

Voices of the Vampire Community (VVC) Public Meeting – December 20, 2009

Attendees (16):

Corvis Nocturnum – Dark Moon Press & Independent Representative
Gabby – ShadowLore
Gypsy – House Scarlet Moon
Lono – PsychicVampire.org
Marcus Noir – Independent Representative
Merticus – Atlanta Vampire Alliance (AVA) & Suscitatio Enterprises, LLC
Ravena – House Lost Haven
Sanguinarius – Sanguinarius.org
ShadowMind – Darkness Embraced Vampire & Occult Society
Sovereign – Independent Representative
SphynxCatVP – SphynxCatVP Real Vampires Support Site
The Pink Lady – Vampirism eList
Vyrdolak – By Light Unseen
Xeurika – House Quinotaur
Zakary – House Bennu
Zero – Atlanta Vampire Alliance (AVA) & Suscitatio Enterprises, LLC

Discussion Agenda:

I. Meeting Information

Welcome to the third public meeting of Voices of the Vampire Community (VVC) for 2009. 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 web site at:

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

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

III. Discussion

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

Let's start the evening with these questions:

a. Community Availability To Newcomers & Seekers: What steps can we take to ensure newcomers to the vampire community find accurate information along with local offline or online safe haven communities?

b. The Outcome & Impact On The Vampire Community From Media Exposure: (1) What positive outcomes have come from media exposure of the vampire community? (2) What have been some negative impacts on the vampire community from media exposure? (3) What relayed information or demonstrations of feeding methods should or should not be broached when working with the media?

c. The VVC Book Project Update & Progress: (1) Publishing consent forms need to be completed and sent to Sanguinarius. (2) What publishing options are available to us for having the book published? (3) What steps need to be completed on the project? What

are the timelines for those steps?

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

IV. Business Reminders

<Merticus> <<<<<< BEGIN MEETING LOG >>>>>>

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<Merticus> Let's start the evening with these questions:

<Merticus> **a. Community Availability To Newcomers & Seekers: What steps can we take to ensure newcomers to the vampire community find accurate information along with local offline or online safe haven communities?**

<ShadowMind> One of the steps we can take is to make sure that the online communities that we feel have been vetted appropriately and have maintained a high level of respectability and responsibility remains at a level of fairly high visibility. This being the case, newcomers are more likely to make their way to these sites and garner a good grounding.

<ShadowMind> These sites, in turn, can have articles, lists of publications, and other resources that will also be useful for newcomers to absorb. While I do not believe in spoon feeding and do not wish to assume that we or any other singular site has all of the answers, by creating a well rounded base, newcomers are able to move and shape their own minds.

<ShadowMind> Realistically, the majority of the newcomers come through in an online fashion, at least from my general view. It is far easier to become part of the community through the use of technology than it is in person. Thus, I think the strengthening of the online presence should be first.

<ShadowMind> As far as the offline sources, that information can also be held within the online communities as far as physical place that can be attended, but, perhaps, some sort of structure should be in place to make sure that those that get that information are not dangerous individuals. Not having been a part or spoken with a great deal of members who have a physical presence does not allow me to speak as eloquently to this point.

<CorvisNocturnum> A widely distributed and copied listing of sites such as Larae's Darkness Embraced, Lono's, Sangi's, SphynxCat, AVA, etc. on a master directory of safe havens would be a first step. All sites committed to the cause paste each others banners; links etc. to make it easier for all new people to be able to encounter the sites we all agree are open to the cause of safety.

<CorvisNocturnum> In this way there is no favoritism, everyone is included and it makes it simple for someone searching to realize the common reoccurring theme is about unity, safety, and community. The only choice then is as always left to the individual to choose which place or several) they feel at home in.

<Sanguinarius> We could make a printed booklet with urls/names/descriptions of sites of information.

<Vyrdolak> Even thoughtful, experienced old-timers in the VC disagree on what "accurate information" IS.

<Vyrdolak> We can't "make accurate information available" without some consensus on what's "accurate".

<Vyrdolak> And history suggests that we're just NEVER going to do that.

