

Voices of the Vampire Community (VVC) Public Meeting – November 20, 2013

Attendees (16):

Abyah – Russian Vampire Community
Acrophobic Pixie – Black Swan Haven (BSH)
Belfazaar – House Of Mystic Echoes & New Orleans Vampire Association (NOVA)
DarkFess – Russian Vampire Community
Gabriel – House Lost Haven
Horus Sat – Italian League Of Real Vampires (ALIRV)
Imon – Les Vampires & Dark Nations Administrator
Heidica Northernlight – Norwegian Vampire Community
Isealdor – House Etherium & New Orleans Vampire Association (NOVA)
Merticus – Atlanta Vampire Alliance (AVA) & Suscitatio Enterprises, LLC
Octarine Valur – House Valur & South African Vampyre Alliance (SAVA)
Reija – Independent Representative
Jeanette – Nexus Noctis German Vampire Community
Scarlet Ravenwing – Blue Ridge Vampyre & Otherkin Alliance
Spurn – Danish Vampire Community
Vyrdolak – By Light Unseen

Discussion Agenda:

I. Meeting Information

Welcome to the first public meeting of Voices of the Vampire Community (VVC) for 2013. 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, and other organizations 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 website 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.

Let's start the evening with these questions:

a. Examining The Prevailing Dogma Of The Vampire Community - A Three-Part

Question: Has the vampire community become too rigidly dogmatic for dialogue? Various groups believe they each know 'the truth' or 'what real vampires are all about' and react to conflicting views with ridicule, sneering, dismissing contrary views, or instantly claiming that they are being criticized or even victimized. If yes, why do you believe as a community we have become increasingly intolerant of diverse points of view? Is it possible to allow for less rigid dogma and discussions while remaining respectful of each other's beliefs or opinions?

b. Realistic Expectations Of Attempting To Protect The Vulnerable - A Four-Part

Question: For many years we have debated whether, and how, to protect new or vulnerable participants of the vampire community from leaders or groups that are perceived (by some) to be unethical, abusive, or disseminating misinformation. Thus far,

we have been unable to collectively agree on which leaders or groups are 'bad' and what to do about them. Are we realistically able to protect others from their own naiveté, wishful thinking, or ardent stupidity? When does trying to 'police' such a diverse and unfocused grouping of participants as the vampire community simply create more divisions and negativity? Is there a more productive use of our time? If so, what is it and how should we best arrive there?

c. Searching For Answers & Aging Out Of The Vampire Community - A Three-Part Question: Have you noticed a steady decline in individuals searching for guidance about real vampirism since the mid 2000s? In essence, have organized vampire groups become the gatekeepers of the existing quality information on vampirism rather than pathfinders of new ideas and explorations into real vampirism? Does anyone ever permanently 'age out' of the vampire community or do they merely step into the shadows while tending to personal matters or pursue their personal vampirism in private?

d. Our Evolving Relationship With The Media - A Four-Part Question: What, if any, changes have you noticed by those who are in the public eye as related to what the media is seeking from vampires they interview? Has television media altered their desire for a particular style of dress, behavior, or backdrop when filming? Is the media across various mediums beginning to allow review and revision of the footage or articles prior to airing or publication? How has this changed, or not, in the past several years compared with a decade or more ago?

e. Critically Evaluating How We Appear To The Outside World: A Three-Part Question: Do you believe the vampire community is serious enough about how it appears to the outside world? Many participants in the vampire community complain about documentaries, interviews and other depictions of real vampires that highlight the melodramatic and colorful participants of our community. However, many of these same individuals embellish their social media profile pages with lurid art, photos of themselves with fangs and bloody mouths, black capes and heavy make-up, and with other macabre or grim materials. Is it possible for us to be horror-centric, embracing of the fantastical, or Goth theatrical 'for fun or lifestyle' and expect the media or the general public to be able to differentiate, understand, or ultimately accept us as harmless? Is such a notion realistic, or even fair?

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

IV. Business Reminders

<Merticus> <<<<<< BEGIN MEETING LOG >>>>>>
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<Merticus> Public Meeting – November 20, 2013
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<Merticus> Let's start the evening with these questions:

<Merticus> **a. Examining The Prevailing Dogma Of The Vampire Community - A Three-Part Question: Has the vampire community become too rigidly dogmatic for dialogue? Various groups believe they each know 'the truth' or 'what real vampires are all about' and react to conflicting views with ridicule, sneering, dismissing contrary views, or instantly claiming that they are being criticized or even victimized.**

<Merticus> **If yes, why do you believe as a community we have become increasingly intolerant of diverse points of view? Is it possible to allow for less rigid dogma and discussions while remaining respectful of each other's beliefs or opinions?**

<Abyah> Да, я лично столкнулась и продолжаю сталкиваться с категоричностью участников различных сообществ. Время идёт, мы меняемся, меняются реалии. То, что существует сейчас, может исчезнуть завтра или стать чем-то совершенно иным.

<Abyah> Природа вампира часто консервативна, как я заметила. У вампиров слишком много вопросов по отношению к своей природе. Когда они находят приемлемый ответ на один из них, то удовлетворённо принимают его и не особенно склонны рассматривать другие возможные ответы. Все мы очень разные. Если какая-то версия подходит одному, это не значит, что она подойдёт всем. "Сколько людей, столько и мнений".

<Abyah> Считаю, что нам следует быть гибче. Если факт нельзя однозначно опровергнуть, то он вполне может быть истиной. Никто не знает всего. Но мы все способны создать некую общую картину, которая способна многое объяснить.

<Belfazaar> There ARE groups within the vampire community/online vampire community that have become so rigidly set in their dialogue that they cannot vary to the slightest degree (I am NOT here to point fingers at specific groups and won't do it) even when absolute proof is in their face (by absolute I do NOT mean empirical data but physical proof, as with when I am NOT feeding properly as a sanguine vampire)...

<Belfazaar> People are literally being beat over the head with this tack that "our way is the only way" and it is usually presented by those who view vampirism as a "spiritual" endeavor of some sort... It is increasingly becoming an issue by those who CREATE their own spirituality and toss vampirism into it...

<Belfazaar> Because of this, they perpetually point fingers at others and harshly criticize them for not falling into toe with others on some ethereal line that they, themselves created during the creation of

their specific paradigm/religion/spirituality... This is the problem with “creationism”.

- <Belfazaar> Even adapting predetermined mythos/legends/religious actions/magicks into your spiritual path, you risk upsetting people IN those religions, and yet these people continue to just willie nillie add what they want, when they want, where they want without thought of consequences of such actions; without even wondering why a process might even have an initiatory path to it... Instead it just gets dumped in and “preached as gospel”...
- <Belfazaar> Currently, with the way things are going, I don’t see people as being more open to discussion without keeping their walls high, especially when it comes to spirituality and the creation of it. What I would like to see happen?
- <Belfazaar> People understand that NOT everyone is going to see EVERY aspect of what you view as plausible, let alone, the “only” path. There are things in MY spiritual path that I don’t view as plausible for whatever reason, yet I still follow that path. Finding others that follow the path yet don’t quite do things the way I do them, I do NOT call them out as wrong... I think, feel and say something about how wonderful it is that Spirit has adapted to them.
- <DarkFess> Никаких догм нет, но должно быть единое видение наших проблем. Основа - здравый смысл. Если кто то «летает в облаках» или «сочиняет свои миры», не вижу ничего плохого в том, чтобы «опустить его на Землю».
- <DarkFess> Или пусть он это делает за пределами Сообщества... Иначе наш дом попросту превратится в цирк и болото. Здравый смысл не должен никогда уступать место толерантности.
- <HorusSat> About real vampirism, at the moment, there are any “actual truth” or firm evidences, or even a proven theory on what and who we actually are. Not by chance we talk about SELF-IDENTIFIED Real Vampires, namely that are people themselves to identify them into Real Vampires.
- <HorusSat> In lack of certain and concrete proofs, specially by the medical perspective, on what we actually are, the Italian RV Community and our Association consider it appropriate that no-one could have the rights to say that he knows the truth and that the information must be given complete, considering all the not-proven theories about real vampirism (even the most absurd), until there will be proven proofs that could be accepted and make the others not valid.
- <OctarineValur> Part 1: I believe parts of the vampyre community have become rigid and dogmatic in the scope of their own dogma or views of what vampyrism or the vampyre community are or should be. In my view, this is tied to particular groups or individual factions.

