen a huge spike in media interest in the community. No less than three television series are planning fall episodes that revolve around real vampires. I'm glad that we've gotten more positive exposure, but I'm not sure everyone in the community is comfortable with the level of interest -- nor do they always feel the interest is genuinely motivated by a desire to understand us as people, and not sideshows.

<Sylvere> I joined the VVC as a means to improve communication between the RVCA and other groups. The RVCA was always the "anti-house" and our founder had a very antagonistic attitude toward any and all organizations. As time passed, I wanted to do more outreach and networking. So, here I am.

<LadyCG> We try Sangi.. we stay around a lot longer than older vamps used to... I remember when it was hard to find a vampire over 40 and now we have community members in their 60s. But we do get tired and we do get burned out.

<Anshar> That makes the ability to properly communicate and share/contrast ideas a must for our advancement as a whole. The collaboration of ideas and critical thinking will be able to bring us all closer to the truth each of us seeks.

<Sanguinarius> that's why I blow off interviews
* Anshar nods

<Merticus> I think the way that we are communicating with each other is changing to a degree - more a shift to smaller or more focused groups or communities and stronger offline focus as those who were younger when they started in the community have grown older.

<Sphynx-NotHere> I also see an increased emphasis on political structures and "tenure" within the community, and seemingly less on open, free and civil discussion - as evidenced by people new and old butting heads frequently on many forums

<M_Belanger> I understand that the newcomers to the community just want to learn, but it's hard to answer the exact same question for the 50th or the 100th time when it's been asked repeatedly in cycles on every message board you've ever been on

<Sphynx-NotHere> (and yea, burnout.... definitely burnt. out.)

<LadySlinky> and there are countless articles answering their questions

<zilchy> MB, yeah - that's part of why I started making the videos

<LadySlinky> they just don't want to bother to read them

<M_Belanger> RTFM ... or at least, RTF FAQ

<zilchy> because lots of people see articles and think TL:DR (Too long, didn't read)

<M_Belanger> heh ... damn the YouTube generation.

<Anshar> It's about the process of self entitlement and the path of least resistance when it comes to personal acknowledgement.

<Sphynx-NotHere> is THAT was TLDR is!
<M_Belanger> Make me feel old....
<zilchy> sphynx, yah
<LadySlinky> me too
<Anshar> I doubt there's much we can do in that arena. That an inherent personality trait with many people, and has little or nothing to do with vampirism specifically.
<LadyCG> You are not allowed to feel old, Michelle, I'm the one who just turned 45, lol
<AncientKhan> Ok. I'm involved because I hope that were someone to walk in the shoes I wore, something I could share might make their lives a bit better and help them become more introspective as to the fact that their vampyrism isn't the only thing that makes them who they are. I think our best bet to grow together is in personal interaction, and that maybe, if we can see further than ourselves, we might be able to rally around the ties that bind us.
<M_Belanger> You got ten years on me, lady. But I still feel old.
<Deacon_Gray> people on line want communication. If they wanted to just learn they would buy the books and read the articles. They are mostly around for social interaction.
* Anshar agrees
<Cammeey> books, I know like... maybe 3 on the topic
<Deacon_Gray> I think that is the first thing the OVC needs to realize
<Cammeey> all of which are at least marginally controversial
<Anshar> People are more interested typically in seeking out others who can "give" them an opinion instead of creating their own.
<M_Belanger> As much as the general aura of impatience annoys me, I also realize that not everyone learns by reading.
<AncientKhan> Agree with Anshar...
<M_Belanger> Some are more visual, some are more hands-on -- so they do need different methods of outreach. But it can be hard accommodating everyone's needs
<Anshar> Promoting objectivity and balance would probably be a good priority.
<LadyCG> That's a part of the idea behind my Library on SL (Second Life).
<Sylvere> Honestly, as one of the "auld pharts" who now has a family and other obligations, I can't spoon feed the newbs.
<Cammeey> Anshar ~ *grins* define objectivity and balance in this context
<Anshar> Most people are incapable of even DISCUSSING their beliefs rationally let alone being objective about them.
<LadySlinky> I agree Sylvere
<Merticus> I like the idea that the community is evolving as a result of the mixed media we've branched into over the last few years.
<Anshar> Objectivity: the concept that what you hold true may be based on information or bias, and the knowledge of that possibility
<Sylvere> I'm happy to create ethical documents, FAQs, or whatever for

them to read and I think we SHOULD create those documents.

<Sanguinarius> yes yes

<Cammeey> Anshar ~ so the acknowledgement of bias is enough to consider objective?

<Sylvere> But those are just a starting point so that everyone is on the same page and speaking the same language.

<LadySlinky> We have those documents

<LadySlinky> lots and lots of those documents

<M_Belanger> The irony with my position is, on one hand, I'm able to reach far more people with my writing and other work. But it all takes up so much time that I've had to sacrifice any kind of online presence or direct teaching.

<Sylvere> It's then much easier to answer questions.

<Cammeey> Anshar ~ I'm not sure I agree, but I agree it's a good step.

<LadySlinky> which may be part of the issue

<Anshar> Balance: The capacity to weigh out different possibilities, and have access to those possibilities presented in a way that shows the individual merits of each belief.

<Sylvere> Slinky: That's the problem.

* Sanguinarius hopes her terminology and lingo is a step towards getting people speaking the same language on the same page

<NyteMuse> Sylvere, there are tons of those documents already...the problem is I really see a major "us vs. them" attitude in a lot of groups. If another group created it, it's obviously not usable

<Sylvere> There is not a single document that represents a majority opinion.

<M_Belanger> Anshar, Cammeey: how do you teach people to think for themselves?

<LadyCG> Sangi can I have that document for the Library?

<Sanguinarius> yeah

<Anshar> Cammeey: if you realize that you have bias then you will be MORE objective. Objectivity isn't a binary on/off kind of thing.

<LadySlinky> None of the documents really is based in anything more than speculation and observance though.

<Cammeey> M ~ in 2500 words or less? You don't. You provide them a foundation to start from and pray they go from there... You can provide possible paths, but giving them the answer quite literally defeats the purpose.

<Sylvere> NM: see above

<M_Belanger> All of our interpretations of our vampirism needs must be speculative

<LadySlinky> Do you really think there is a majority opinion?

* zilchy agree w/ Cammeey

<NyteMuse> Does there need to be a majority opinion?

<M_Belanger> We have only our personal experiences to measure by and no hard data such as laboratory research, really

<Anshar> Michelle: By showing them that even the people who know the most understand that they are capable of making mistakes and changing their introspective reality through trial, error, and revision.

<Sanguinarius> majority, or at least the biggest percentage of opinion :>

<Cammeey> M ~ (you know this, but let me say it for others who don't know me) my view is: create a solid non-harmful foundation and a few road-maps for people who give a care to start with.

<zilchy> NM, not really. It would be nice to have a majority opinion, but there doesn't NEED to be one.

<Sylvere> Slinky: See my post on the forum re: creating a doc that represents a majority

<Merticus> I don't believe there does at this juncture... we're still coming into our own in many respects.

<Deacon_Gray> typically we don't listen to the "Elders" because they tend to act a little too elitist...

<Deacon_Gray> all in their own houses, or groups, and hard to interact with for most

<M_Belanger> Our majority opinion is that vampirism exists, and some of us can be defined as vampires. Beyond that, things begin to diverge wildly.

<Anshar> If role models in the community are capable of showing that they are human and have gotten where they are through their own personal journey of questions and revisions, that encourages others to do the same.

<Cammeey> IF they're going to parrot something, give them something semi-reasonable to parrot

<Cammeey> and then tell them that they should go from there, and hope

<Cammeey> that's all

<M_Belanger> The first rule of Bite Club....

<LadySlinky> even being human is in question in the community

<zilchy> Anshar, agree.

<NyteMuse> Zilchy, I think any "push" to create a "majority opinion" on anything is going to set a lot of folks on edge if they deviate or are just plain Gen-Xer recalcitrant

<Sylvere> Deacon: And yet we KEEP setting up houses/orders/yadda yadda that have that hierarchal structure

<Sphynx-NotHere> LOL @ Michelle

<zilchy> NM, absolutely - which is why any publicly available statement of "majority opinion" needs to include EVERY opinion we can find.

<M_Belanger> Anarchy in a group setting isn't workable. Someone needs to be "in charge" in some capacity, even if it's only to moderate discussions

<Sanguinarius> do people come in, gravitate toward the hierarchical structure but then eventually grow out of that and move on?

<LadySlinky> then it isn't a majority opinion

<NyteMuse> Sangi, makes sense to me

<Merticus> Though not all houses, groups, et. al. are created or function the same either. Some are out of convenience of communication and provide the ability for others to work together to accomplish something faster and sometimes more efficiently than without some degree of structure.

<Sphynx-NotHere> Some people never had the hierarchal mindset to start with :P

<Deacon_Gray> it is not that...the houses can have all the organization they want

<Deacon_Gray> hell have more...just need to open it up more in my view

<Sylvere> We can represent the opinion that a majority of people have while still directing them to other opinions for further study.

<Anshar> Majority isn't a necessity for a personal world view. Have any of you ever gone to ReligiousTolerance.org?

<M_Belanger> Just from what I know of human psychology, some people function better within a structure. Some function better outside of it. And some fall on a continuum in between.

<Sylvere> It doesn't have to be an "us vs them" attitude.

<Sanguinarius> If my teen self came into the community today, it'd get flamed out probably, for acting like a little poser/wannabe/etc.