<Vyrdolak> Plus, people disagree about which offline groups are/are not "safe" or reputable.

<Vyrdolak> This exact issue has monkey-wrenched most of our projects!

<Zero> When we say "newcomers," what does that mean? People on Google? Folks hanging around clubs?

<Merticus> Newly awakened vampires or those who have located the "community" for the first time.

<ThePinkLady> I also think it would be helpful to come up with a list of reasons why such places are considered newbie-friendly.

<Lono> True.

<CorvisNocturnum> People will always disagree.

<CorvisNocturnum> I like Xeurika's saying "dedicated spot or line of communication that people could go to would be very valuable."

<Vyrdolak> Even if we always talk about each other respectfully, which isn't a given.

<Vyrdolak> Newcomers who go to 3 different sites will get 3 versions of "what vampires are".

<Vyrdolak> And they'll stick with the one that most flatters them or appeals to them.

<Vyrdolak> People looking for community don't care about "accurate information," they care about being accepted.

<Vyrdolak> They'll take recommendations from groups/leaders who make them feel good about themselves.

<Vyrdolak> And disregard the recommendations/info from groups/leaders they don't like.

<ThePinkLady> My elist--let me show you it. It's a shark tank. We brook no bullshit. It's not the friendliest place for newbies. But IMO Sangi's site is the same way... but people have more patience

"unlearning" newbies.

<ThePinkLady> And I'm agreeing with Vyrdolak even if I don't like the truth she says.

<CorvisNocturnum> People will always make their choice based off what works best for themselves.

<Zero> That's one of the first things I'd warn a newbie about - taking info at face value because it makes you feel good about yourself.

* Sanguinarius agrees with Zero.

<Ravena> The more nuts someone is, the more they welcome a new person with open arms.

<Sanguinarius> Hey, Ravena, lol... you calling me a nut?

<Ravena> You're the good kind of nut Sanguinarius ;)

<Vyrdolak> I've become very contrarian. I think it should be much harder to find us.

<Vyrdolak> People don't value what comes too easily.

<ThePinkLady> @Vyrdolak: Then it becomes a question of who the newbies find first.

<CorvisNocturnum> @Vyrdolak: Then won't people be more lost than ever?

<Vyrdolak> Is it our business to "find" them?

<Zero> The OVC went online in the first place because newbies and the curious were getting snookered pretty badly by those outside the community.

<ThePinkLady> Semi-sidetrack, it's like the media: If we don't stand up and represent ourselves, it's an open invitation to let a less stellar example represent us.

<Vyrdolak> Trouble is, the "nuts," cult leaders, use tactics that reel people in, deliberately.

<Vyrdolak> Do we WANT to do that?

<Lono> Seeing how much Twilight, TrueBlood etc. spam I've gotten in the past year... I'm starting to agree with Vyrdolak, and take this whole thing back into the shadows.

<Merticus> How difficult does everyone think it is for the average "newcomer" or "novice" to find the actual "real vampire community" today?

<Ravena> It's extremely easy Merticus.

<Zero> @Merticus: I think it takes about fifteen seconds on Google.

<Marcus_Noir> The Community used to be very elitist to filter out those that were not serious and the just curious...

<Zakary> I think we need to categorize people and groups within the community. Those that have a face and that are publicly accessible 'important', those who are faceless 'irrelevant'... easy! We could only inform people of groups that have a visible and public profile. Groups like the Aset Ka etc. Who are they. Who is the leader? I don't know do you. Why would I recommend them?

<ThePinkLady> @Zakary: Agreed about the "face" thing.