- <OtarineValur> Part 2: This may be partly due to charismatic or manipulative leaders who convince their following to see things the same way they do while rejecting or even expressing hostility towards dissenting view points. Part 3: Anything is possible.
- <ScarletRavenwing> (1) I do feel that there is a growing intolerance in the community, of other opinions, suggestions, standards and actions. Is it too dogmatic, I don't feel that it is, it is simply that we need to find a peaceful means of open communication that does not ostracize each other or each others thoughts and feelings.
- <ScarletRavenwing> Before there was such a large and multidimensional community, people could still "fight" amongst themselves but often it seemed they would agree to disagree and move on. Now with the community as an ever expanding, evolving and globally seen social structure, people have taken to "picking sides" instead of agreeing to disagree or finding common ground.
- <ScarletRavenwing> (2) I feel that the reason for such intolerance and negativity is the mass grow without a solid infrastructure, as well as the shift from "underground" to public media. As any growing community feels growing pains, no matter how major, we have in some ways outgrown the skeleton of our community base.
- <ScarletRavenwing> People have taken to forming factions, houses and covens that are based solely upon their belief and practice. Further putting a once secretive community into such daylight forms of media as news, television and internet programming has shone a light into a place so many have not spoken of outside their small faction.
- <ScarletRavenwing> I do not feel that putting this community out into the media is wrong, I fear that programming such as news and television are looking to entertain rather than show honestly how this lifestyle and community exist. They are often in it more for the shock value than any actual form of teaching acceptance.
- <ScarletRavenwing> Further the persons that are shown in the media aren't always the best to represent this community, thus causing even more confusion for those new to or outside of this community. Due to these mixed signals, the mass of falsehoods on the internet, and the lack of peaceable agreements is where I feel this emotional instability of a sense is happening in this community.
- <ScarletRavenwing> (3) I believe there always is, where a true wish to connect as a community exists. The problem is that not all members of the vampire community are willing to work as a community. Common Unity, a place where we can meet on some simple base to strike conversation from, a place that connects all of us, this is what we need before we can join together and make a community whole again.
- <ScarletRavenwing> I fear that with the upsurge in the numbers of community members as well as the incorrect imagery from various forms of

media and factions make it difficult to try and strike a common ground.

<Spurn> Jeg mener ikke at vampyrsamfundet er for dogmatisk, men blot at diskussioner og samtaler om netop vampyrisme i alle sine facetter er dalende. Det er sandt at forskellige grupper synes at mene at de besidder den eneste sandhed om vampyrisme.

<Spurn> Hvad grunden til dette er, er et godt spørgsmål. Jeg mener dog ikke at hoveddelen af vampyrer ikke vil snakke om og vurdere forskellige gruppers synspunkter, men blot at de ikke bliver bragt for dagen, da grupperne, som mener at de har 'sandheden', ikke er til at diskutere med på et civiliseret niveau. Det må være muligt at diskutere andre gruppers synspunkter, uden at anfægte eller afskrive omtalte gruppers ideologier.

<Reija> Of course every group believes that they are "right". It's much like religion, where only by attending Church A can you go to Heaven, everyone else is wrong.

<Vyrdolak> Maybe that's the problem with groups, per se.

<Heidica> I would say it depends on if a group etc actually has strong and agreed on believes or not. If a group, House etc. does not have that and instead is a gathered place for vampires with different believes it might not be as much quarreling either. I understand most groups or Houses has agreed on believes, but that doesn't go for all.

<Merticus> People are often too afraid to speak up because someone will cry "attack" when someone is merely disagreeing with them.

<Heidica> Or they just don't wish to spend their energy on the drama Merticus.

<Merticus> I'm not sure why we can't agree to disagree more without making it personal, vindictive, or worse...

<Heidica> Hear, hear.

<Vyrdolak> Likely, although it's hard to be sure why people won't talk when they won't speak up to explain.

<Isealdor> Because drama is more interesting to most people.

<Gabriel> A lot of vampires/ones in the community from what I've seen look for common threads, be that an identification or a definition of something in particular. I think the dialogue break downs may be commonly threaded with these. I think that groups or individuals can be dogmatic in their approach to the things around them to obtain their own belief without breaking down dialogue.

<Jeanette> I think group rivalry is not a problem of the vampire community... it is a universal human problem.

* Isealdor agrees with Jeanette

<Imon> I think it's more a problem with a few individuals who are like that rather than the community as a whole. I don't see any of that behaviour in the company I keep :-)

<Merticus> Yes, as a people we don't seem content unless we're engaged in some kind of conflict or struggle. It's much easier to denigrate than to create something.

<Isealdor> Well... and that people let the actions of a few individuals cause issues for the community as a whole (or, rather, the more public forums).

<Imon> I'm actually seeing a lot of collaboration among groups now and people in the vampire community in general.

<Heidica> Agrees with it more being a few individuals.

<Merticus> Are we more intolerant of ideas as a "community" than we were 5 years ago? 10 years ago?

<Imon> I see more tolerance now than I've ever seen.

<Heidica> I also see more trying to cooperate these days.

<Heidica> I don't think so Merticus.

<Merticus> Across the board do we respect one another less than before? And if so, if that just for online interactions or does it translate to people we've met in person as well?

<Gabriel> I personally see a lot of the community doing a circle. Things from years ago that we were taught kind of fading as we grew and then it becoming new again with other groups. However intolerance not so much more acceptance.

<Jeanette> The vampire community doesn't *become* intolerant... all these years (I'm active member since 2000) exists groups that fight each other... in the last years the community have a positive development in my eyes... because we have such projects like VVC.

<Heidica> I feel a lot more people have tried to gather and cooperate just the last year.

<Reija> I agree with what Gabriel mentioned. there's been a definite pendulum swing, and we're headed back to where we were 15 years ago with finite groups with finite views, rather than a broad spectrum we had a few years ago.

<Heidica> I felt it was a lot more arguing going on when I got in here about 3.5 years ago.

<Merticus> I'm quite pleased with what we've collectively accomplished over the past few years. I would contend we're far more organized and able to put people in touch with resources/information than we once were.

<Heidica> I am hoping that will continue.

<Reija> Yes, but in a way it's also divisive. A person says "I'm interested in/I feel this" and we point them to group XYZ which feels the same way, and they don't get to explore other viewpoints.

<Reija> Everyone gets neatly packaged up and filed away rather than exploring all their options.

<Merticus> Hopefully they'll be enough innovation and projects to keep people engaged enough and will drown out some of divisiveness

and expand into new outlets of information.

<Merticus> I don't believe everyone should be placed into neat boxes within the vampire community... we're all unique (I would hope) and able to appreciate and encourage that diversity. But at the same time remain respectful of the little quirks and variations of how we interpret "vampirism".

<Isealdor> @Merticus: Really, I don't think there is that kind of respect, for the most part -- it's more people have gotten sick of arguing about it and so sectioned off with others who think/believe/feel more similarly to them, and primarily ignore (and randomly in their own circles bash) the others.

<Merticus> The social media networks are also enabling mechanisms for misinformation and reinforcing the mentality that whatever you wish to believe is acceptable. If you say you're a demonic vampire unicorn who's reincarnated from some ancient deity then no one should dare challenge the identity you've created for yourself.

<Heidica> There will always be nuances and so some diversity but it might be you are right in many times Reija.

<Imon> One thing is the swing in social media sites had a big impact on older groups.

<Heidica> Do you feel in a negative way?

<Jeanette> @Reija; This is better than someone searching for other people who feel like him and don't find anyone.

<Reija> That's true, Jeanette.
* Gabriel nods to Imon

<Imon> Yes, Dark Nations almost kicked the bucket until we opened up the Facebook site and now it's thriving beautifully.

<Imon> I've also decided to open a branch of Les Vampires on Facebook and I was NOT a Facebook fan in the beginning lol.

<Heidica> Nods. Good to hear things are going well with the Dark Nations :)

<Heidica> I have used Facebook a lot for my group and community, not always a good thing but mostly it has been and it's easy to get in touch with others that way.

<Heidica> Also Skype has showed to be useful for us.

<Imon> MySpace has pretty much been deserted as a whole by everyone I know.

<Reija> Facebook is good for quick easy communication, but not good for public chats, and doesn't replace a website with a good filesaver.

<Imon> Nods to Skype.

<Jeanette> In Germany the most people don't like Facebook Vampire groups... it's very difficult to get in touch with others.

<Merticus> Do you believe rhetoric is more or less contentious within Facebook groups than just a year ago *OR* have people simply

stopped responding/talking or segregated themselves into insular smaller groups to avoid receiving/seeing challenges to their viewpoints?

<Isealdor> The latter. Very much the latter.

<Reija> Facebook is definitely more insular. It's easier to just not approve someone to join the group.

<Reija> Plus on Facebook you can check out what other groups the person is in, their friends, their photos, it's WAY easier to screen people.

<Gabriel> I don't think that just going to a smaller group is just about challenges to viewpoints.

<Merticus> What do you think the long term effects will be for the community of isolating or surrounding ourselves with people who don't challenge our beliefs, ideas, or notions?

<Reija> I think we'll implode and set ourselves back by at least a decade.

<Imon> Who knows a year or two down the road, the favorite social media may change again.

<Imon> So I've just learned we have to be more flexible to change.

<Heidica> I believe it will be very bad long term effects from isolating etc.

<Heidica> I agree Reija.

<Merticus> I really hope we don't transition to an entirely new social media platform anytime soon... so much is lost in transition each time there is a great exodus.

<Reija> Merticus should start a VVC exchange student program, lol

<Isealdor> How would that work?

<Gabriel> Loss of data and archives is horrible in transitions.

<Heidica> I believe it is possible to allow for less rigid dogma/discussions while remaining respectful, yes.

<Reija> Do I think it's possible, yes. Do I think enough people will put forth the effort to make it happen? No.

<Heidica> Some are willing Reija, and if some are more might follow.

<Reija> *nod*

<Merticus> I believe the insulation is also leading to duplication of information/resources and leaving many caught in limbo between groups/websites and thus not finding donors or mentors because they don't know which way to turn.

<Reija> Quite possibly.