<LadyCG> I have Anshar

<zilchy> sangi - same story

<NyteMuse> Anshar, yes

<Sanguinarius> (which is one major reason why I put up my site, to help newbie vamps get past that stage)

<Deacon_Gray> indeed...but we could offer a structure with out admitting them to a house

<M_Belanger> My teen self was a predatory cult-leader in training. I can relate. Though I suspect some folks would argue the "cult leader" status never really went away.

<Deacon_Gray> a path of learning so to speak

<Anshar> ReligiousTolerance.org is a website that remains objective about EVERY belief. It simply lists the beliefs and central ideas of each belief system, and why/what people who endorse that belief actually believe.

<Sanguinarius> hehe, "cult" doesn't necessarily have to be "bad"

<Anshar> It makes no statement of right or wrong, it's purpose is simply there to inform.

<Sanguinarius> just don't make anyone drink coolaid

* Sanguinarius ducks and runs

<NyteMuse> Anshar, I believe the problem with that is what we ran into on the forums, with the discussions about "classicals"

<M_Belanger> I *think* that's one of the sites Dr. J. Gordon Melton is or was involved with.

<Merticus> Well another good offshoot question... as a teen 10 years ago vrs, a teen coming into the community today - would you say it's

easier to find information or easier to interact effectively with others - or build a respectable reputation (not to say elder or leader) but in general?

- <Anshar> By understanding the merits of different individual opinions, it encourages others to make their OWN decisions
- <Deacon_Gray> people like benchmarks in learning
- <Deacon_Gray> degrees
- <Deacon_Gray> a sense of accomplishment
- <Deacon_Gray> but many also like their freedom
- <Sanguinarius> freedom is good
- <LadySlinky> There was nothing when I was a teen so I would definitely say it is better today
- <Gabrielx> hey guys
- <LadyCG> I don't know that you can benchmark self discovery, Deacon
- <M_Belanger> As a teen coming in today, I think it is easier to find information, but that also I think has had the negative side effect of making it easier to become overwhelmed with information. Rather than having to fight for bits of insight, a newcomer drowns easily in conflicting opinions that they have no ability to navigate.
- <zilchy> CG, he's talking about something like belt levels in Karate or something.
- <sarasvati> I think it a lot easier now vs. 10 years ago to find information... its the vast amount of information available. A newbies basic tenets will be grounded on what information they find first.
- <Sylvere> Anshar: the problem with that is a rank n00b will have no concept of what is a balanced view and what is crap like WingedWolf or Catherene Nightpoe
- <Anshar> Sylvere: but... who are you to say that WingedWolf is a kook?
- <Anshar> I happen to agree, but that's my OPINION.
- <Sanguinarius> oh god *groans*
- <M_Belanger> Is Catherine still around? Thought she had kicked the proverbial bucket?
- <Sanguinarius> she died but her site lives on
- <Sylvere> How do you create a balance between them and everyone else without giving them a foundation?
- <Anshar> if we're going to encourage people to form their own opinions, injecting your own bias isn't going to help anything.
- <M_Belanger> And that whole business about Classics and Nightsiders and such? Oi vey
- <Sylvere> Anshar: WWP's crap was debunked years ago on TNO by electrical engineers.
- <LadyCG> Catherene died in 2005
- <Cammey> Ok, but let's take another tack on this - so you just threw out most of what you 'knew' by accepting vampirism/magic
- <sarasvati> No, you have to give them what you have for your base, and the reasons you have for that, and they have to choose for

themselves which direction to go...

<LadySlinky> Why include crap to preserve crap

<Cammeey> how the hell are you supposed to jump paradigms like that and sort out what makes sense from what does

<Cammeey> no

<Cammeey> when NOTHING makes 'sense'

<M_Belanger> No, it doesn't help, but maintaining the intellectual objectivity when writing up the beliefs of a group that you personally disagree with can be difficult.

<Anshar> if someone's ideas are kooky, then an objective survey will let a person who's interested in knowing more have the information to make their own assertions about who is "kooky"

<Sanguinarius> optimize your sites for search engines.. get ranked higher than sites that pump crap down people's throats

<M_Belanger> Also, for some of the kookier beliefs, if you manage not to seem a little incredulous, some folks might take your write up as an endorsement.

* NyteMuse agrees with Michelle

<sarasvati> Mentally, I compare it to different Christian sects...what make one person choose Catholic over Protestant? over Episcopal? heck, over Mormon or Pagan?

<M_Belanger> Mormon women have those funny hairdos. I would just look ridiculous. ;)

<Anshar> Sylvere: What I'm saying is that instead of dismissing the beliefs of others, post them up. Once they see WingedWolf's theory of curing vampirism by imprisoning an energy parasite in tupperware, copper foil, and bucking magnets... they'll have all the info they need to decide for themselves who is "kooky" :D

<Sanguinarius> lol

<sarasvati> It goes back to that first base information and the basic tenets of a persons belief in what vampirism is or is not TO them

<LadySlinky> lol

<Deacon_Gray> not all of them

<NyteMuse> saras, I see your point, but...well, it's kind of different, since I don't believe most vamps "choose" their origin story

<Deacon_Gray> that is the reformed church

<AncientKhan> I agree with Anshar again

<AncientKhan> You can't make crazy people be "not crazy".

<Anshar> Exactly.

<Sanguinarius> well, what IS kooky? Some guy discovered a cure for cancer using radio waves, pie pans and hot dogs

<Gabrielx> I think one of the most important parts is our diversity and willingness to work with one another honestly

<sarasvati> NyteMuse: Most Christians would say the same, though. They didn't choose their faith, it is what they believe... for vampires, that can be anything from biology to demonic possession.

<AncientKhan> An audience of believers in the company of our peers will show their merit for themselves.

<Sanguinarius> and that's true

<M_Belanger> Well, and there's this point at which one must accept that we cannot protect everyone from falling prey to beliefs that we personally find objectionable.

<Sylvere> Thin skins + unwillingness to create any sort of *meaningful* structure (as opposed to the V:tM based House/Clan structure) because of a fear of somehow infringing on a person's right to think for him/herself.

<Deacon_Gray> people could run something like a course on historical theology

<Sanguinarius> google Kanzius machine

<NyteMuse> saras: *raised eyebrow* Really? I'd never heard that, but I guess I can kind of see that take...

<M_Belanger> The moment we try to steer people away from certain beliefs for their own good is the moment that we're no better than our well-meaning Xtian relatives...

<Deacon_Gray> don't try

<AncientKhan> Well said, Michelle

<Deacon_Gray> just set up a means to gain insight into many

<M_Belanger> ty

<Sanguinarius> I think we can't stress too much people being careful when bloodletting, and not to just go out and go it casually.

<Sanguinarius> esp. newbies and younger vamps

<Anshar> Anyhow, my point is that by trying to promote "rational" views in the community, you usually encourage the crazies to come out.

<Cammeey> *agrees with Sangi* I think that's one of the few _hard_ things this topic hits

<M_Belanger> Would it be helpful to have a list of all of the possible beliefs/interpretations/permutations that vampirism has taken within the community -- absolutely

<Cammeey> M - not possible

<M_Belanger> Could we accomplish something like this in an unbiased way? Possibly.

<Sylvere> Anshar: You still have to provide some basis for critical analysis in order to decide what's "kooky" and what isn't.

<AncientKhan> We can't post them all, but ours here would be a good start...

<Anshar> If you promote a fair and balanced view that objectively looks at the standpoint of each belief system, then a person can have a consolidated idea of what's out there and decide what's kooky or right on for themselves.

<LadySlinky> As long as it is presented as all the views no matter how crazy and not as some majority

<sarasvati> I think on Sangi's board there has been an attempt to list many of the current theories, M_Belanger

<Deacon_Gray> well CG and Sangi I believe have a library concept is a good start

<sarasvati> But I don't think that list went into details...just a list

<M_Belanger> A list is a start.

<Anshar> Sylvere: trying to tell people HOW to be critically analytical takes you back to square one: telling them how to form their belief system. It's better in my opinion to put up the data and let them develop their own thought process.

<AncientKhan> And may I suggest that instead of listing everyone's, we only speak for ourselves...

<Merticus> Yes, anything set down in writing in one comprehensive site or place is better than crawling 50 sites for the material.

<LadySlinky> Many have gotten the idea that Sangi supports all the articles on the list.

<sarasvati> A more objective list is in my to-list for my site...but that list just keeps getting pushed back *sigh*

<M_Belanger> The history project is part of that when I suggested it to Mert. But that relied on hearing things (when possible) from the horse's mouth, so to speak

<NyteMuse> Hm...wonder if we could just post the list and then Bonewits' guide to evaluating cults and call it a day *chuckle*

<Anshar> The benefit of that is that if in their personal journey they realize that they've been led astray, they'll be able to self-evaluate and re-approach.

<M_Belanger> Khan -- but where does that leave the belief systems that have come and gone but still have some impact? Someone should chronicle them.

<Merticus> Yes, on the project I have compiled information on some 50+ houses, trying to get it all in table form or an sql database atm.

<AncientKhan> M, I think we can't really speak for others if we aren't in their heads.

* Anshar agrees with Khan

* Sanguinarius wonders how effective Bonewits's scale is for people who are already brainwashed IN a cult

<LadyCG> I'm pretty sure no one WANTS to be in MY head. lol

<Sylvere> Anshar: I disagree. Universities teach people how to be critically analytical in various subjects all the time without telling them what to believe.

<AncientKhan> I don't say that they don't count, but I can't make a statement for someone else's belief system.

<Sanguinarius> can they see things objectively enough to evaluate their organization?