<ThePinkLady> But not the importance/unimportance.
<ThePinkLady> @Vyrdolak: What if they just show up?
<Sanguinarius> Depending on how far they get when they look, it could be pretty easy.
 <Ravena> It's too late for the shadows.
 <Ravena> We are full of media whores.
<Vyrdolak> @Ravena: You remember the scene in Jurassic Park with the flashlight and the T-Rex?
<Vyrdolak> It's time to turn off the fucking flashlights.
 <Lono> The only ones that seem to be elitist these days are the Temple of the Vampire (TOV) and Aset Ka.
 <Zero> @Ravena: See PinkLady's comment. I remember the days of the Sally Jessy Raphael show and do not want to go back to that.
<Marcus_Noir> There have already been several attempts to create exactly what we are discussing...
<Marcus_Noir> One of the House of the Dreaming (HotD) members tried this before, for example, with the Red Pages...
 <Zero> Yes, the Red Pages didn't work so well.
 <Lono> Not that I mind giving information to people that need it...
<CorvisNocturnum> If we disappear who will take our place?
 <Zakary> Yes not in those terms but you get the gist.
<Vyrdolak> Can we ever come to consensus on just what is "accurate information"?
 <Ravena> I'm not sure it's possible.
<Marcus_Noir> @Vyrdolak: Its obvious that no we can't.
 <Zero> I would hope that "accurate" info is information about the community and about how vampires THINK about vampires.
<CorvisNocturnum> That is why I suggest a united traded list where we support each others' websites.
<ThePinkLady> I think I suggested at another meeting about coming up with a good info/bad info checklist and Anshar was dead set against it.
 <Vyrdolak> In that case, how can we direct new people to it?
 <Lono> Since most vampires have a different sets of skill sets and their own personal truths...
<CorvisNocturnum> Ahem... see above :)
 <Zakary> I don't know if 'accurate' is the correct term or perhaps credible. If coming from a credible group.
 <Ravena> Well, I have my own list of what I consider "accurate".
<Marcus_Noir> We can't even get our own members to have an open mind towards individual differences and, gasp, respect each other...
<Marcus_Noir> So how can we expect this so called community to do the same?
 <Zero> I don't suggest we try to become authorities on the nature of vampirism, which I have to admit we don't understand real well anyway.
<Sanguinarius> How about solid info vs. lala-land info?
 <Vyrdolak> I mean, how am I going to refer/recommend a new person to a

group I think isn't correct?

<Merticus> We're asked on a weekly basis almost by people "what houses or groups are located in my city?" etc. - we field more of those questions now than the general vampire FAQ variety. People simply wishing to network.

<ThePinkLady> @Merticus: I wrote a "how to find vamps in your area" guide for the Yahoo group because I was tired of clearing those questions out of the post queue.

<Ravena> But some of the community don't like it as it excludes some of their beliefs (same ones that render them special).

<Vyrdolak> @Sanguinarisus: But everyone has legit people they think are "lala-land".

<CorvisNocturnum> We need put differences aside or be labeled kooks.

<Zero> The community exists so that we can help put one another onto a path of self-discovery. We are not a canned tin of answers.

<Sanguinarisus> So we might as well just give up :(

<Vyrdolak> Some people in the VC see me as a loony-tune "mystic".

<Vyrdolak> I don't agree with the psi-vamps.

<CorvisNocturnum> We don't need agree on specifics!

<CorvisNocturnum> Just the unification of safe places.

* ThePinkLady agrees with Corvis.

<Vyrdolak> New people come in and get all this confusing input.

<Lono> There's nothing wrong with that Vyrdolak.

<Sanguinarisus> The irony is, Vyrdolak, that it's your site that introduced me to psychic vampires.

<Vyrdolak> Except I don't agree with the paradigm of "psi-feeding" the evolved AFTER I published my article.

<Vyrdolak> But that's not germane to the agenda item.

<Vyrdolak> The question is, how much can we worry about whether new people get "accurate information" when all the information is so conflicting?

<Merticus> There seems to be a growing rift between some sangs and some psi's over what is "accurate" information... hopefully any conflicting views won't confuse those seeking the basic fundamentals of vampirism as they are most widely understood (at least at a core level).

<Zakary> Yes, safe = credible, known etc. Unsafe = the secret Vampire empire run by 'secret Lestats'

<CorvisNocturnum> @Zakary: Agreed.

<Vyrdolak> Okay, do we concentrate on integrity and honesty among leaders, not their specific views?

<CorvisNocturnum> @Vyrdolak: Most old sites provide that well enough.