<Merticus> I've seen numerous responses to the Reformation Questionnaire that there aren't enough community resources and places to pool information. I'm left somewhat bewildered by where they are or aren't looking for help.

<Heidica> I agree, and am all up for contributing more to gather people.

<Reija> Because the websites went down when people moved to social media.

<Merticus> Many of the forums and websites are indeed gone now, but there are well over 100+ Facebook groups at the moment.

<Vyrdolak> Well, right, that is a factor -- websites have been superceded by Facebook.

<Reija> But Facebook is more chitchat and less actual information.

<Heidica> Nods

<Isealdor> 100+ Facebook groups... all of which are a pain in the ass to use for any sort of archive.

<Vyrdolak> The groups simply don't serve the same function.

<Reija> Exactly!

<Isealdor> People can't go to them and read back through or search for anything effectively.

<Isealdor> I mean, they can read back through, but it's painful.

<Merticus> It's not realistically possible to archive or group together important postings without creating documents, etc.

<Reija> Facebook isn't an archive.

<Vyrdolak> There's a big difference between an informational website and an interactive group.

<Gabriel> Wikivampedia

<Merticus> Would any of you posit that technology and the existence of social media itself is harming the vampire community (dialogue and rhetoric) more than we could ever do ourselves?

<Vyrdolak> But that leads to, is that what people want? Because they don't really come looking for information, but for people who agree with what they already think?

* Gabriel agrees with Vyrdolak

<Gabriel> Well put.

<Isealdor> Right... and there's certainly beneficial aspects to interactive groups... but having that interaction not archived effectively also means a lot gets lost.

<Jeanette> But are the groups active?

<Heidica> I have found the socializing to be good for many and more and more to ask for personal info/counseling on their vampirism. I believe both are good, both info pages and smaller groups where one can address others to ask for assistance on a more personal basis.

<Isealdor> Some groups are very active, others are dead, and others are active in bursts. Most aren't active in the long term.

<Heidica> Nods Isealdor.

<Vyrdolak> Socializing is good, but having nothing else but that is superficial.

<Imon> If I'm talking to someone and I know there are two trains of thought on a topic, I usually say that.

<Imon> I may say one is more my opinion but I don't knock the other one down.

<Heidica> It takes at least one active and engaging person to do that. When that person keeps getting attacked eventually they will either give up or move their assistance to other places or smaller

- groups again.
- <Jeanette> The German groups are not active, but every day are 50 members online on the vampyre website I administrate... I think it is an American problem? ^^
- <Isealdor> I suppose Facebook threads at least do lend toward socializing that extends beyond the daily "Hi, how are you? What's the weather? I'm having steak for dinner" bs that chats tend toward
- <Reija> I'll clearly state that this is my opinion, and there are others.
- <Imon> Nods
- <Merticus> The latest trend seems to be blocking those who disagree with you completely on Facebook so their entire pages and posts aren't available to you - which creates even more issues when things come up in other groups/pages/discussions and people are clueless what you're referring to because some can view and some can't.
- <Heidica> I agree Vyrdolak, it also has to be good information pages around. I get requests for doing classes very often and have occasionally done them on the subjects I know something about, but people also have to be responsible for own learning and development and not just rely on others to do it for them. It can be hard to find balances.
- <Merticus> Forums in the United States have largely fallen silent... there are a few left but even those aren't active. Most of the connections to our websites I'm seeing are from mobile devices - upwards of 70%+ now.
- <Vyrdolak> Which is even more superficial than chat.
- <Reija> Everyone wants info in 140 characters or less.
- <Merticus> There is a lot more "media" in general competing for our time throughout the day.
- <Imon> As for being respectful in conversation, regardless of differences, for the most part I see that with both groups and individuals I'm around. I agree one or two people can make it difficult to post in some groups unless you have really tough skin, so I do post less in that type of group.
- <Vyrdolak> And people don't want to *think* about things. All these 300-post comments threads are just 300 people popping off the cuff.
- <Heidica> Yes, and complains if they don't get our attention 24/7. As if one hasn't any life outside the community at all :P
- <Reija> It's all become much less personal. When I started out in the vampire community, you talked over the phone or in person. You had a difference of opinion, you hashed it out.
- <Merticus> **b. Realistic Expectations Of Attempting To Protect The Vulnerable - A Four-Part Question: For many years we have debated whether, and how, to protect new or vulnerable participants of the vampire community from leaders or groups that are perceived (by some) to be unethical, abusive,**

or disseminating misinformation.

<Merticus> **Thus far, we have been unable to collectively agree on which leaders or groups are 'bad' and what to do about them. Are we realistically able to protect others from their own naiveté, wishful thinking, or ardent stupidity?**

<Merticus> **When does trying to 'police' such a diverse and unfocused grouping of participants as the vampire community simply create more divisions and negativity? Is there a more productive use of our time? If so, what is it and how should we best arrive there?**

<Abyah> Этот вопрос вытекает из первого. Несправедливостей я видела с лихвой. Достаточно непросто ответить на все вопросы новичков. Однако бывает, что и новичок неожиданно может подать блестящую идею. Слушать друг друга и прислушиваться друг к другу - разные вещи. Можно, конечно, создать что-то типа Верховного совета, который будет разбирать наиболее сложные споры.

<Abyah> Но с другой стороны - это как раз приведёт к лишнему формализму. Считаю, что каждый лидер обязан пресекать ссоры и несправедливости, он в ответе за взаимопонимание и мир в своём сообществе. Если же в его Доме творится хаос и беспорядок, то какой же он лидер?

<Abyah> Спорные вопросы лучше решать на местах, среди круга, члены которого знают друг друга и смогут понять ситуацию лучше, чем приглашённые "судьи" со стороны.

<Belfazaar> In all honesty, these people, places and organizations tend to be very seductive in nature. Knowing just the right things to say to spread doubt about others and making themselves seem like innocents in some plot against them.

<Belfazaar> In the long run, I think that we will just have to be available for any and all people who come to us, for whatever reasons, up to and including when they finally open their eyes and see these people/groups/sites for what they really are...

<Belfazaar> Policing/trying to rule the community is what split the community in the first place. As I said in previous writings, I visited the New York community in the 1990s and was treated like absolute dog shit because I wouldn't bow down and kiss the rings of those who thought they ruled over us all, not understanding that I was a member of the community BEFORE the advent of the internet...

<Belfazaar> BEFORE people started claiming to be the father/mother of the community.

<DarkFess> Я считаю, что мы должны как то защищать себя от дезинформации и клеветы. Было бы весьма неплохо создать такую вот нашу «полицию».

<DarkFess> Но вопрос в другом, кто этим будет заниматься? У нас

всегда много идей, а не поверку - попросту не хватает исполнителей... тех, кто бы хотел и делал что то. В основном все только болтают.

<HorusSat> Strict rules concerning what is allowed, and what is not, are required in the vampire community. I'm talking about regulations that must be shared, liked and respected by all the communities. For instance, the relationship between donor and vampire must be regulated with the bill of rights, that should be mandatory for all the communities as safeguard for all both sides (vampire and donor).

<HorusSat> Furthermore it must be regulated the respect between two or more groups which are on the national territory. Quarrels between groups are something that damage not only the involved groups but the entire national (or even international) community. We need more discipline in implementing the rules and regulations for the common good living.

<HorusSat> Such rules and regulations must be approved and endorsed by all the groups or communities belonging to the VVC. Nobody is forced to be part of the vampire community but those who decide to do so must abide by the rules and regulations.

<OtarineValur> I think that realistically, all we can really do is to provide as accurate or realistic information as we can and hope that common sense prevails, at least in the majority.

<OtarineValur> The "core documents" for example might be displayed across various sites in the online vampyre community alongside the same list of signatories in terms of groups or vampyre community bodies that agree with them, and perhaps there should also be a page warning against sites or groups providing misleading information or information which can endanger those looking for information about real vampyrism and the vampyre community.

<ScarletRavenwing> (1) A person cannot force someone to learn a lesson, they must learn it themselves. With that in mind I see nothing wrong in giving warnings. If a child is about to touch a flame is it not at the very least polite of us to warn it that it may get burned and hurt?

<ScarletRavenwing> Even if we do so, does that mean that this child will then never try and touch the flame? No. People learn from their actions or the actions of others, but if we never even offered help, warnings, or support then what kind of community are we?

<ScarletRavenwing> (2) Unfortunately setting any specifics as a community will rile up various groups. If we announce group A is a dangerous roleplay group, then that only will make group A more volatile and any groups that support it.

<ScarletRavenwing> It is perhaps best to place individual warnings, each persons opinions of what to be wary of, as opposed to setting a list of

names out as "bad groups/people" Because we have such vastly different sub-communities setting an absolute right and wrong will not happen.

<ScarletRavenwing> However placing an individual opinions as a choice would mean more that this person feels this way, and not that the community at large feels this way. We already have too many groups claiming that they are speaking for the vampire community all at once.

<ScarletRavenwing> (3 & 4) If I may suggest, if this is such a concern to ask members of the VVC and/or upstanding representatives of the community to answer a survey or questions that would detail what are ups, downs, and concerns within and about the community and place it in a public setting.

<ScarletRavenwing> This way the topic is discussed and addressed but from various backgrounds, showing more of the variations of this community as well as perhaps similarities.