<NyteMuse> What about making the list and publicly posting it, giving the addendum that the list is based on our experiences and not complete and anyone who has anything to add can contact us?

<Cammeey> Sangi - probably not, but I've seen it used before someone

considers joining a group - that's probably the more useful form

<Anshar> Sylvere: but students of science CHOOSE to be there and have a desire to be objective.

* Sanguinarius agrees with Sylvere

<M_Belanger> Anshar -- I've found that two of the most controversial and cult-like groups in the Vampire Community have proven very good at producing discerning and analytical minds ... once they got sucked in and went through the process of getting back out.

<Cammey> Sylvere - I think that is a very optimistic view of universities

* NyteMuse agrees w/ Sylvere

<Sylvere> Mert: re: 1 site vs 50 - exactly

<Sanguinarius> that's good

<Sanguinarius> (re: M_Belanger)

<Anshar> Michelle: Exactly. Which is why encouraging people to use their own process is helpful. It teaches them to be analytical of their OWN volition.

<Anshar> By realizing that if they're aren't objective they'll end up where they were before.

<M_Belanger> Sometimes falling on your face teaches you something that being *told* about falling never could.

<Anshar> Bingo.

<NyteMuse> *nods*

<Sanguinarius> *nod*

<Sylvere> Anshar: So you think the newbs who come to the VC looking for answers don't *choose* to be there?

<Deacon_Gray> I think they just have a good education system...there is no reason we cannot as well

<Sylvere> Cammy: Since I'm attending university, I think it's a valid view.

<Anshar> Sylvere: Perhaps I'm misunderstanding. Are you opposed to having an amalgam of beliefs listed in an objective way for the purpose of research and personal evolution?

<Deacon_Gray> They have a set task list: exploration or education goal for their members that helps them to have directed exploration

<Cammey> Sylvere - I went through grad school

<Cammey> there is a LOT of bias at a university level, just often very educated and well-spoken bias

<M_Belanger> So on that line, I think we should be a little less worried about trying to save people from themselves. Leave that to the legislators in the U.S. They seem to try it with dumb-ocracy laws all the time.

<Deacon_Gray> and cuts down on the repetitive conversations...of course they could all gather in rooms and chat about what they think with others in the same task list kinda thing

<Anshar> Cammey: VERY true.

<Sylvere> Anshar: No, I'm not. What I would like to see is something like this...pls bear with---

<Sanguinarius> if we leave it to them, they'll legislate laws that marginalize us or what we do.

* Anshar nods to Sylvere

<Anshar> Please, go on. I'm listening. I think we may have misunderstood one another.

<Deacon_Gray> well let me attempt to give an example...I went looking for info on Warrior types place and duties inside a ritual and how to complete those tasks

<M_Belanger> Sangi -- I think it's entirely possible for future laws or at least legal actions to interfere with our "lifestyles"

<Sanguinarius> we gotta devote at least a little energy to saving people from themselves

<M_Belanger> Some of the rumblings toward the kink community suggest things might go that way...

* Sanguinarius agrees

<Deacon_Gray> I think two houses had some info...most had nothing but a little mention of that they do have a task

<Deacon_Gray> so it is not just newbes who cannot navigate our community

<CammeY> "lead a horse to water" - personally, I'm for digging extra watering holes and putting up signs

<CammeY> but I think that's all we can do

<sarasvati> Technically, there are already laws that make what we do illegal... but they are not heavily enforced

<LadyCG> Sangi.. that could be circumvented were the community to develop the kind of political clout the pagan community now enjoys

* Sanguinarius agrees

<Sylvere> Let's say you have 5 docs that say vampires are defined by a need to feed to maintain good health. 2 say that a vampire is someone who does energy work or blood magic for spiritual purposes. 1 says a vampire craves blood/energy but doesn't experience any ill effects from not feeding, 1 says there's an astral symbiont.

<Sylvere> The 5 docs are the simple majority.

<Anshar> Sangi: that would be about as effective as teaching abstinence... though I'm all for teaching people that if they ARE going to do something, "here's a way to do it safely without breaking the law"

<zilchy> ash hits the nail on the head here

<NyteMuse> IMO, if we really want to promote diversity w/i the community, a good approach would be to list all the possible theories/causes/explanations and include a statement/article about evaluation/discernment/critical thinking/threat assessment without hinting that any one particular group is wrong. Then we've done the responsible thing and left it to other people to think for themselves without telling them they had to.

<Deacon_Gray> you would take the best representation and let people read the three

<M_Belanger> Funny thing -- I've used that same argument, Anshar, to defend why blood drinking practices should be posted online to ppl outside the community.

<Sylvere> However, within a doc describing that majority view, there can be embedded links, footnotes, or whatever that direct those who want further info to a page that discusses those views in greater depth.

* NyteMuse agrees with Cammey

<AncientKhan> With all due respect, Sylvere, if we just go with the majority, there is no reason for those not in the majority to participate, which is part of the drama we face now.

<Deacon_Gray> sounds good sylvere

<Anshar> Sylvere: but does that make them right? or does it mean that it's possible that aspects of each may be true? or even... does it mean that research on the other points should be discouraged?

<Gabrielx> Cammey: If we tried to do anything more I think that there's a possibility new comers would shun even the thought of reading things over just due to the mass majority of the houses signing off on it. They'd actively seek somewhere more non independent. A lot of them may not want free thought :P

<Sylvere> All views are represented with the majority view as the basis for comparison in order for the person to evaluate the rest.

<LadyCG> I believe it would be possible for the Vampire Community acquire that kind of political clout (such as the Pagan community now enjoys) but it would require us to set aside our personal bias's and commit to a community that includes Everyone who calls him or herself "Vampire"

* Sanguinarius nods

<LadyCG> for whatever reason they choose to identify with the community

<Anshar> Sylvere: for example, by looking at WingedWolf's arguments I was able to get enough interest to study the piscavat, a spiritual parasite in the Hindi belief system.

<Anshar> Does that make WingedWolf right? No. But, by making information available it encourages others to think for themselves, which was Michelle's question at the beginning of all this.

<M_Belanger> I would love us to get there, CG, but some of the forward momentum the Pagans enjoyed involved rallying under the banner of religious freedom.

<Sanguinarius> I think if we de-emphasize who is and who isn't "a vampire" (within reason), and just focus on vampiric info and problems...that would go far.

* NyteMuse agrees with Sangi

<LadyCG> and is our freedom to be who we are any less critical?

<Deacon_Gray> of course the task would be...HUGE
<Anshar> Studying that spirit phenomenon in their culture allowed me to learn more about what those who believe in them believe them to be and how that might tie into a potential view of Vampirism.

<NyteMuse> The terminology and excessive reinventing of the wheel takes up so much time and energy

<LadySlinky> It seems to me the more we head towards the pagan community ideal the further we get away for objective research.

<AncientKhan> Do we agree on anything?

<M_Belanger> Vamps get touchy when the issue of religion comes up, especially in the context of their vampirism. Even though religious studies scholars would tend to define our belief that we are vampires as a belief, and therefore lump us in with New Religious Movements.

<Sanguinarius> and we can devote less time and energy arguing about who/what is/isn't a "vampire"

<Cammeey> Slinky - I'm not sure, IMHO, there's more objective-research pagan side then vamp side, though mostly because of the sheer numbers of participants

<sarasvati> Khan: We all agree there are vampires :)

<Cammeey> it's one of the reasons I love Mert so much, for introducing that to the community in a big way

<LadyCG> We don't want to BE the Pagan community.. we want to emulate the path they took to achieve the community they have now.

<Sylvere> Anshar: those not in the majority are still represented and you could still do the same research

<LadySlinky> I am not saying the pagans do not have research

<AncientKhan> Then maybe that's where we start, and let the rest work itself out with dealing with that one agreeable factor...

<Sylvere> There is no win/lose situation here.

<M_Belanger> Shouldn't we look more to the gay community?

<Sanguinarius> somewhat

<Anshar> Sylvere: ah, darn, I misunderstood again. I thought you had said that we would focus on the majority views.

<Merticus> How does one arrive at something that can be labeled as a "majority view" - what are the standards and by what measure would they be set? I would think on some level such would be counterproductive than just presenting the various opinions on their face value for other's to decide or make an informed decision. Yes, we don't need to be in the business of exclusionary practices, etc.

<Anshar> my mistake and apologies.

<M_Belanger> They have to struggle with the same issues -- outsiders thinking it's a choice or even a willful rebellion, the internal belief that the majority of us are born this way ...

<LadyCG> Its true we don't have a lot of standards or majority views.. and

yet.. here we all are.

<Deacon_Gray> yes...

<LadyCG> something brings us together

<Sanguinarius> show the majority view but make it clear that it isn't necessarily better view than some view in the minority

<Sanguinarius> maybe?

<Deacon_Gray> but we do not have to fight for what they did

<Anshar> Sylvere: the "majority view" is that vampirism is bullshit. Should we post that there as well?

<LadySlinky> I think both communities have merit to learn from.

<Sylvere> Anshar: we use the simple majority as a basis and still direct those who want info on the minority to places to find that info. However, those looking for a basic and very general understanding don't have to dig through 50 websites and books to find it.

<Deacon_Gray> you are not denied medical visitation rights because your spouse is a vamp

<Sanguinarius> majority vampire community view

<M_Belanger> It's funny. This happened at Twilight II.

<M_Belanger> We were all in a room together, and when we tried to use words to define our similarities and differences, all we could do was argue.

* Anshar nods to Sylvere

<Anshar> makes sense.

<Gabrielx> CG: I think the fact that we care brings us all here

<Deacon_Gray> I mean what is our goal of being public?