<Vyrdolak> Another question is, how do we evaluate offline groups without direct in-person contact?

<CorvisNocturnum> Isn't integrity provable by actions?

<Zakary> I think you have to, I am not concerned with individual beliefs

myself. As long as they don't suggest breaking any laws.

<CorvisNocturnum> By phone calls, people vouching for them.

<Vyrdolak> @Corvis: What if a group has such strict confidentiality; it's hard to know what they do?

<Ravena> I'm sure Merticus could find out.

<Vyrdolak> That doesn't mean they're bad, just very discreet.

<CorvisNocturnum> Unfortunately they would be passed over.

<Lono> To me I have members and other administrators, though when I wrote the site it was mostly an old compilation of my previous posts on different forums that I added on to.

<Lono> And I have had sections of my site changed as my knowledge has grown.

<Lono> Nytemuse has revised a few of the FAQ answers as new "understandings became available.

<Zakary> If a group is so secret then that's fine, you don't get listed!

<Sanguinarius> Maybe those core ones should be more firmly established?

<Zero> I would prefer to see a list of guidelines for interaction rather than a "list of safe groups" a manners list and a when-to-worry list are far less disagreeable.

<Merticus> I think we can start evaluating offline groups in a regional sense - those who have experience in certain areas or a write-up about certain offline groups.

<Vyrdolak> @Zakary: But what if a secretive group is the best option in a locality?

<CorvisNocturnum> How about Michelle Belanger or Joseph Laycock? They know most on and offline people fairly well right?

<Zero> @Corvis - I think we're talking about steering newcomers to not-crazy community groups so they don't accidentally join a fringe group or cult when they were looking for us.

<Zero> and not all offline groups are interested in taking on new members.

<Lono> Good call.

<Marcus_Noir> @Zero: Exactly

<Marcus_Noir> Let me interject some thing here...

<Marcus_Noir> There are more private offline groups than there are known ones.

<Marcus_Noir> Not every group is seeking public and internet attention.

<Vyrdolak> The Pagan community has exactly the same issues.

<Vyrdolak> Seekers, especially. young people, can't find good groups and don't feel confident enough to start one.

<CorvisNocturnum> ALL communities have this problem. Same as us.

<Sanguinarius> How do they deal with it?

<Zakary> It is really up that group and whether they feel it beneficial to be listed. If they don't that's OK. They don't have to ostracized. However, as the community develops it will become more public so it needs credibility.

<ThePinkLady> It's sad that we can't have the internet equivalent of a storefront.

<Vyrdolak> Good leaders are hard to find, and they burn out.
 <Zero> @Sanguinarius: They give advice on choosing groups, they don't evaluate the groups.

<Sanguinarius> That is probably the best approach then.
 <CorvisNocturnum> @Vyrdolak: You're still here and Merticus, etc.
 <Lono> They don't burn out if they take vacations...
 <CorvisNocturnum> Sanguinarius has one of the oldest sites I believe.
 <Sanguinarius> Vyrdolak and I have the oldest.
 <Ravena> Sanguinarius was around since the horse and wagon.
 <Ravena> Vyrdolak too I suspect.
 <Vyrdolak> I burned out on forums and e-groups, though, I won't do them anymore.

<Vyrdolak> I do one-on-one contact.
 <Merticus> I do not plan to be around as much in the future... I'm beyond burned out at this point. It's more a "chore" than anything else at this point for me.

<CorvisNocturnum> And that is how I discovered this community.
 <Sanguinarius> I burned out on email, I HATE e-mail!
 <Ravena> So there are plenty of others who live offline and never venture into this realm.

<Zero> Yeah, can we abolish all email?
 <Sanguinarius> I mean, I like the concept... I just hate the avalanche of it endlessly flowing to me, taking up my inbox.

<ThePinkLady> About burnout: What happens when our pillars step down?
 <Vyrdolak> I'm getting more and more people now who write and say they don't want to read a lot, they want personal replies.

<Zero> @Vyrdolak: If kids today don't want to "read a lot" they can damn well remain ignorant! (get off my lawn!)