<Spurn> ærligt talt må jeg sige at vi ikke er i stand til at beskytte alle mod 'dårlige' grupper og forkert vejledning. Det betyder dog ikke at vi skal lade være med at forsøge, for hvis vi helt lader være med at forsøge, så ryger flere i 'fælden'.

<Spurn> Så længe at alle i samfundet ikke er med på ideen om en fælles police, så vil der altid opstå divisioner. Jeg mener at vi forsøger at bruge vores tid så fornuftigt som muligt, men desværre er det ikke alle der hopper i puljen. Flere skal deltage i at forbedre vores fælles samfund.

<Vyrdolak> I think it's worth looking at the current news about George Zimmerman, with respect to this question.

<Vyrdolak> He had a history of domestic violence, he was acquitted of murder, he split up with his wife who had supported him through his trial, and *immediately* he has a new girlfriend.

<Vyrdolak> Whose house he just trashed and who he pulled a shotgun on.

<Vyrdolak> Now presumably she wasn't living in a cave.

<Vyrdolak> So the question is -- does "warning" people about someone questionable even help?

<Reija> No, it makes people curious.

<Heidica> I do believe we need to warn community members when we are familiar with individuals or groups who has been involved with criminal or damaging activities. We have some responsibility I feel.

<Merticus> Yes, most of the time it just drives a person toward that individual even more to "see for themselves" or makes you out to be the "bad guy" for spreading "rumor" or "unsubstantiated allegations".

<Heidica> Will that depend on how the warning is being given?

<Vyrdolak> Right, and what about liability, Heidica? Can people sue you in Norway for slandering them? I know the laws are a bit different.

<Reija> Not really.

<Heidica> No, it's hard to sue anyone for slandering in Norway.

<Reija> Here in the U.S. about all you can say is post the facts. "He is a registered sex offender", "He was convicted of this crime" and that's it.

<Vyrdolak> Trouble is, just about everyone here uses pseudonyms, many people more than one. To effectively keep track of them and "warn" others, we have to "dox" them -- reveal who they are.

<Reija> Yes.

<Merticus> There is also the other school of thought that individuals can do whatever they wish and their personal lives and misdeeds are off limits to the vampire community in all respects - regardless of what they have done or intend to do with said individuals/situation/etc.

<Heidica> Then at least we should post that I feel, if anyone is convicted.

<Vyrdolak> Convictions are public record, but lots of problems never get that far. And that still involves revealing people's real names, behind their vampire community names.

<Merticus> Regardless... even if convicted of crimes there are those who feel it's none of anyone's business in the vampire community. Even if involves associating with those offline or in some cases even with minors.

<Imon> Well I'm definitely not of that school of thought Merticus, nor is anyone I know.

<Jeanette> @Vyrdolak; Yes, we know is just America and the other part of the world ^^ :)

<Imon> Yes, I think people should be warned when there's a real danger from someone in the vampire community for criminal behaviour or those we see luring underage to be runaways or heaven forbid abducting them or anyone, even legal age.

<Heidica> Would you feel a person has given up their right to privacy with committing serious crimes?

<Imon> Yes Heidica, if indicted but not convicted, then at least follow the proceedings, if convicted, definitely.

<Vyrdolak> Here's another issue: What about vampire community members who are mandated reporters? That means, legally they have to report danger to a child, elderly person etc.

<Merticus> Those of us who operate offline groups have legal responsibilities to consider as well - for the protection of our members, their privacy, and any associations with criminality - as some hold security clearances and professions which are closely scrutinized.

<Heidica> Merticus, that is something that can be very tricky. Personally I feel a person has given up their right to privacy when they commit a serious crime like rape, violence and etc, and I will not defend any of my fellow vampires if they have.

<Merticus> I'm sure many of us have encountered individuals coming to us with "horror stories" and "I'm going to kill myself" etc... it's sometimes difficult to sort through what is accurate, what is imagined, and what is said to only to capture our attention or keep us spinning in circles.

<Vyrdolak> That's another issue, too -- people who come to the vampire community pleading for help, talking about abuse from someone who isn't in the vampire community. It's very hard to sort out those stories, and you wonder what kind of mess you'd let yourself in for if you even emailed them.

<Vyrdolak> There are cases with outside documentation, but then we have cases where individuals and groups tell upsetting stories, but it's all "he said-they-said". People pick who to believe.

<Imon> And then again underage girls who run away from home to be with "their" vampire.

<Heidica> Nods Vyrdolak.

<Vyrdolak> Or someone we liked a lot suddenly is accused of serious stuff and it's pretty plausible.

<Imon> Right Vyrdolak, you can't go on hearsay alone.

<Heidica> Unfortunately it can be tricky to differ between the seriously ill and the drama feeders,

<Vyrdolak> But what do we do when that's all there is? And the accusations are really serious? Not, person broke rules or repeated secrets, but person raped a 14-year-old?

<Vyrdolak> What do we do if someone confessed they were making meth and selling it to teenagers?

<Heidica> And sometimes the drama feeders can be seriously ill as well. Which can be very hard to handle if its someone close to you who's mental issues suddenly takes a turn for the worse. Then we should report it to the police.

<Heidica> I mean if someone tells me they sell drugs or raped someone.

<Merticus> It's rarely cut and dry and often law enforcement won't involve themselves because their ability to investigate claims (or situations that have happened in the past tense) are next to impossible (or not feasible time/budget-wise within their department).

<Merticus> Thus, individuals remain part of the community, change pseudonyms, reinvent themselves, and integrate back into their comfortable niches.

<Vyrdolak> The unresolved tension, which has been debated so many times in the vampire community, is between how far we police ourselves versus when and whether to involve authorities.

<Heidica> I say we should when it is serious crimes that can put our community members in danger.

<Vyrdolak> It used to be that in almost any subculture, you never involved authorities, and brought that kind of attention on the whole

subculture -- everything was dealt with internally.

<Vyrdolak> But the vampire community doesn't want to/can't do that effectively, or agree on how to do it.

<Imon> Then it's probably someone I would avoid if they haven't been arrested but there is a good probability it's true. And if they were in my physical area, I'd probably give folks a heads-up.

<Merticus> Some would contend the vampire community has no business ever policing ourselves and that we should feel "safe and secure" in whatever we do, suggest, or advocate within the confines of the vampire community itself. Furthermore, that 'political correctness' and any ethical guidelines are restrictive to personal freedoms and hamper the dialogue of the community - the feeling of family and being able to openly share.

<Heidica> Then each have a personal responsibility and/or choice. Again, if one chooses to do it I believe more will follow and I have no problems reporting a fellow vampire to the police if I learn they provable has raped someone or other serious criminal activities.

<Vyrdolak> But how does anyone feel safe and able to share in an environment with no ethics and no standards of behavior?

<Merticus> I have often wondered that myself for those who make such arguments. I suppose some aren't concerned because they consider themselves the "alpha predator on the block".

<Vyrdolak> Way back in the early days, that's how the Pagan community thought. Then we got our noses rubbed in it by some very ugly incidents.

<Merticus> As will (and have) undoubtedly happened within the vampire community.

<Heidica> I think they won't, and so we have to have some agreed on rules. *ducks down as she knows that is a tricky one* :)

<Vyrdolak> It's very naive (unfortunately).

<Reija> Rules only work when people agree to follow them.

<Imon> I personally don't believe in the whole vampire community judicial court thing and most people I associate with don't, but rather let the law handle the legal/illegal aspects. Of course if someone was an eye witness of a crime, they should come forward to the authorities. But the local community and online vampire community can certainly ostracize someone who has a really bad reputation and it seems to work.

<Imon> These people are usually repeat troublemakers, it doesn't just come out of the blue.

<Vyrdolak> And there are those who will be attracted to situations like that precisely so they can take advantage of them -- which I think we've seen happen here in the vampire community a number of times.

<Heidica> That is true, and it does affect people when things are posted about in Vampire Community News (VCN).

<Reija> Back in the old days, like 10-15 years ago, they used to have "hearings" and "trials" and kick people out of the community. It was all just a drama show. They logged off, changed their nick, got a new ISP, and were back in a week.

<Merticus> Any "judicial courts" or other similar groups in the vampire community are at best a ridiculous notion because there is no legal standing to conduct such actions.

<Reija> Exactly. They were like watching TMZ.

<Heidica> We can at least agree on the report to police if provable serious crimes.

<Imon> Right and some of the suggestions downright border on being a vigilante or worse.

<Merticus> The majority of us are not children in our parent's basements and this is not a roleplay game, we have our own children, professional and employment considerations, custody issues, and other legal ramifications to consider without playing "vampire vigilante".

<Imon> Exactly.

<Reija> ^^

<Imon> Those type of people seem to feel the need to run their mouths about it and take pictures and post them with their guns and swords.

<Vyrdolak> Right. There's a certain amount of denial about just how much most people base their idea of the vampire community on fiction and games -- the whole idea that we're an underground society and should have "enforcers" and courts and whatnot.

<Imon> Look how many "regular" people who ended up killing someone did the same thing and it came out in their trials.

<Heidica> Nods

<Merticus> "They" are watching... they have been for years now. Just like they will be reading this transcript days, months, or years from now. So plastering your social media profile with such is a very poor choice and ultimately may bite all of us should you find yourself arrested or linked to a serious crime.

<Imon> Right and as you know data forensic science is very effective.