<Deacon_Gray> so we are not made fun of?

<Merticus> Let's use that as a segway into the next question..

<Merticus> **b. If you had to point to one positive or defining characteristic of the vampire community what would it be and why do you feel it's so important?**

* Anshar nods to Mert

<AncientKhan> <M. This seems to repeat itself like bad history..

<M_Belanger> And yet, when we weren't trying to find words to define ourselves, we could all inherently recognize our similarities, the ties that bound us together.

<Sphynx-NotHere> As a whole there is more awareness of possible medical issues contributing to a person's health and well-being. This is important because EVERYONE must take care of their health, and everyone must be aware of how anything they do, or anything they're eating/drinking/taking on a daily basis can potentially impact their health.

<LadySlinky> The vampire community as a whole is so vast that there really is no single positive defining characteristic.

<LadyCG> My point though Gabe is that we don't all agree on a lot of things, and yet here we are from all over the community with all

our different beliefs, and we all recognize each other AS community.

<Cammey> B. Diversity.

<Cammey> (<- uses cheap route)

<Gabrielx> I think one of the most important parts is our diversity and willingness to work with one another (repeat from earlier)

<sarasvati> Support... whether it be a small website or a vast house, support is always available in some form

<zilchy> The positive defining characteristic in the vampire community is that we're all together, for whatever reason, and most of us like to take a critical view of our condition in order to validate it for ourselves and others.

<Gabrielx> CG: agree'd

<Deacon_Gray> I like what I am

<M_Belanger> It's simple, really. We're vampires. We believe that vampirism is something that exists, and that some people can be vampiric.

* NyteMuse agrees w/ Michelle

<Deacon_Gray> ok so we come out with that

<Deacon_Gray> and the rest of the society says....SO what?

<Anshar> I'd say the most positive and defining characteristic of the vampire community is diversity. That diversity may cause us issues, but it's also our greatest strength. Some of us are doctors, lawyers, respected members of the community, housewives, and more. Our strength is that we realize that we have a common condition, even if we have difficulty acknowledging exactly what that condition is.

<LadyCG> Yes. I agree

<M_Belanger> The second part of that statement should always be that within the community there are many different expressions of vampirism as well as many different interpretations as to what it really is and what causes it.

<Merticus> Simplicity is often the best route in this community.

<LadyCG> Michelle that's the simplest form of what brings us together, period

<M_Belanger> Generally, when I'm on the radio or tv, they're like, Hrm, that's neat.

<Deacon_Gray> exactly

<NyteMuse> The other positive characteristic I seem to see a lot of in the VC is that vampires are encouraged to really seek further growth and development...it's not just "I'm a vampire!" and then sit on your laurels. Sure, people may come to the wrong or kooky conclusions, but there is a big drive to understand

<Deacon_Gray> thats neat....

<Deacon_Gray> and than what

<AncientKhan> I think another issue that is hurting us is that we care too much what mainstream society thinks of us.

<Deacon_Gray> we are vampries and...
<Cammeey> Nyte - I have to agree with that
<Deacon_Gray> and stop teasing us?
<Cammeey> Khan - I disagree
<Anshar> Khan: at the rate we're going, there's a possibility that we may join a section of the mainstream at any moment.
<AncientKhan> How so, Cammeey?
<M_Belanger> They really only worry about us when or if they feel that our way of doing things might infringe on their lives -- like Pagans worried about predatory vampires.
<M_Belanger> Everything else, it's just idle curiosity about us, really.
<AncientKhan> Isn't that what causes all these documentaries?
<Anshar> Khan: that won't change some people's opinions of us, but it is a reality.
<Cammeey> Khan - because I think it's important. Personally, as someone who lives pretty solidly in mainstream society, I'd rather not have parts of myself which could be seriously problematic where they to come into the light of day
<Deacon_Gray> sensationalism causes the docus
<NyteMuse> I see more concern from Pagans than the rest of mainstream
* Anshar nods to NyteMuse
<Deacon_Gray> the freak show curiosity
<AncientKhan> I understand that they have an opinion, but I think we lose a little trying to make them understand us if they don't want to.
<Gabrielx> or when someone run's around killing a lot of people and claims their a vampire
<Cammeey> Nyte - that's because most mainstream don't take it seriously. Many pagans do.
<NyteMuse> Agreed
<M_Belanger> Some of it is definitely that, Deacon.
* Sylvere agrees with Deacon
<LadySlinky> I don't see how we can make them understand us when we do not understand our own community
<Cammeey> Khan - probably, but we lose a lot if say, it starts to become a serious source of discrimination
<M_Belanger> Khan -- you can never make anyone understand something they don't want to.
<AncientKhan> Agreed.
<Deacon_Gray> I don't see why we try to make them understand
<Anshar> Khan: Mormons deal with the same thing, yet, they are also "mainstream" in that they are a recognized religion. Some people think they're kooky or odd, but yet they ARE mainstream.
<NyteMuse> You can never _make_ someone understand, PERIOD. It's their choice/internal thought process
<Sanguinarius> documentaries?

<M_Belanger> Sangi -- right now, three episodes of three different television series are in the works.

<LadySlinky> Mormons know without a doubt who they are

<AncientKhan> So maybe we focus on understanding our people first, and let the mainstream catch up when they're ready.

<Sanguinarius> oh my

<Sanguinarius> can you send me any info on them?

<M_Belanger> Monster Quest is one, Paranormal State is another, and I don't know the name of the other series, as it's apparently new

<Anshar> Slinky: I doubt that's true any more than Catholics know who/what they are as a group.

<Deacon_Gray> and we will all flock to it and proclaim how much we loved so and so and hated so and so

<Cammeey> and here's where I think we get back to the pagan analogy - the 'understanding' you get is likely to be grossly oversimplified, but at least it's not overtly _negative_

<Sylvere> Sangi: One of them is "Secret Lives of Women"

<Cammeey> imho, that's really the goal

<M_Belanger> Oh yeah - that one, too

<LadySlinky> Anshar that's still a hell of a lot better than us

<Deacon_Gray> I like projects inside the community for the community

<Anshar> I'm not saying we're there yet, I'm saying we're dawning on that time.

<Anshar> If we were already there, this group would serve less of a purpose.

<M_Belanger> I get to play with a thermographic camera. That's all I care at the moment.

<Deacon_Gray> that are geared to more than self promotion of the newest community celeb

<Anshar> That's exactly what GIVES us purpose.

<AncientKhan> I hate to have to leave at this juncture, but I need to get my daughter ready for bed. I'll try and catch back up if you are on when I get back.

<Sanguinarius> we need to make a documentary within the community, that deals with the community

<Sanguinarius> so far, nobody has done that. I know there are filmmakers in our ranks

<Deacon_Gray> which community?

<Deacon_Gray> just the New York crowd?

<Anshar> Sangi: it would be no different than other documentaries in that it would imply a bias and there would be views we would both be lambasted and lauded for.

<Anshar> Michelle knows about THAT phenomenon.

<Sanguinarius> the vampire community (not the vampyre lifestyle scene)

<Deacon_Gray> the TOS crowd? The Japanese satanists..

<Sanguinarius> not satanists

<Deacon_Gray> we pick and choose which one we want to accept...

<M_Belanger> Anshar -- I've accepted that for every person who actually likes what I say on tv, there will be three louder people who find fault with it. But I still think I'm accomplishing something useful for the moment, so I keep doing it.

<Sanguinarius> some degree ofdamn, what is the term.....distinction has to be made

<Anshar> The thing to do is not one documentary where we try to encompass everything, but several that encompass different topics, just like what's already out there.

<Sylvere> Anshar: at least we wouldn't be lumped in with mass murderers and Satanists

<Sanguinarius> otherwise, it'll end up documentary about satanists, ufo abductees and otherkin

<LadySlinky> I think your interviews have improved greatly over the years.

<Anshar> Sylvere: I agree with you, I'm talking about the approach if it were to be done.

<Deacon_Gray> you know what worked well

<Deacon_Gray> Michelles open houses

<Sylvere> <--- *is* Otherkin so I don't see an issue with that

<Anshar> In everything I've seen Michelle do, for example, she always tries to weigh the different systems that exist and state that many people have different beliefs. When she specifies a belief, such as her own, she calls it out by name. It's the people who actually MAKE the documentary who make the associations, and it's also necessary to realize that drama sells.

<zilchy> <-- is a Satanist, so bite me... well... you know...

<Anshar> And then, address the individuals who WATCH the documentary and carry their own bias.

<Anshar> I'm just saying that more views is better.

<Sanguinarius> maybe make one showing how diverse we all ARE

<Anshar> exactly and perhaps another about how the different belief systems of vampires vary

<Anshar> and that some have no belief system at all.

<Anshar> maybe an inquisitive piece

<Cammeey> I think, while showing more views, in a broader sense, is a good thing

* Sanguinarius agrees

<Anshar> that asks questions instead of making statements

<Cammeey> it'll also confuse the hell out of your average watcher

<Cammeey> you need to define your audience

<Cammeey> is it other people in the community, newbies to the community, or outsiders?

<Sanguinarius> good point

<Cammeey> personally, I'd love to see something put together going into the nuances of everyone's belief systems.

<Merticus> Anyone else wish to add to the "good aspects of the community"?

<Cammey> but I'm not sure that's the best idea for pr, you kinda need a simple sound-bite message

<Deacon_Gray> I dunno seems to me like everyone is looking for a "Cause" Some kids go to school to get an education, some to party and play, and some to show their daddies that they have beliefs...deep ones damn it! And everyone needs to know...""were here, we drink blood or energy in a safe protected manner...Get used to it!"