<Vyrdolak> @Zero: I'm not judging, just reporting.
 <Sanguinarius> No, they need knowledge forcibly injected into their tiny brains!
 <Sanguinarius> Vyrdolak, that's what I try to avoid.
 <Vyrdolak> Young people are abandoning e-mail, half my inquiries are texted now.

<Zero> @Vrydolak - :)
 <Zero> I got little patience for people who are handed info on a plate, and insist on being spoon-fed too.

<ThePinkLady> @Vyrdolak: not always.
 <Lono> When you average 25-100 emails a day... I get behind and I don't allow people to text me anymore.
 <Ravena> "You're special, you're a vampire, let me teach you my uber powers" basically.

<ThePinkLady> From my Yahoo Group, I can tell you that -- well, what Ravena said.

<ThePinkLady> No wonder Daemonox lurks. It's become grand central station for special snowflakes.

<CorvisNocturnum> Lono, once upon a time, perhaps...maybe not anymore with

fiction running rampant.

<Zero> @Ravena: Yep, that's why it's so scary to let these impressionable folks just hang in the wind - someone without scruples will pick up on those people if we don't set them straight.

<CorvisNocturnum> @Zero: Exactly my point for bring up the topic.

<Marcus_Noir> Ok, so here's the question...

<Marcus_Noir> Who wants to put the energy into creating a directory of online and offline groups that is Google search able of discovery, listing regional bodies?

<Marcus_Noir> AND keep it neutral?

<Marcus_Noir> That is a Herculean task kids.

<CorvisNocturnum> I'm neutral but lack the time.

<Zakary> Here we are having an international meeting. I am going out of my way to communicate with others.

<Zakary> People who live offline won't really be affected by recommendations?

<Vyrdolak> I just don't feel connected enough to do that, I'm too iconoclastic.

<Vyrdolak> I've had a couple of inquiries from worried parents, that's another issue.

<ThePinkLady> @Marcus: Yup. Too bad meetup.com charges.

<ThePinkLady> That was a decent neutral ground before the economy tanked.

<Marcus_Noir> @PinkLady: That is why we had parties in Gotham.

<Marcus_Noir> To find each other.

<Merticus> The information I've compiled for the offline groups/houses I will put into a database and release to people to do with what they wish. I will not have time to organize it all but will be able to classify by geographic location best I can.

<Vyrdolak> Another question, too, is what seekers WANT from these groups. What do they expect?

<Sanguinarius> @Merticus: Should I redirect my Regional Groups effort to yours? No sense duplicating efforts and my project is way out of the loop.

<Merticus> @Sanguinarius: Let me compile the info I have into a database first. I have other projects stacked in front. I'm in process of delegating tasks out to people where I have more time on my hands to wrap things up.

<Sanguinarius> I need to delegate the task of delegating tasks to other people.

<Vyrdolak> Another question is, how many seekers are REALLY "awakening", etc. and how many just want to be part of a fantasy?

<ThePinkLady> I don't know what's worse, having to slap down someone who doesn't know that posting their 200+ age is a bad idea, or the group members who think that I was heavy-handed in correcting the snowflake.

<Merticus> Or how many just want to feel like they belong to something and this is their escape?

<Lono> My biggest pet peeve is when people sign up on forums, and ask questions that were even in the first page of my website.

<Vyrdolak> Are there really that many more authentic new vamps than there ever were (i.e. not many)?

<CorvisNocturnum> We can never know for sure until they stay involved.

<CorvisNocturnum> The proof is in the pudding, as it goes.

<Sanguinarius> I'm almost loathe to talk to people and give out info at all these days.

<ThePinkLady> Once the popular media finds something else to chase, I wonder if the number of curious folks will die down?

<Zero> @Vyrdolak: That's why we're better off teaching people how to listen to themselves rather than trying to educate them in any other way.

<CorvisNocturnum> Sanguinarius: Isn't that what FAQs are for?

<Sanguinarius> @Corvis: Yes

<Vyrdolak> I am not dissing or condescending to ANY seekers, regardless of motive.