<Heidica> Just want to say that trying to be a good example personally always is a productive use of time.

<Vyrdolak> I agree, Heidica!

<AcrophobicPixie> In my opinion and experience, no matter how much we may try to protect people from their own stupidity, they'll still do it. I mean, just look at the U.S. We reelected George Bush Jr. Not really the best thing, but what can we do. Mankind is inherently dumb and naive. And anything we do to try to get things on what we may perceive as the right track more times than not, makes them throw up defensive walls and go "I'm not dumb! Don't call that!"

<Imon> Anyway as far as doing preventative protection of the new and vulnerable, I just try to be friend and advisor. Not every person may listen but you can try. Locally as far as groups they already have a good handle on that here.

<Heidica> Has to start with oneself, always. Thank you and that's my activist side lol ;)

<Imon> I agree Heidica.

<Imon> People in the community are very safety conscious both in NOLA and Houston that I've experienced.

<AcrophobicPixie> Thank goodness for that. I mean, safety is my main priority.

<Imon> Women get walked to their car, hotel etc. at night or people go in pairs or groups.

<Imon> Everyone was worried about me driving to NOLA 6 hours by myself but I told them I was traveling during the day and on a major freeway. I had hoped some of the Houston folks could join and carpool with me but no one could make it. But often they do carpool to events local or out of town for both economy and safety.

<Merticus> Nod Imon, that is the ideal community - one that looks out for one another, can trust one another to have each other's backs when we need help, and to be mindful when there is danger from within and without the circles we float around.

<Heidica> I see that happen, and hopefully will be more and more of it eventually that we have each others backs.

<Heidica> But then I always have hopes ;)

<Merticus> One more thing I'd like to say... some people assume 'I'm' often upset over certain behaviors or actions, etc. when nothing could be further from the truth. I'm merely disappointed in the way one has chosen to express or execute said action without taking into consideration those they are influencing or absent of safety, support, and other mechanisms to mitigate situations should they not turn out like they have planned/intended.

<Merticus> Education, not blind restriction, is crucial for the benefit of everyone.

<Merticus> At least for those who are able to discern the difference without inflecting their own biases or knee-jerk reaction to cry "authoritarian foul".

<Vyrdolak> People project on you, Merticus.

<AcrophobicPixie> Yeah, despite your wishes to the contrary, there are some people in the community who equate you to the vampire community equivalent to the Great and Powerful Oz.

<Merticus> I'm just as deviant as most anyone else, you just have to find me in the right situation and company.

<Heidica> :)

<Merticus> I really hope over the next couple of years the offline communities will strengthen and grow. I have great expectations

for places such as New Orleans and Austin & Houston (Texas), and even lesser known areas like Oklahoma.

<Gabriel> <Merticus> I'm just as deviant as most anyone else, you just have to find me in the right situation and company.

<Gabriel> I'll vouch for that :)

<Imon> Nods it's so expensive now to travel very far, I'm certainly glad to have found locals who had previously been hiding in the woodworks lol.

<Merticus> **c. Searching For Answers & Aging Out Of The Vampire Community - A Three-Part Question: Have you noticed a steady decline in individuals searching for guidance about real vampirism since the mid 2000s?**

<Merticus> **In essence, have organized vampire groups become the gatekeepers of the existing quality information on vampirism rather than pathfinders of new ideas and explorations into real vampirism?**

<Merticus> **Does anyone ever permanently 'age out' of the vampire community or do they merely step into the shadows while tending to personal matters or pursue their personal vampirism in private?**

<Abyah> Да, я заметила, что в последнее время сообщества как-то измельчали. Люди мало общаются между собой или говорят о второстепенных вещах, часто покидают обсуждение, охотнее общаются приватно, не желая делиться своими выводами с широкой публикой. Я спрашивала таких одиночек, почему они пассивны в решении общих проблем.

<Abyah> В основном получала такой ответ: а какой смысл в обсуждении, если основная масса участников сообщества либо проявляет непонимание, агрессию, либо уклоняется от активного обсуждения? Люди читают чужие мысли, а составляют своё собственное мнение.

<Abyah> Я сторонник открытого обсуждения всех тем, которые могут волновать участников. Пусть даже эти темы весьма косвенно касаются вампиризма. Считаю, что нельзя начинать с опровержений. Сперва следует разобраться, почему вообще возникла тема.

<Abyah> Многие опасаются быть непонятыми, многие не могут достаточно хорошо описать своё состояние. Одно дело - совершенно глупый вымысел, которому не место среди серьёзных обсуждений, а другое - малоизученный вопрос, который требует времени на осмысление.

<Belfazaar> I honestly don't see a decline in people seeking information. What I see is them getting shut down by people for asking questions. Some people only know to ask questions from their own understanding and we, as Elders in the community, NEED to be understanding OF this fact.

- <Belfazaar> I hope I can get to the point where I “age out” however, I think more just drop back behind the scenes... Neither being an upfront “force” nor slinking back into the shadows.
- <Belfazaar> They may be working on their own personal matters or more readily working on their personal vampirism or even other projects that have been put off for being a guiding light in the community however, I don’t see them as completely dropping away without so much as another word.
- <DarkFess> Сложно говорить с такой позиции, т.к. Сообщество у нас (в России и странах бывшего СССР) молодое. Но участники иногда пропадают, в большинстве случаев это связано с вопросами личного характера. Такова уж природа общения в сети.
- <HorusSat> We shall ask ourselves why so many vampires prefer to not join in any way to the communities, feeling not represented by them and prefer a lonely life. We need to investigate about if the motivations are caused by the community itself or are about won’t follow rules of life and standards for the good living.
- <HorusSat> So many times it was highlighted that living in the shadows is done by the willing of “encroaching illegality”, that is much more harder to do if you are into a community or group because they are more visible.
- <OctarineValur> Part 1: No. In South Africa we have noticed an increase in incidence of individuals not previously associated with the vampyre community requesting contact or information.
- <OctarineValur> Part 2: In my humble opinion, most established groups or bodies indeed appear to be acting like gatekeepers of existing information without themselves providing anything new to this body of knowledge.
- <OctarineValur> Part 3: Hard to say. Several may indeed feel the need to leave the vampyre community for various personal reasons. Many seem to alternate between activity and inactivity due to personal dramas and responsibilities requiring their free time or full attention be spent elsewhere.
- <ScarletRavenwing> (1) What I have noticed is the decline in solid information being available to others. With the now public faces of this community many are turning to books, web blogs/shows, and the internet at large for the answers.
- <ScarletRavenwing> The social interactions of even just the mundane world are leaning less toward actually meeting others and more toward learning through faceless/nameless education. This decline is to me, in ever community, not just ours, people spending less time learning and talking with each other than with some form of electronics.
- <ScarletRavenwing> (2) In some ways I’d say yes, it seems only some of these “elders” or older orders are the people who have lived through it

and know more about it. In doing so they are the ones fighting to keep the information, the community and its core true, which is in itself a rough battle at times.

- <ScarletRavenwing> Further while I know we can never know everything about real vampyrism, we can also only go as far as we can with the information and knowledge. It is in these variations that we get stuck and the growth of new information ends.
- <ScarletRavenwing> (3) If by this you mean does anyone just stop being a vampyre I doubt it seriously. If you mean do they fade back and absolve their connections and interactions with the community, absolutely.
- <ScarletRavenwing> As with any community people grow out or away from, they place it in a different importance or tire of its difficulties altogether. Just like a tired pagan becomes agnostic, or a kinkster goes vanilla, vampyres can grow tired and free themselves from the burden by absolving their connections.
- <Spurn> Jeg synes umiddelbart ikke at se noget fald i folk der søger vejledning. Det virker som om at der regerer en 'største' sandhed grupperne imellem, og nye ideer synes ikke at blive bragt på banen eller taget op til seriøs debat.
- <Spurn> Jeg synes at mange hopper ud af samfundet for egen personlige grunde - og det er OK, selvom jeg ville ønske at alle holdte ved deres projekter.
- <Gabriel> I see a lot of vampires coming into the search with as Heidica said earlier already a preconceived notion and what they want it to be. Looking for others to fill that role.
- <Imon> The last question I think it's the latter or even they feel driven away if they are in a hostile environment.
- <Vyrdolak> I certainly don't get anything like the number of inquiries I used to, but I've really withdrawn from being available to answer them, so I probably shouldn't generalize.
- <Imon> Online maybe a little decline but not in 3-space as I call the 'real' world.
- <Heidica> I can understand the ones who step into the shadows all right.
- <AcrophobicPixie> I, personally, have noticed a not so much steady decline in online membership, but a sudden rush to other social media networks outside of the "traditional" forum setup in the past two years. I mean, look at all of the Facebook groups cropping up overnight. It's somewhat good, that people are interacting on a more personable level, but then it's kinda icky, because forums are slowly going stagnant. The information is there, it's just being able to find it.
- <Imon> Nods that's what we were talking about earlier Pixie.
- <Gabriel> Agreeing with Imon, I see a lot of "aging out" to do with getting away from the drama.
- <Vyrdolak> The drama, and people drop out because their friends have, and

they don't relate to the newer people.

<Imon> I have no problem answering reasonable questions.

<AcrophobicPixie> On the aging out thing... You can't fully age out. I mean, well, some donors can. I mean, not everyone -has- to donate like me, but vampires are vamps forever.