<Sylvere> Good aspects: less secretiveness

<LadyCG> I'd like to add, Mert

<Merticus> The very fact that we are communicating with one another while sharing diverse viewpoints and coming together in offline gatherings centered around academic discussion I think is a very positive development within the community.

<Anshar> Merticus: agreed

<LadyCG> I'd like to add that I have grandkids and just like I have kids who are grown vampires. I think its positive that the community is becoming better known.. some day they have a chance of being mainstream enough to not have to ever be labeled freaks for being vamps..and isn't that the goal?

<Cammey> *agrees with mert*

<Sanguinarius> that should be a major goal

<Cammey> *agrees with CG*

<Gabrielx> how about the younger kids in the community that are being swept up by outside groups to join their houses since we have age restrictions? any thoughts on that?

<LadyCG> so..even though we stumble and fumble around.. we ARE getting there.. we just have to keep on keeping on

<LadySlinky> michelle's open houses

<Deacon_Gray> yeah michelle's open houses

<Deacon_Gray> have some fun and learn something

<Cammey> Gabe ~ Yes, a lot of comments, none of them good, a lot of them frustrated

<Anshar> Gabe: Legal repercussions always have to be considered

<sarasvati> Ditto to Cammey

<LadyCG> S&M support doesn't have age restrictions.. never has

<Sanguinarius> we walk a fine line with the age restrictions...on one hand they awaken at a young age and need the guidance then, but dang, we can't give it to them. :(

<Cammey> I will say, with more openness in general, there is more info which is just "out there"

<Gabrielx> anshar: I know from our side that's majority of what it is.

<Cammey> which is always good

<Lady Slinky> But it isn't a house either

<CammeY> HK keeps our boards PG 13
<CammeY> I was a firm arguer on that
<Sylvere> RVCA has age restrictions since I got threatened with a law suit for letting a 17 yr old into the group.
<CammeY> mind you, our boards have (frankly) gone to crap
<Deacon_Gray> isn't this the same conversation we always have more or less?
* Sanguinarius hopes some day THAT will change, too
<NyteMuse> Psyvamp.org tries to keep it PG-13 as well
<CammeY> but keeping the boards not 18+ was a major push for me, and I think a good one
<Sanguinarius> #Sanguinarius is 16+
<Sanguinarius> my chat room
<Lady Slinky> VCMB is 13+
<Sanguinarius> I'll send youngun's to the VCMB
<CammeY> if you accept vampirism as a condition, rather than as a belief system
<Sanguinarius> I do anyway, though
<Deacon_Gray> I dunno is it still snarky?
<CammeY> it's really, really crappy
<CammeY> to tell anyone under 18
<CammeY> sorry, screw you, you're out of luck
<Gabrielx> ok, was just curious.
* Gabrielx nods to cammeY
<Sanguinarius> for some it is a belief system, but for others it is a condition
<Gabrielx> then they join a group that is a cult because their accepted
<Lady Slinky> if they have parental consent they can be there before 13 but no one has sent the form yet
<Sanguinarius> some people have both the condition AND the belief system
<CammeY> I'll be honest, I'm more concerned about the condition
<Sylvere> I send all the minors to apply for membership to Sangi
<Merticus> AVA is 21+ because 95% of what we do is offline and involves events etc. that are sometimes 21+ only + other legal factors considered. Though forum is open to public.
<Gabrielx> sorry just was on my mind had an issue recently
<Sanguinarius> I am too
<CammeY> the belief system is important as well, but it's the condition that actually concerns me
* Anshar nods
<LadyCG> I agree CammeY
<zilchy> I think the best way to accommodate the minor-crowd would be to have some kind of local mentoring program for them so that the parents could meet up with the community leader(s) and decide for themselves. Just to legally cover our own asses.
<CammeY> HK's open houses are any age - with parents
<CammeY> that's probably one of the only non-18+ rl events
<CammeY> club, of course, is 18+

<LadyCG> My focus is usually on helping young people look after their needs in a way that won't get them in any trouble

<Sylvere> Sangi: all the minors who apply to join the RVCA - I send them to your room

<NyteMuse> Could a move be made to make Twilight any age?

<Sanguinarius> Some parents are closed minded and wouldn't have anything to do with that. A lot of them. But it is a good idea.

<Sylvere> Mostly we get them in the 16 - 17 range.

<NyteMuse> Or at least portions of Twilight?

<Cammey> Sangi - MOST parents are, but it's a start

<Merticus> Currently TWILIGHT is 18+ for the safety of those attending and our liability + insurance on the event itself.

<Cammey> it's freaking _something_

<Lady Slinky> I have been surprised by the growing number of parents who are open minded about it.

<Sylvere> My offline group for vamps is open to all ages with parent or guardian.

<Sanguinarius> that's good

<Sylvere> But the parent gets to meet me in person and decide if I'm ok.

<Lady Slinky> We even have a couple parents on the forums

<Sanguinarius> and that you're not going to take advantage of their precious lil darlings

<sarasvati> I think a big part of how parents perceive it is when they go looks at our sites and realize we are giving sane, practical information not "KILL THEM ALL! NOM NOM! Bathe in the blood of man!!" :P

<Sylvere> yep

<Lady Slinky> indeed

<Sylvere> Faerie glamour hard at work. ;-)

<Sanguinarius> hell, I'm 37 now, and my mother still worries about crazies when I go to ShadowLore's Gatherings

<zilchy> my folks nearly died, but that's because they're hyperconservative southern-baptist types.

<Sanguinarius> I think she's beginning to realize that they aren't out to get me

<Gabrielx> anyhow sorry for de-railing just was curious if we had thought of ways of dealing with them as well as we are thinking of ways of dealing with ourselves

<NyteMuse> Gabe, sadly I think the best we can do (legally) is put the information out there and maybe list contact info for personal guidance, and leave it up to the contact ppl to get parental consent

<LadyCG> On S&M we've always made it a known rule that we will ban on Parental request. In the 6+ years I've had the board, we've never had a request, or complaint

<Lady Slinky> If you want to list everything then list everything but present it as listing everything with big bold we do not endorse this

disclaimers.

- <Merticus> **c. What do you consider to be the single greatest inhibitor to productive conversation or continuing education for those who are part of the community? What can we do to change this and why have we fallen short in the past?**
- <Sanguinarius> egos
- <sarasvati> Ego
- <Sylvere> Ego
- <Gabrielx> 'my ways better'
- <NyteMuse> Focusing on the unimportant minutiae, like reinventing definitions
- <Gabrielx> ie: as they said ego's
- <Sphinx-NotHere> Thin skins. People with too much "my way or the highway" attitudes. If we are to grow as a community, we need to be more tolerant of other people's differences. I'm not saying to approve of every single viewpoint - I see no use promoting anyone who advocates that vampires can survive being shot, for example - and I'm not saying people have to AGREE either (it IS possible to politely disagree without incurring hard feelings) - but accepting divers
- <Sphinx-NotHere> If people are too busy sniping each other every chance we get, the only people who will gather are people who either have the stomach to give as good as they get (or who have the time to play politics), or people who share similar views. And we'll be no farther than where we are now - small clumps of people with similar views, or highly political organizations.
- <Sphinx-NotHere> The community IS diverse, and the diversity is NOT going to go away, despite what some people may think - it's time people woke up and realized that.
- <Lady Slinky> The greatest inhibitor to productive conversation and continuing education is the lack of facts within the community and the over abundance of ego filled speculation and supposed tradition with a focus on social eliteness..
- <LadyCG> Keeping those of us who teach from burning out
- <zilchy> Concentrating on educating the noobs, inflated egos, political drama, etc.
- <Deacon_Gray> here here!
- <Deacon_Gray> noobs and me too
- <zilchy> another thing, lack of delegation within houses.
- <Sanguinarius> I hate politics and drama
- <Sylvere> Also, refusal to take a position on any subject on the grounds of "tolerance"
- <sarasvati> unfortunately fixing ego requires work from the ego... not so easy to do
- <Lady Slinky> and you fix one ego 4 more show up
- <Sanguinarius> the houses and groups don't interact enough with each other (#2

problem)

<zilchy> then kick them in the face?

* NyteMuse agrees with Sangi

<zilchy> 'swhat I'd do... either that or delegate the newly rectified ego to go and fix their egos.

<Sylvere> Oh hell...I'll just go out on a wire and say "House hierarchy"

<Sanguinarius> lol, zilchy

<Lady Slinky> egos are fragile and it would be overtaken

<Sylvere> Half the drama trickles down from that.

<Merticus> Well there are groups and efforts to encourage them to interact and communicate, however not always realized in practice.

<Deacon_Gray> some egos are

<Gabrielx> drama can start with no hierarchy as well

<LadyCG> yes it can

<Sylvere> I did say half.

<Sylvere> Not all.

<Sanguinarius> I have an ego, but I try my best to not let it get in the way of things

<Gabrielx> nods

<Deacon_Gray> ok it is time for me to go and leave the big brains to their devices...my brain is still a little too pickled from sun and beer

<Deacon_Gray> good night all

<Merticus> Anything else you view as an inhibitor to progress within the community?

<Cammey> I'm actually going to go a different direction with this one and say: burnout

<LadyCG> I agree Cammy

<Lady Slinky> that's a good one

<NyteMuse> YES

* Sylvere agrees with Cammy on that

<LadyCG> It's something I'm struggling with right now

<Cammey> the few people who are really willing to put stuff together

<Lady Slinky> I think a lot of us are burnt out.

<Cammey> get frustrated by things - some well meaning, some not, and that slows down or stops overall efforts.

<Sanguinarius> burnout from the hordes of newbies attitudes and thinking they know so much

<Sanguinarius> but, that seems to be part of being a teenager

<sarasvati> Burnout is definitely up there on the list too

<Lady Slinky> I think the burn out comes from a variety of directions

<Sylvere> Possibly lack of time for the "auld pharts" to devote to the community because of other responsibilities.

<Sanguinarius> *nod*

<Cammey> it doesn't matter if the newbies are the sweetest kindest newbies in the world, the hordes of them still can be problematic

<Merticus> It's a struggle for some to have the patience to see projects to

completion when others often are excited but unwilling to lend a hand as well... many "good ideas" within the community but little that materializes.

<CammeY> their problems are VERY important to them

<CammeY> right that moment

<CammeY> and, somewhat rightly so.

<CammeY> ... communication skills aside

<LadyCG> At the end of the month, I'll be turning Smoke and Mirrors support on YUKU over to my old second in command, Craze. I need a break from public support board work. I'm learning to hate it desperately

<Lady Slinky> yes they enter the community and 2 days later are giving out advice

<Sanguinarius> the same questions from newbies, who are too lazy to do their reading, time after time after time after time after....

<Sanguinarius> and they don't listen, either

<Sylvere> Apathy isn't new though. It's been an ongoing issue for the past 10 years.

<sarasvati> It's hard to care more about a person than they care about themselves...which is what happened when we spend more energy to tell someone something than they are willing to spend to read it

<CammeY> Sara - Point.

<Sanguinarius> everything I know, is up on my site. There shouldn't be any reason to email me :>

<Lady Slinky> Which takes away from caring for ourselves and those who really are willing to listen

* Sanguinarius nods

<sarasvati> Its the same reason for burnout in the vetmed...vets cannot care more for a pet than the owner does...but we try anyway :P

<Merticus> We all need breaks at times but motivation to re-ignite one's involvement in the community is helped when others are actually producing some kind of result. It's costly both in time and money to do many of the things we do for the community and many never manage to realize or appreciate this on any level.

<CammeY> Mert - and friendly intelligent conversations

<CammeY> I am rarely more encouraged than when I've spent time talking with intelligent people and getting my spirits up, it's why gathers are kinda vital for me,

<CammeY> just with every community

<Sanguinarius> I'm burned out, but I attend these VVC meetings because it does seem productive

<Sylvere> I'm burned out on the "talk but never DO" aspects of the VC.

<M_Belanger> Negative aspects ... could we have a little less dissension and warring egos, please?

<LadyCG> I can say with some experience that being a public support board owner can suck. It has its good points but they don't outweigh the stress. If we WANT to have long running support board owners we need a way to support THEM. so they don't burn out like I have over the past 6 years.

* Sanguinarius agrees with LadyCG

<zilchy> CG, if you want another example, look at Glass from OKA.

<M_Belanger> I can't even bring myself to go to the Kheprian forums any more.

<Sanguinarius> mine too

<Cammeey> (admittedly, speaking as a mid-tier person) you need more good mid-tier people

<Cammeey> to do things like organize stuff

<Cammeey> put work together

<M_Belanger> The crazies drove me away.

<NyteMuse> *giggle* Yes, the crazies...

<Cammeey> crazies == most of the cause for burnout

<M_Belanger> It seems only the really whacked out people or the drama whores post, and the good folks are busy with RL or are just apathetic

<Sanguinarius> the crazies will drive anyone away. you gotta drive them away first

<Sanguinarius> but they keep coming

<LadyCG> Zilchy over the past 13 +_ years I've seen tons of burnt out Vampire teaching board owners. I 'm not the first and I won't be the last. If we want to have support boards that are long running we need a way around burned out board owners

<Merticus> I admit I have fallen victim to apathy when it comes to the forums... I'm simply too busy elsewhere or too hurried to answer redundant questions or monitor posts.

<Sylvere> Sangi: Oh but we can't. That wouldn't be TOLERANT of their personal realities.

<M_Belanger> They keep coming ... and when your slogan is "Seek Your Own Truth" they tend to beat you over the head with it

<Cammeey> Sylvere - there are days I have cursed 'seek your own truth' (our house motto)

<Lady Slinky> I bet

<Sylvere> Cammeey: I'm sure.

<NyteMuse> heh...yeah, you kinda ran yourself into a hole with that one

<M_Belanger> Exactly. And we lose some good people that way, since they're too entangled in that "You believe my bullshit, I'll believe yours" mentality

<M_Belanger> There's this fine line on calling the crazies -- we encountered it a little just trying to come up with a majority definition of vampire

<M_Belanger> Everyone has an opinion. Some of them stink, but at what point is it intolerant to speak out against that stench?

<Lady Slinky> that is a big problem I find

<Sylvere> The community has ceased to employ any rational thought and

will accept any half-baked notion to flit through someone's head because to do otherwise would be "intolerant."

- <Merticus> What can we do to engage ourselves more on forums and online communication with those coming into the community for the first time or who have not found a stable forum or medium of intelligent conversation? Should we shoulder such a role?
- <Lady Slinky> I don't think we should or realistically can
- <Cammey> Mert - my personal solution, use some of the moderately educated giant egos
- <Cammey> to answer newbie question 346
- <M_Belanger> Well, this moderately educated giant ego just doesn't have time to mince words with people.
- <M_Belanger> And my frustration starts to come through ... which doesn't help.
- <Gypsy-HSM> I have a real problem relating to self-claimed vamps that have no psychic abilities or vamp auras or anything I can grab onto - is that remote?
- <Anshar> Mert: Availability and humility is the only thing that can serve that purpose.
- <Anshar> Anything active would probably be fruitless.
- <Anshar> Just being there to answer questions if they direct them, and being humble enough to express our views and views and not fact should be the main motivators of truth in the community.
- <Anshar> as views and not fact*
- <M_Belanger> Verifying someone's legitimacy through an internet connection or even relying just on words ... I don't know about that.
- <Gypsy-HSM> If I can't reach out and touch you, then I can't always reach out and relate
- <Merticus> Well one thing the VVC did set up via the web site is a "Community Feedback" section - it's currently in testing mode to see how it runs but if you haven't visited the link you may wish to do so (brought up at the last meeting)
<http://www.veritasvosliberabit.com/communityfeedback.html>
- <Sylvere> We can only answer n00b question 256 so many times.
- <Cammey> Sylvere - especially after the article is written, and out there
- <M_Belanger> As for my boards, it seems like we end up with more self-appointed infiltrators from other systems than much of anything else.
- <M_Belanger> TOV, OSV, TOS -- HK seems unduly fascinating to them all.
- <Sylvere> Cammey: exactly
- <Merticus> Yes, I agree.
- <Sanguinariius> you'll get people wanting to be vampires begging you to make them so
- <NyteMuse> It seems like 2 aids to the system would be 1: having multiple competent ppl available to answer questions so you can rotate frustrations, and 2, have a file of stock answers to the most commonly asked stuff. Yeah, ppl posts FAQs on sites, but

newbs don't read it. I've copy/pasted a LOT of answers on forums from FAQs and news are fine with it

<CammeY> M- at least they're amusing

<CammeY> even if not everyone agrees *smile*

<Sylvere> Nyte: #2 doesn't work

<NyteMuse> Well, HK _is_ the famous one...

<SanguinariuS> "I know you get this all the time, but I'm the one important exception you should make me a vampire. I'm meant to be one blah blah blah"

<M_Belanger> Bah. Sangi

<Sylvere> We can't even agree what the "stock answers" are or should be because we keep wanting people to figure out for themselves

<M_Belanger> 'Sangi's been around lots longer and is far more visible online, IMO

<Lady Slinky> I still don't get why they come to my place looking for HK though.

<CammeY> I know this is going to sound a little weird, but I wrote up something for internal HK use

<NyteMuse> Sangi doesn't appear on multiple documentaries :p

<CammeY> you'd be amazed how often people walk away happy

<SanguinariuS> yeah, my site's bigger than Google! j/k

<CammeY> when I copy-and-paste sections of the 'internal training book'

<CammeY> copy-and-paste to an email works really well

<CammeY> in general

<Lady Slinky> they just read the book and gosh are they excited!

<NyteMuse> Sylvere: I wasn't suggesting for global usage, just on people's individual boards

<SanguinariuS> Cammy, do tell!

<M_Belanger> Well, I think she should -- the blood drinkers need a well-spoken advocate.

<Merticus> Yes, feel free to share - least in part if possible.
* zilchy perks

<SanguinariuS> I'm not well spoken

<CammeY> Ironically, I don't think any of the HK members have read it besides like, Andrea

<CammeY> and Michelle chunks of it

<SanguinariuS> just in print

<CammeY> but it's good material regardless

<Sylvere> Sangi's been in print before. I remember the Pitch Weekly interview.

<M_Belanger> Yeah, and they all think because one line struck them like a chord, they must belong to my thing ... so not my intention. Ah well. That milk is all over the table.

<SanguinariuS> yeah, I still got that, lol, came cross it the other day while cleaning

<Sylvere> I wish I'd saved it.

<NyteMuse> Or because they really really really like mummies, they MUST have had a past life in the temples and are thus members of the House and omg, why won't you let them in the House even though they live 2 countries away!

<Sylvere> Of course, it probably would have died in the flood of my storage unit.

<Merticus> Sangi - would you mind scanning in photo form to VVC Gallery section?

<Sanguinarius> I can scan it for you if I can get my scanner to work

<M_Belanger> Yup -- that was long-lost cousin Nek-Ta (neck tie!?) and Darth Marduk.