<Heidica> There has to be respect when someone is having personal issues or just not the energy anymore to deal with the drama lamas. Not everyone does respect that unfortunately and keeps harassing others to do everything.

<Merticus> We're generally growing older as a community faster than we're replacing with new participants who are willing to stick around - that and they often perceive less areas where they can contribute so there is a net-negative matriculation effect.

<AcrophobicPixie> The most you can do, I think, is just cut yourself off or distance yourself from the community as a whole. But you can't really leave.

<Imon> I still kind of cringe when I get letters about how someone is part of a whole vampire family ie mother father grandparents for centuries descended from Vlad Tepes or something fanciful.

<Heidica> Online can never replace the real life interactions anyway.

<Vyrdolak> Well, you can leave the *community*. And at least one long-timer keeps saying that she doesn't think people *should* stay in the vampire community indefinitely, that people should get the help they need and move on.

<Gabriel> Also I think we incorporate a lot of 'older' ideas where as I said earlier the community moves in a circular formation so where as were "been there" their looking for someone who is there as far as the younger crowd.

<Merticus> And as we grow older many of us have less tolerance for drama or discussion for the sake of just talking. Many of us would rather do it face to face.

<Heidica> Nods

<Reija> Agreed

<Vyrdolak> You tend to be less willing to waste time, or to repeat the same things over and over.

<Imon> I recently responded to someone in a forum about a simple 'dating' a vamp and then I got this long fanciful letter about her being a vampire countess now and one guy she was with and another was her mate in a past life and now I don't know what to do with her lol.

<Heidica> I am willing to work hard to save money so to travel and get to meet people in real life. It wont be possible for all but finding vampires in own area is always good.

* Gabriel nods to Vyrdolak

<Heidica> Nods to Vyrdolak too.

<Reija> What Vyrdolak said.

<Merticus> Many websites (the informational websites that still exist) haven't been updated in several years now (some even longer)... so I can also understand those who feel we are stagnant when it comes to putting forth fresh ideas and information. Although for many of our experiences there are only so many ways to discuss them before reaching a state of redundancy.

<AcrophobicPixie> The bitch part is feeling the pressure that if you leave, you need to have someone ready to take your place and fill the gap you're going to leave.

<Heidica> And how many really wants to put themselves out there really?

<Vyrdolak> If you think you're even going to leave a gap, or indeed if anyone will even notice! People drift away when they get to that point, too.

<Merticus> The 'accolades' and 'ego' suggestion is laughable... putting yourself out there is almost never worth it when weighed against the amount of headache and grief you're often put through for doing so.

<Heidica> Not many when you keep getting the drama lamas harassing you for all you are not doing as they would want it, but not are willing to put themselves on the spot. Bah.

<Vyrdolak> Yeah... as time passes I wish I could find more in common with people than *just* vampirism. Like when we got talking about gardening for a while. Or exchanging holiday cards, just because. I don't know if I'd travel just to meet other vampire community people, but if I was in your area, I'd sure love to give you a call and say hey, let's have coffee or something.

<Heidica> :)

<Vyrdolak> Merticus, I'm dying to pick your brains about something that has nothing to do with the vampire community whatsoever! But I can't.

<Vyrdolak> I think that's part of it... after a while, I want relationships that get a little deeper, and that doesn't seem to happen. It's all vampire stuff all the time.

<AcrophobicPixie> It is SO refreshing when you meet someone in real life and the first thing out of their mouth isn't something to do with the vampire community but "How's your family? What's up with work?"

<Vyrdolak> Pixie -- YES!

<Merticus> Nod, we're a little too hyper-focused on vampirism for our own good perhaps... or rather I know some of us are :)

<Reija> With me it's more "come visit my house, it's haunted! Also, eat BBQ! XD"

<AcrophobicPixie> I just spent a day out with a local vampire and his partner and I don't think we mentioned vampires at all. It was awesome!

<AcrophobicPixie> Just shopping and eating burritos as big as our heads... and marveling over how fast my little brother made his disappear. I

- swear, teenage boys have black holes installed in their stomachs.
- <Merticus> It's not healthy to eat, live, and breathe vampirism 24/7... there should be more to our interactions. Hence the offline encouragement.
- <Vyrdolak> You know, we get to chatting about life stuff and people start complaining that it's off-topic or what does this have to do with vampirism.
- <Heidica> Sometimes though it can feel like you have no choice but to try your best to either give back to the community what you have got or because you have a need to share whatever you think others might benefit from. I don't know for how long I'm going to last in here but at least I feel I contribute everyday I'm here, and so do all of you guys.
- <Imon> As a friend once said, no one wants to be known just as "the vampire".
- <AcrophobicPixie> Vyrdolak - I loved the gardening and it's related threads, but I have to admit, some of it was out of reach from me, no thanks to my black thumb :P
- <Vyrdolak> But there are other interests people can share. Sharing life stuff IS what builds community.
- <AcrophobicPixie> Having that outlet on the VVC for us to talk about non-vampy things is/was awesome. Screw those who are like "Vampypires 24/7".
- <Merticus> @Vyrdolak, I'd like to see your sermons if you are ever able to record them by the way.
- <Vyrdolak> Yes, I need to put some of them online.
- <Heidica> Socializing Vyrdolak ;) Always a good thing too!
- <Imon> Nods, while vampirism may come up, most of my conversations involve a large spectrum of other things.
- <Vyrdolak> I'd say that when some people drift away, it's because they're missing this kind of deeper life connection, and we need to allow more of that to happen.
- <Heidica> I agree.
- <Merticus> Unfortunately my time online is limited to where it seems like (and unfortunately often is the case) all I have time to talk about is vampirism related because otherwise I'd never finish having conversations or being productive on my dayside. The net is cast too large and this is why I keep myself invisible and chat on social media turned off.
- <Heidica> I would have liked VVC meetups.
- <Vyrdolak> You've kind of made the vampire community a vocation, Merticus, and that's hard. Me, not so much anymore.
- <Merticus> **d. Our Evolving Relationship With The Media - A Four-Part Question: What, if any, changes have you noticed by those who are in the public eye as related to what the media is seeking from vampires they interview?**

- <Merticus> **Has television media altered their desire for a particular style of dress, behavior, or backdrop when filming? Is the media across various mediums beginning to allow review and revision of the footage or articles prior to airing or publication?**
- <Merticus> **How has this changed, or not, in the past several years compared with a decade or more ago?**
- <Abyah> Мой опыт общения со СМИ могу назвать скорее негативным. Наше общество, особенно в России, очень традиционно, не скоро на подъём, полно скептицизма. Я честно старалась рассказать в газетах, журналах и на телевидении о том, каков вампир на самом деле.
- <Abyah> Но мои слова чаще всего переиначивались. На ТВ вырезались хорошие моменты и оставлялись откровенно неважные. Журналисты особенно демонстративно высказывались негативно.
- <Abyah> Учитывая, что я всегда выбираю деловой или casual-style на встречах со СМИ, всё равно в их глазах я являюсь ненормальным и большим персонажем. К сожалению, пока ничего не меняется.
- <Belfazaar> The only changes I've really noticed is this trend to pronounce sanguine vampires "outlaw" in communities. No. I don't think that the media has altered its desire to sensationalize the topic in any way, shape or form. I do believe that other vampires are giving into this view. I have yet to meet a media group that allows for filming review.
- <Belfazaar> I would hope to see more people standing behind those who stand up for them however, this is a dream that I feel will never be realized as too many people would rather point out the flaws in production than understand that editors get to it before we can even see the final outcome and it is always up to the production crew as to how a person's words will show up (as evidenced with the ABC 20/20 fiasco).
- <DarkFess> Прогресса в общении с СМИ в последнее время не наблюдается.
- <HorusSat> I can answer to this question only for what concerns the Italian Community. In Italy, vampirism is somewhat considered by the major mass medias as "evil", of the Devil and so on, because of the dominion of the Italian Catholic Church on the mass medias. Anyway there are little signal of openness and dialogue between the Vampire Community and the medias.
- <HorusSat> The Italian problem is that the declared Real Vampires able to talk about vampirism to the media (television, newspapers and so on) are few. Not only that, but the few declared RVs willing to talk with televisions and newspapers are often seen by the undeclared RVs who live in the shadows as a danger, a threat.