<Cammeey> better then people that say they must be part of the House because they where this pharaoh's concubine once.

<Sylvere> I'd love to have a copy.

<Sanguinarius> Darth Marduk?

<M_Belanger> Funniest piece of fan mail ever.

<Gypsy-HSM> If it wasn't for doing acid in the '80s I'd have no past life memories - it's the same one - so, most of them – that's just crazy

<Anshar> my apologies folks, but I have an appointment

<NyteMuse> Did he go evil because of love for Tiamat?

<M_Belanger> Called himself Darth Marduk. Seriously.

<Lady Slinky> yes but why do they not go to house K first?

<M_Belanger> Can we make it a part of Netiquette to not be a stupid git and move on? :)

<Sylvere> MB: you can try but I don't think it will work

<Sanguinarius> The Stupid do not think they are stupid

<Merticus> **d. What steps are you personally taking to support the community or aid in the education of others about vampirism?**

<Sphynx-NotHere> As personal circumstances preclude any offline involvement, my website, and my involvement in Sanguinarius' IRC channel are the two primary avenues of my involvement within and support of the community. IRC allows real-time conversation, and my website provides information that people can access 24x7, year-round.

<Sphynx-NotHere> With what I've seen from the Vampire Survey project, getting accurate medical information out there to people is much more important than many people seem to realize - most of the issues I've seen in the samples released to the public show many common health issues that can be mitigated or eliminated with proper nutrition (diet, supplements or both) or other adaptive steps.

<Sphynx-NotHere> Because of that, I research medical issues for people who ask, while providing links for them to investigate further, and/or provide recommendations on topics for them to follow up on

with their physician or other medical staff.

<Sphynx-NotHere> I also provide articles from different people that offer different perspectives in an effort to highlight the diversity of opinions that are in the community.

<CammeY> M - you want to go over Kherete, or should I?
* zilchy points at YouTube

<M_Belanger> Hope springs eternal. I've tilted at crazier windmills.

<NyteMuse> Participating in projects that I feel will aid the community and putting as many articles as I can in forums not already covered

<M_Belanger> CammeY -- go for it

<Sylvere> I've also got the RVCA with Deacon and SapphoWolf as my mods. That's my limit.

<Lady Slinky> I generally do not do community wide projects.

<Merticus> Any projects, etc. you'd like to single out specifically?

<sarasvati> I am (still) working on a complex survey to hopefully get a better idea of the "symptoms" of vampirism by looking at frequency of vampire-related problems vs same issues in the regular human population. My sticking point is the human survey right now

<M_Belanger> My biggest thing right now? I'm trying to get access to ghost-hunting technology and related stuff to start running tests on myself.

<Sanguinarius> wtg sarasvati

<Merticus> As for myself; the VEWRS/AVEWRS, TWILIGHT, the local Atlanta meetup group, House AVA, and of course here with the VVC.

<NyteMuse> Me personally, VVC, DN, and helping CammeY with the Kherete stuff

<NyteMuse> And House Rosa

<LadyCG> My newest project is the Vampiric Library on Second Life. Everyones heard lots about it in the last meeting and there is a thread up on VVC so I don't need to go into it here.. but if you're in Second Life and want to drop by drop me a Hail: LadyCG Llewellyn on Second Life

<Lady Slinky> do you think you're a ghost?

<M_Belanger> Doing an energy exchange in front of a thermographic camera, etc.,

<CammeY> HK, or more, a chunk of HK, has been working on a project called the Kherete project. The really short version is an education portal with books, teaching aids, and a forum - possibly other stuff - meant to sort of generalize HK's stuff. I'm not going to lie, it does a pretty good job of straddling practice vs. religion

<NyteMuse> As well as promoting more classes/articles at pagan and magical schools, like Grey School

<Gabrielx> participating in projects, had a support site (it'll be back),

Bloodmoon, articles, chat channel, radio show, education, etc

<Cammeys> It's mainly meant as a way to address a couple of things: 1. All the serious seekers who really want to get into HK stuff, but which HK doesn't have the time or inclination to really admit into the House. 2. The need for better general vamp education. It's definitely our system, but we're trying to put it out there in a way which is meant to be taken and modified.

<Gabrielx> even though were a lot more locally active for the moment

<M_Belanger> Slinky -- no, but the tech they use to ghost-hunt measures energy, typically, and I've interfered with ppl's use of it before. I think some of it might reliably record some of the things psi-vamps do.

<Cammeys> <could go on for a long time, but leaves it at that unless someone really wants to know>

<Sanguinarius> interesting

<Lady Slinky> Sounds like that could be interesting

<Gypsy-HSM> May I ask a strange social vamp question?

<Gypsy-HSM> why is everyone mixing vampirism and magical religions - is it necessary to follow TOV's bad example?

<Gypsy-HSM> Isn't that confusing what we worked hard to pull away from in the Dion Fortune comments?

<LadyCG> Remember .. I'm looking for donations of articles and books to put in the library. All info from the community is welcome and I've donated my own book to the library there, if you don't have a copy and want one

<NyteMuse> Gypsy, everyone?

<M_Belanger> Yeah -- Kherete project = Open Source Kheprianism. So many people want to belong. I don't exactly want to lead them, so I'm handing them the system to do with it as they please.

<Cammeys> Gypsy - because it's what people want

<Gypsy-HSM> So vampirism has to be magickal?

<Cammeys> M - exactly, Open Source Kheprianism

<Cammeys> Gypsy - has to be, no

<Cammeys> is in our system

<Cammeys> definitely

<sarasvati> Gypsy-HSM: I think because for some the two are not separate, and going back to earlier conversations, we do not have all the knowledge yet to say what is crazy and what is not... its all beliefs

<Lady Slinky> I think energy vampirism has a tendency to lean that way sometimes

<Lady Slinky> that it may be but that is why it happens

<Gabrielx> We personally don't at LH, it is a selected path in the criteria if they wish it though do to the fact our members are really diverse and don't hold to one belief

<NyteMuse> (Wreck's driving or something and couldn't post, but his

contribution is administrating the forums at psyvamp.org)

<sarasvati> The two do not HAVE to be linked, but for some they are...

<Gypsy-HSM> I think energy vamps are natural witches and vice versa - but that's apples and oranges

<M_Belanger> It does, Slinky. Can't deny it. The techniques to feed energetically have too much in common with magick and energy work not to draw some parallels at least.

<Sanguinarius> for psi vampires,, at least

<CammeY> Sangi - agreed

<Lady Slinky> Also the magical community was the first to "out" energy vamps to the public.

<CammeY> we're not trying to pretend to be anything but one take.

<CammeY> and this particular take happens to be very much along the magical lines

<M_Belanger> Yeah -- that's the perspective I'm writing from, generally.

<CammeY> it even dips into philosophy

<Sylvere> I have to say I cringe when vampirism gets lumped together with religious philosophies. I can't help feeling it's a precarious position that will Not. End. Well.

<Gypsy-HSM> yes sangi - that distinction often makes sanguines second class magickal or whatever

<Sylvere> But that's just me.

<Sanguinarius> yeah

<CammeY> and is meant as an al la carte system

<Lady Slinky> I do as well Sylvere

<Gypsy-HSM> Preach on Sylvere

<LadyCG> to me Sanguinarianism has NOTHING to do with religion at all.

<CammeY> CG - fair.

<Sylvere> LadyCG: Bingo.

<zilchy> because it really doesnt...

<CammeY> I am very much not sanguine

<LadyCG> I feed.. therefore, I am, lol

<Gypsy-HSM> maybe no one understands that we are metaphysical beings not metaphysics itself

<Lady Slinky> That is my slant as well

<Sylvere> I don't see energy vamping as religious in any way either.

<CammeY> sylvere - doesn't have to be

<zilchy> but CG, that's a philosophy, not a religion

<M_Belanger> I want to focus more on teaching mechanics rather than belief-systems, leaving the spiritual application up to the individual.

<Sanguinarius> I'm a physical being

<LadyCG> What is, Zilchy?

<Lady Slinky> I think that is wise

<zilchy> "I feed therefore I am"

<Merticus> Personally I try to keep my spiritual views and vampirism as two separate entities but of course that is another debate and the

subject of a paper soon to be released hopefully in the fall through Nova Religio.

- <Sylvere> I am therefore I feed.
- <M_Belanger> I really think it's possible to learn the mechanics of energy work in a fashion that is separate from any spiritual interpretations of that energy work.
- <Sanguinarius> what's Nova Religio?
- <Gypsy-HSM> Most of HSM is now irreligious and/or agnostic - the witches are all gone save me and Brad - we're almost gone (LOL!!)
- <LadyCG> I just know for me its very physical and I suffer physically I don't feed, so its not in any way religious to me
- <Merticus> It's a compendium publisher for religious based writings, etc. The AVA and Suscitatio have been shadowed for the past year+ by a member of the AAR (American Academy of Religion) - we've been emphasizing that vampirism and religion are not equivalent institutions - just bear some commonality and crossover at times as do many other aspects of a social identity group.
- <Sanguinarius> I am therefore I feed
- <Sanguinarius> I like that
- <Cammey> for me it's not religious
- <Cammey> but there are definitely people who want it to be
- <Gypsy-HSM> I definitely want to be taller but it ain't gonna happen
- *
<Cammey> Gabriellx nods to cammey
- <Cammey> because, let's face it, the systems which have presented a way to explain all of this have definitely drawn a lot of attention, and a lot of them have been... not my favorites
- <NyteMuse> My vampirism affects my religion/spirituality, but it isn't the same thing *shrug*
- <Cammey> frankly, I'm a very RHP Athena - worshiper
- <Cammey> but there are definitely people who look for *meaning*
- <M_Belanger> For an energy vamp, it's hard to avoid terminology and techniques that others equate with religious and/or spiritual systems. I don't think it's religious unto itself. But our culture lacks the necessary paradigm to view this invisible force in terms that aren't at least somewhat esoteric.
- <Cammey> and I think providing a starting place for that is filling a genuine need
- <LadyCG> I think its easier for we Sanguines to keep the two separate
- <Sanguinarius> maybe there is no meaning, maybe it's just the way things are?
- <Sanguinarius> like life
- <Sylvere> My spiritual views are closest to Hinduism but combine dynastic Egyptian, Native American, Kabbalistic, and Celtic elements.
- <Gypsy-HSM> I'm finishing my Dianic Training - a Kabbalah/Voodoo devotee - I am all over but never into vamp-y goddesses
- <Sylvere> Go ahead, unravel THAT mess.