- <HorusSat> In Italy we must educate to the respect of the diversity, starting by the vampires themselves. Many vampires don't accept their nature, don't respect their diversity and so impeach those who instead have undertaken an acceptance and of visibility path, retaining them a threat.
- <HorusSat> Actually, the greatest threat for all the Italian RVs, is the lack of acceptance and the willing to remain in the shadows which becomes a sort of "self-ghettoisation" and lacking of insertion and coexistence in the civil society. It is also because of the hatred and discrimination on the part of the Catholic hierarchy against any expression of diversity and subculture.
- <OctarineValur> Part 1: I can't say I've noticed any real changes. We still have some responsible vampyre community participants trying to convey the realities of vampyrism to sensation-seeking media and we still see some sensation seekers getting the glaring media attention they crave.
- <OctarineValur> Part 2: I have reservations that the media has changed much if any. They still look for sensational stories to boost their ratings. In South Africa we are in the grips of a Satanic Panic, so everything relating to vampyrism will be given a "satanist" spin.
- <OctarineValur> Part 3: Locally a few SAVA members have only conducted email interviews, or rarely, face-to-face interviews with print media journalists. Articles have been sent for reviewing before going to print in recent times, and we seem to have built up a relationship with at least two local journalists.
- <OctarineValur> Previously, interviews would seem to be favorable, but when they appeared in print, would be sensationalized and we would have had no opportunity to review anything.
- <ScarletRavenwing> (1) Where they were once just looking for anything or anyone, they now, to me it seems, have taken to the more glamorized, dramatic side of things. They used to be so few who would talk about it openly they took who they could get and now there are more and more people willing to talk about it, especially for money it today's tight incomes.
- <ScarletRavenwing> We went from people like Michelle Belanger to the Hierarchy of Austin and Don Henrie. The factual they seem to think is boring, so they go or what is entertaining, what has shock value.
- <ScarletRavenwing> (2) Yes as said above, we have them moving from people who would come dressed professional and speak clearly without misunderstanding to the dark Goth groups who present what the media wants to hear. Again shock value seems to be the most important thing to the media today, not the truth or real lives.
- <ScarletRavenwing> (3) I seldom see much information about things prior to it airing, though I am aware that in some case it was aired prior elsewhere.
- <ScarletRavenwing> (4) It seemed to me that there was a lot more talking, a lot more

conversation over who and what was saying this or that before it ever made it anywhere. Now it seems people can just pop on and say what they want and no one the wiser till it's aired.

- <Spurn> I Danmark synes anmodningerne altid at handle om det samme.
- <Heidica> I will say they ask more sincere questions these days.
- <Merticus> I've found the media increasingly easier to speak with, manage, field, mitigate, etc.
- <Merticus> That and they are becoming less and less interested in the "freak of the week" pieces aside from the occasional one here or there by someone who stepped into it who didn't know what they were doing or how the game is played.
- <Heidica> Nods
- <Imon> Well quite a few people in the community who actually do interviews have cut out the Goth look to do them and go for the business dress look.
- <Vyrdolak> I don't know. I think they're still coming from the same motive.
- <AcrophobicPixie> In my opinion, they still expect the uber Goth look. They've gotten better at the questions, yes, but they still ask some of the same questions over and over again.
- <Vyrdolak> It seems more common for media requests to be "on spec" than for an existing show or confirmed project.
- <Heidica> I have had several requests to do interviews, (which I have declined) but what they ask now is different and more sincere than it used to be just some years back.
- <Merticus> We will all see what happens next year when the MTV's TrueLife episode airs.
- <Vyrdolak> Hm. Maybe the number of interviews and people being out there is hitting a critical mass?
- <Imon> If someone does radio live or a live interview then they don't have to worry about the slice and dice effects of the filming for sensational purposes as much lol.
- <Merticus> Most of the reality show ideas have fallen flat or never received funding. I expect this to change in near future though as younger vampires (and younger communities in the spotlight) step forward.
- <AcrophobicPixie> My only requests have been for podcasts. Which is good in my opinion, cause it saves me calling up a drag queen friend to have them make me over and unrecognizable. In person, like at NOVA's thing, that's one thing, but cameras = wig, severe makeup, etc.
- <AcrophobicPixie> Drag queens; they can make you not look like you. It's weird and awesome at the same time, if they contour your face right.
- <Vyrdolak> Maybe the fact that more serious academic treatments of the community have come out, is affecting what the broadcast media is asking?
- <Merticus> I will still do print/magazines/newspaper interviews when asked

but the amount of solicitations have decreased in recent years.

<Imon> Or as we talked about years ago, the community doing its own videos and interviews that are taped.

<Vyrdolak> I think print media is sharply declining, right across the board, though.

<Vyrdolak> And shorter pieces, lots of unpaid "content" and syndicated stuff.

<AcrophobicPixie> Everything is going digital. Look at Newsweek.

<Imon> I can't do visual media at all due to my work and a state license. It wouldn't go over well.

<Merticus> Well there is digital press - many of the start-up companies do solicit "vampire-related" pieces (or have).

<Merticus> With a few exceptions, I'm pleased with many of the radio and video/television treatments of the community in the last couple of years.

<Imon> One thing that irks me about media requests too they expect someone to drop their life and respond and show up with a 24 hour deadline, that's ridiculous.

<Imon> Especially if they want you to fly somewhere, sure they may pay for it but 24 hour notice?

<Vyrdolak> These are driven by popular fiction, like Vampire Diaries and True Blood -- because otherwise the media wouldn't think any viewers/readers would be interested.

<Vyrdolak> The competition is so fierce in the business now -- they have those deadlines every day.

<Merticus> Most of the media solicitations expect a 24 hour turnaround and some still don't understand why someone wouldn't want to go on television. Most serious media outlets deal in signed contracts and tight deadlines.

<AcrophobicPixie> Yeah, I can't just up and leave on short notice with my job. I don't work an office job where I'm just another office drone who has scads of call off days. I get 5 call offs a year. That's it.

<Merticus> Some will fly you out to the location and not even film/use you for their material.

<AcrophobicPixie> We have to be careful with some radio interviews, too, if we're cautious of our appearance being splattered everywhere. Many radio stations have live webcam feeds of the studio.

<Merticus> Many of those who were once staples in the media when it came to "real vampires" are now elsewhere (no longer interested or called to be on the shows) so new faces are emerging. Some of these newcomers have the benefit of being educated to what went "wrong" with the community as far as the media in the past.

<Heidica> Is it common in the U.S. they offer you money to do it? I have had that, but I still refuse because as Pixie says I either would have to do the drag look too or they would have to interview me as a private person and skip the vampire questions.

<Imon> I'm happy with our local person who is dealing with the media and doing a good job at it even though it's new for him. But he's also a model so he's used to the cameras.

<AcrophobicPixie> I've never been offered money.

<Merticus> Some will offer you money, most will not (it depends on the format of the show). And if they do offer it's far from enough to destroy your life/career over so one should keep that in mind.

<Heidica> Nods

<Imon> The NOLA folks are also comfortable and have been through it enough to know when to say yes and when to say no.

<Heidica> I know they did in U.K. with that interview someone did there last year that I refused to do :P And that really didn't turn out well and neither did a magazine one unfortunately :P

<Heidica> Exactly Merticus

<Imon> In NYC the guy at one of the Kmart's at Grand Central wore fangs to work behind the electronics camera and neither his boss nor the public seemed to care at all.

<Merticus> The "shock magazine/entertainment-only outlets" will often pay a set amount and then paint you in the worst possible light because they maintain exclusive control over your image within the piece.

<Imon> Geography and culture does make a difference.

<Heidica> Yes

<Heidica> I still tell some I'm into live action roleplay. You can laugh but it's the vampires pretend to be humans who pretends to be vampires and it helps a lot :)

<AcrophobicPixie> Geography is a big thing. NYC or Portland, you can be as weird as you want, and no one will blink an eye. But say, rural Indiana, you get looked at funny if you wear white after Labor Day.

<Heidica> It was great wearing the fangs in NOLA Pixie, there no one will raise an eyebrow, at least during Halloween week lol.

<AcrophobicPixie> Seriously.

<Imon> Nods to Heidica, people will want to know what play you're in lol.

<Heidica> Yes :)

<AcrophobicPixie> I think, in our group, I was actually looked on as the odd ball since I didn't have fangs, wasn't always in black...

<Heidica> I can wear them at home too, everyone thinks live action roleplay right away.

<Heidica> Pixie you have invisible fangs :)

* AcrophobicPixie hisses

<Imon> I love the expression that a friend of mine uses, that "vampires have always been shadowkind to mankind".

<Merticus> **e. Critically Evaluating How We Appear To The Outside World: A Three-Part Question: Do you believe the vampire community is serious enough about how it appears to the**

outside world?

<Merticus> **Many participants in the vampire community complain about documentaries, interviews and other depictions of real vampires that highlight the melodramatic and colorful participants of our community.**

<Merticus> **However, many of these same individuals embellish their social media profile pages with lurid art, photos of themselves with fangs and bloody mouths, black capes and heavy make-up, and with other macabre or grim materials.**

<Merticus> **Is it possible for us to be horror-centric, embracing of the fantastical, or Goth theatrical 'for fun or lifestyle' and expect the media or the general public to be able to differentiate, understand, or ultimately accept us as harmless? Is such a notion realistic, or even fair?**

<Abyah> Да, я считаю, что иногда очень приятно выглядеть, как киношный вампир, однако такой вид более подходит для вечеринок в стиле хэллоуин, тематических фотосессий и частных мероприятий. У нас 21 век на дворе. Излишняя театральность может успешно уничтожить конструктивизм.

<Abyah> Особенно это касается публичных членов сообщества, тех, кто даёт интервью СМИ. Если мы хотим быть понятыми максимальным количеством людей, нужно сломать стереотипы, которые укоренились в их умах.

<Belfazaar> We appear as hypocritical as any other community. We are disjointed at best, permanently fractured, at worst due to the perpetual need to segregate ourselves into minor aspects of our whole collective.

<Belfazaar> Many of the critics of those before the camera embrace so totally the theatrical aspects of what it is to be a vampire that the hypocrisy literally oozes out of them like some horrid smell... In all honesty, you can't expect today's Jerry Springer-esque media types to differentiate between us NOR accept us as "harmless" by the way many of us show these... Grisly... photos.

<Belfazaar> It is unfair to even think it can be done. The most that those of us in front of the camera can hope for is to excite the search for knowledge and hope that those people go to sites which we consider "legitimate".

<DarkFess> Каждый из нас индивидуален. Я не думаю, что кому-то из нас можно что-то запретить или навязать. Если хотят вести такой образ жизни - пусть ведут. А вот нашему Сообществу в целом меняться не стоит.

<HorusSat> The answer lies in the way we relate to other forms and expressions of diversity. Taking as an example the gay community, the "Gay Pride" is an expression of all the different currents belonging to the GLBT (Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual,

Transgender).

<HorusSat> Vampire community has much to learn from the gay community. Certain path about the self-acceptation of the several nuances of diversity in the gay community must be used as example in the vampire community. One can be horror-centric as can be an elegant vampire or a "common person" vampire. Every expressions of real vampirism must learn to share and coexist as expression of a diversity or social minority.

<HorusSat> Therefore every expression of culture, fashion or subculture, must be accepted and respected as a different expression of the community. Vampires must be educated, as we did for the gays, to accept every nuances of diversity and every characteristic of the vampiric subcultures: everyone should be free to interpret their own diversity without being judged or discriminated against.

<HorusSat> Media, televisions and newspapers must understand that every expression of diversity (from vampires to gays) has its own language, traditions, costumes, fashions, and different subcultures which must be accepted, respected and ward as free expression. Mass medias must be educated in respecting all the diversity and all that concerns their own world.

<OtarineValur> Part 1: I would say that depends on the individual participant - and there are many participants, and so there will always be those who think they have carte-blanche to portray being part of the vampyre community as a joke, a freak show and an opportunity to get their five minutes of fame and fortune on shows like Jerry Springer.

<OtarineValur> I think they are the ones the media seek out, while the quieter, more reserved and knowledgeable folks are ignored or unwilling to be interviewed.

<OtarineValur> Regarding the posting of vampire pictures and possibly Halloween photos with fake blood and fangs etc, I think a great many participants in the vampyre community "bury themselves in the part" a little - even I am guilty of this from time to time.

<OtarineValur> After all, it's one of the "fun" aspects of the identity and lightens things up a little. However, it does make it harder for outsiders (and sometimes insiders) to differentiate between fact and fantasy."

<ScarletRavenwing> (1) As a community whole, not entirely, as individual groups, it varies. Some of the groups being presented by the media are giving a bad image by my standards but a clear and open one by theirs, and vice versa.

<ScarletRavenwing> (2) While I can understand that to the outside those type of images are confusing, but I find that it is more the in person image that is important. It comes back to judging a book by its cover, however showing up to interview for the media like you

- thought it was a Halloween ball does not help but hinders.
- <ScarletRavenwing> Judging the true nature of someone by their social media sites is silly. As it has been shown time and again, you cannot judge who are dangerous by looking at them alone. Come on John Wayne Gacy Jr. was a clown at children's parties; Charles Manson was a hippy by outward appearance... Judging a vampyre by the dark imagery of their Twitter or Facebook is ridiculous.
- <ScarletRavenwing> (3) Within reason I feel it is. If you are going to present yourself for a job interview you don't show up wearing fangs and white cake makeup and presenting yourself to the media should be treated similarly.
- <ScarletRavenwing> You are representing an entire culture by your image, words and actions, make sure they represent it well. However I do not feel you should be bound to such standards in your everyday life. Each person is free to be who they are, and I think that if anything, that if they are going to present for the community, be aware of your appearance, otherwise be yourself.
- <Spurn> Folk fra vampyrsamfundet tænker altid over hvad de skal sige, hvordan de skal klæde sig osv. når de omgås omverdenen.
- <Spurn> Vampyrsamfundet er så bredt at der findes mange forskellige måder at fremstå for omverdenen, og medierne tager selvfølgelig de mest 'farvestrålende' og 'øjnefaldende'.
- <Heidica> 1: Yes, 2: No
- <Merticus> I have nothing personal to add to this one because I don't appear to the outside world and am merely a figment of everyone's collective imagination.
- <AcrophobicPixie> Seriously. I know a good many in the community are little cuddly rays of sunshine, but if all anyone sees is the "Omg I'm a deep dark vampyfire of darkness and blah blah blah DAAAAARK" they aren't going to believe y'all are cuddly balls of sunshine.
- <Heidica> We cannot really expect anything else I believe, but we can angle the questions etc into more sincere about vampirism. If doing interviews etc.
- <Imon> It's not realistic but I do think there are subtle shifts in perceptions taking place at least by anyone who bothers to actually do their research who make docs and interviews for any reason other than the "it's Halloween, get me a vampire" or sensationalism.
- <Imon> Not to mention serious researchers.
- <Heidica> Nods
- <AcrophobicPixie> *Imagine the blah blah blah as the Dracula stereotype*
- <Heidica> We LIKE the vampire images, but we are more so have to show more too I will say if we are giving interviews etc.
- <Vyrdolak> I think this is something people really need to consider seriously

-- not so much the Goth stuff as the really gory, semi-threatening imagery.

<Imon> I loved that in one of the interviews a friend of mine did in NOLA, which the whole thing was done very well, but at the end he asked had coming out as a vampire changed her life in any way and she laughed and said "I don't guess I'll be dating any politicians". lol

<Reija> I'm totally against the cape-and-fangs interviews, and don't get me started on feeding on television.

<Heidica> Not all are Goths as we all know but most will feel the look appealing even if not for oneself. Anyway its diversity and I still feel that should be appreciated.

<AcrophobicPixie> Goth can be classy. And wearing something like a black business suit still triggers the "Oooh, Gothy" feel without looking like a random doofus was dragged out of the crappiest Goth club in town and put in front of a television camera.

<Vyrdolak> It reminds me of the late 1960s when the big shift was starting for Witchcraft and Paganism.

<Vyrdolak> Because you had some very colorful figures that were going around as Witches (Sybil Leek, Laurie Cabot, Louise Huebner, etc).

<Vyrdolak> And then when the Pagan revival got going, you had Scott Cunningham putting out a book with a "Witch" on the cover and it was a prosperous young woman in a business suit

<Heidica> Nods

<Vyrdolak> That was one of the things that really started to change the image -- the whole message, this is what we ARE not what we LOOK like.

<Heidica> Which was good :)

<Vyrdolak> But the vampire community isn't there yet. Just a couple of months ago, there was a poster for an event on Facebook, by a high-profile vampire community member, and I just cringed when I saw it.

<Heidica> In these years though when media embraces the whole vampire image so much we can't blame the media for wanting that, it sells. We can still affect how they present things. I felt good when I read how our Austin, TX friends handled things :)

<Vyrdolak> I mean, why does being a vampire automatically come with all the stereotypes and clichés from fiction, when we want to differentiate ourselves from fiction and RPGs like the plague?

<Merticus> I have a feeling that aspect of the vampire community will likely never change because of the association with the archetype.

<Merticus> Especially for groups that derive their funding and patron base from club/music events.

<AcrophobicPixie> Unfortunately, things like the odd and sex sell, and if it gets viewers, subscribers, or some other way that they can make

money, people will glom onto it until it no longer pays.

<Heidica> I have often felt I have got somewhere with curious outsiders when I have laughed with them at the archetype and made jokes about it for then to explain and say "but really this is how I see the condition".

<Vyrdolak> I get spooky, but the blood and sharp blades and that kind of thing... really can backfire on us, especially with the way public sentiments are going about violence and child abuse and so on.

<Heidica> I agree with the blood and knives, Vyrdolak, fangs and cape can be humorous, not those things... or not to me they are no.

<AcrophobicPixie> It's just going to be difficult to toe the line between tasteful and tacky when it comes to "looking the part" for the vampire community.

<Vyrdolak> Well, maybe not show business stuff but the kinds of things people put on their profile pages and so on, or what people see when they click on a group. I think there's an over-compensation for a sense of powerlessness, of being oppressed. But it doesn't serve us.

<Vyrdolak> Most subcultures, like LGBTQ or Pagans, have a side that's private and then there's the public face, which is, "what I want to show my mom when I come out to her."

<AcrophobicPixie> When it comes to things like social media, it's like "Really? You just bitched about what So and So wore on television, etc, but you just put a picture on your Facebook wall that will trigger scads of people to gag a little at the ick? Seriously?"

<Merticus> I do agree it's in poor taste (potentially sends a wrong message) on information related websites that also tout safety, support, etc. as opposed to strictly entertainment groups or adverts.

<Heidica> I agree. I believe there's a difference between blood feeding in private or at least showed in safe ways and the shows sometimes put on where no safety or warnings are either shown or posted. Just my beliefs.

<Vyrdolak> Exactly, Pixie.

<AcrophobicPixie> Vyrdolak, and people wonder why I don't log into my nightside Facebook account that often.

<Merticus> **f. Other topics you'd like to bring up for discussion?**

<Vyrdolak> Nope!

<Isealdor> New Orleans Vampire Association (NOVA): We're doing Thanksgiving + Christmas feeds still... if anyone wants to donate, it'd be greatly appreciated!

<Merticus> **IV. Business Reminders**

<Merticus> Refer to the forum for all current discussions.

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