<M_Belanger> I agree, CG
<Cammeey> pretty much everyone in HK
<Cammeey> has a different set of religious beliefs
<Cammeey> pretty directly
<zilchy> and the satanist stays in the corner...
<Cammeey> but I think it's an area where there's a lot of serious need and interest
<Cammeey> also, note, I'm not totally going there,
<Gypsy-HSM> But dropping someone (from feeding) at a bar when your really hungry is an amazing religion
<Cammeey> but I don't think touching on it is a terrible thing
<Cammeey> provided it's presented as just one system or many
<Sylvere> Heeeere Satanist...come out come out wherever you are
<M_Belanger> LaVeyan, Luciferian, or some other flavor?
<Kmerathaetra> Teriyaki satanist
<NyteMuse> Rocky Road? *snicker*
<zilchy> MB, my own brand
<M_Belanger> Just curious.
<zilchy> bit of LaVeyan with a lot of "I'm my own God in this realm."
<Merticus> Is anyone else involved with other projects they'd like to share information about?
<M_Belanger> Gods, I don't even know how one would classify my actual religious beliefs.
<Sanguinarius> well, I made the 2nd edition of my terms and lingo into a book, and I'm eventually going to get a Library of congress number and an ISBN
<Sanguinarius> Go check out The Dictionary of Sanguinese: Terminology and Lingo in the Vampire Community (Second Edition), by Sanguinarius, at <http://www.lulu.com/content/1797153> and buy a copy! Heck, buy 20 copies!
<M_Belanger> Most of my latest writing projects aren't connected with the vampire community.
<Gypsy-HSM> I am trying a new experiment on HSM - just a wide open party every sabbat - check out depression/energy health
<Gypsy-HSM> no ritual,
<Sanguinarius> and I'm collecting terms slowly for the 3rd edition which prolly won't be out for a number of years, lol
<M_Belanger> And I'm starting to wonder whether I should go forward with a volume II of the anthology or not.
<NyteMuse> Michelle, why wouldn't you?
<Gypsy-HSM> just a keg, food, music, and candles here and there in the colors of the sabbats, the proper oils, herbs, etc
<LadyCG> Michelle.. I want to try to remember to beg you to see if you have any articles you'd be willing to donate the use of for the Library
<M_Belanger> Too much controversy. I tried my best to give as many people as

possible a voice, and most of the complaints and negative reviews are still about how I'm just pushing my own views on people.

- <Sylvere> Michelle: Considering the limits on how many books you can publish, you should probably put out as much of your own stuff as you can.
- <Sanguinariu> Also, I will be moving toward the end of June, to Arizona, in or around Tucson, to be near my folks
- <Sanguinariu> but that's not really a project
- <Gabrielx> we have a lot of local get togethers, so if you're in the area just msg me and I'll let you know if anything is going on .. or to hang out for some coffee or the such
- <NyteMuse> Aw, that sucks...I was going to try and write something for this round
- <Sylvere> Sangi: have fun with the heat
- <Merticus> If you are still looking for a September submission deadline I can come up with a couple articles etc. In other projects news Daemonox and I are still deciding on where to hold TWILIGHT III - between San Francisco, CA or Seattle, WA for July 2008. (Update: Seattle, WA won in the final poll)
- <M_Belanger> Lady CG -- I'd been out of the loop on the project, but you can have anything & everything
- <Sylvere> I don't envy you.
- <M_Belanger> Well, that I'm not bound by copyrights to protect.
- <LadyCG> Thank you Michelle. I appreciate that
- <LadyCG> I'll talk to you about what can be used
- <Sylvere> Mert: What happened to Chicago as a possible site?
- <M_Belanger> The only two that would be off limits are the PVC and the full text of Vampires: In Their Own Words
- <Sanguinariu> if it is on the west coast, I have more of a chance of coming, lol
- <Gypsy-HSM> It's money - it's Llewellyn, it's not like it's . . . a reputable publication, it's a metaphysical tabloid in book form
- <Merticus> Chicago is on the list for consideration for TWILIGHT IV.
- <LadyCG> I hold the copyrights on all my work so I donated it all.. if anyone wants to read anything of mine it will be in the library on Second Life
- <M_Belanger> *But* I fought for the right for each contributor to have the freedom to reprint their own work even after the book came out
- <M_Belanger> So any of them can send their articles to you separately.
- <Merticus> If you'd like to view photos and a short synopsis + the program guide from TWILIGHT II you can visit:
<http://www.suscitatio.com/twilight.html>
- <Lady Slinky> that must have been some doing
- <M_Belanger> But get ready to see Jay in the ugliest burnt orange shirt I've ever seen. :P
- <Sylvere> It doesn't really matter. I've got an internship with a publishing

house this summer so I won't be traveling.

<Cammeys> M - not worse then you in light-blue jeans

<NyteMuse> lol...yeah, that was a kick. Though that black & white pic of you was pretty good

<M_Belanger> Hey, what's wrong with my Tommy Hilfigers?

<M_Belanger> I have a pair of jeans I bought for a character ... and a very loud canary yellow shirt.

<Gabrielx> Michelle: I still laugh when remembering you walking in that other outfit at Pcon :p

<Gypsy-HSM> I got a new Prada Fairies Handbag - so I feel that I am opening up to Otherkin some - *smirk*

<NyteMuse> *raised eyebrow* Other outfit?

<M_Belanger> They are *so* not me, it amuses me to wear them now and again.

<Merticus> **e. What are current projects or gatherings designed with the community in mind and what can we do to support these initiatives and encourage others to attend?**

<Merticus> We've already touched on this with TWILIGHT III and Michelle's Open House but feel free to elaborate and other gatherings in the works...

<Gypsy-HSM> Dave and I are attending HK's open House

<Gabrielx> We're still deciding on bloodmoon (per date)

<M_Belanger> Kheprian Open House is June 6-8 for those interested.

<Sanguinariius> well, when I get to Tucson area, I plan on trying to get the community there connected and holding some informal meet n greets

<M_Belanger> I'm doing DragonCon again, and they're planning to expand the vampire track there

<Sylvere> I'm still eagerly awaiting Zilchy's next video but other than that, I got nothing.

<Gabrielx> sang: I'm surprised anyone's even in Tucson hehe

<Sanguinariius> gotta be more in Tucson than in Topeka

<NyteMuse> DragonCon might have to wait for 2010 for me...still debating Convocation for /09

<Sanguinariius> yeah, I like zilchy's videos

<zilchy> havent gotten around to the next video due to some tool backing into my car and removing the front end.

<Sanguinariius> Gab, hopefully there are some there

<LadyCG> To help and support the Vampiric Library project please send any articles you are willing to donate to ladycg@gmail.com with your copyright info and any links to your main website you want included in the piece.

<Merticus> I should be at the HK Gathering, TWILIGHT III, and DragonCon + other events around Halloween, etc.

<M_Belanger> I'm on the board for Univ-Con now also, and working with the board for the Michigan Pagan convention ConVocation. All are

now vamp friendly

<Cammeey> Convocation rocked, but that was more pagan-outreach, and we don't have next year's schedule

<Gypsy-HSM> Michelle, I have a booth at Convergence in Tampa for my Shoppe - I can vend whatever you ship to me and I'll ship it back afterward with profits

<Sylvere> If Sangi could ever get a ride to KC, we've got a decent little group going.

<M_Belanger> Convo, which happens in February, will feature me & Raven Kaldera on a panel together

<Merticus> I'd like to see an informal gathering of the community at DragonCon since many of us will be in Atlanta already.

<M_Belanger> Well, I'm planning on sticking around for several days afterward -- Jay's schedule will be my only constraint

<M_Belanger> Presuming he's not a cop by then

<Merticus> Black Oaks Savannah (GA) is the weekend of May 30th - HDH is planning an entire weekend of events along with Voltaire playing etc. - www.blackoakssavannah.com for more info.

<M_Belanger> Actually, he got tired of bouncing bars in Detroit

<Sanguinarius> mmm, Voltaire rocks

<M_Belanger> Sitting on a panel with him at DragonCon one does not get a word in edgewise. Not that I minded.

<Sylvere> I think Voltaire played STL recently or will be playing there in the near future.

<Merticus> **IV. Business Reminders**

<Merticus> Refer to the forum for all current discussions. Please continue to follow-up on the updated buddy list chart that was discussed at the last business meeting and subsequently created several weeks ago.

<Merticus> Scheduling of the next business meeting will be slated for voting in early to mid-May.

<Merticus> Thank you all for coming!

<Merticus> <<<<<<END MEETING LOG>>>>>>>>