<Vyrdolak> Different motives require different responses.

<CorvisNocturnum> The video series helps.

<Zero> I'm thinking we should branch out - the vampire community self-help series!

<Sanguinarius> I'll be the first to buy the program.

<Zero> Chicken blood soup for the confused soul.

<Sanguinarius> Duck's blood soup for the vampire soul.

<Vyrdolak> @Zero: I totally agree, but it's not so easy to do!

<Zero> No, especially since the seekers will often fight you on it. The fantasy-seekers will totally shop around until they find their Lestat.

<Vyrdolak> Everything is moving to video now, that's why I've been taking a class.

<Vyrdolak> My living room is morphing into a full studio.

<ThePinkLady> I think the OVC is helped by moving to newer formats, videos and podcasts and the like.

<ThePinkLady> Though it's harder to maintain anonymity.

<Zero> @ThePinkLady: Anonymity is a big issue.

<Ravena> I was a seeker around ten years ago when I showed up in Sanguinarius' channel.

<Lono> I do give some lessons on my website.

<Merticus> The more multimedia, the less actual time spent writing/posts/articles etc. with new information.

<Vyrdolak> Well, the fantasy-seekers really want to belong to something, that's the core of it.

<CorvisNocturnum> @Merticus: YouTube?

<CorvisNocturnum> No one wants to read anymore.

<ThePinkLady> I'm a snob: I still prefer book info because (most of the time) it's been checked.

<CorvisNocturnum> LOL; Merticus edited my book.

<Merticus> YouTube, Podcasts, FetLife, Social Networking etc.

<Ravena> It's not that hard to be anonymous if you're not out in the media.

<Zakary> I would like to see more decent books.

<Sanguinarius> Me too.

<Vyrdolak> Anonymity is contra-indicated to being taken seriously, I'm afraid.

<Zero> @Vyrdolak: I've seen this be both good and bad, since the community will accept you "as you are" and encourage you to not lie to yourself. Some fantasy seekers find they can belong without the fantasy.

<Zero> The community has lots of non-vampire members who come in through that door.

<Ravena> Any idiot can write a book.

<Zakary> Not a good book.

<ThePinkLady> @Ravena: I know... but there's a difference between Joseph Laycock and PublishAmerica.

<Zero> @Ravena - :) True that.

<CorvisNocturnum> Ravena... my feelings are wounded lol

<Ravena> I didn't mean you Corvis, by all counts your books are decent.

<Ravena> Though I must admit I have not read one yet.

<CorvisNocturnum> Thank you.

<Zakary> That's why Ravena... we need more good books!

<Merticus> I'm just happy Laycock is now in nearly 280+ libraries. The more that responsible academic texts find their way into the hands of those writing articles/papers/books on the vampire community in the future, the greater the likelihood of more accurate representations replacing outdated and "alarmist" information that's been in print for well over a decade.

<Vyrdolak> Yes, well, Laycock... that's another story.

<Zero> I'm glad that he can put ideas together.

<ThePinkLady> @Merticus: My library system just ordered Michelle's Psychic Vampire Codex.

<ThePinkLady> I'm proud of my backwater library.

<Vyrdolak> What about new people/seekers?

<Vyrdolak> I mean, what I do is tell people to check out a whole set of websites with different info and make up their own minds?

<Lono> The problem with changing the name from 'vampires' is that it's hard for people to find us... like calling each other Quinotaurian, Kheprian, etc.

<Ravena> I give people websites that I think generally contain decent information.

<ThePinkLady> So if someone just wants to learn more about vampires, and isn't an asshat, should we turn them away?

<Ravena> I don't.

<ThePinkLady> I'd rather help out a fellow info mole than a self-possessed "awakening" vamp twit.

<Vyrdolak> I'd say no, why would we?

<Lono> Most of what I've written out of my book or decided it wasn't appropriate is being added to my website.

<Lono> The Pagan community knows us as psychic vampires... or just vampires.

<Lono> Most that find us... find us through that community.

<Vyrdolak> Yeah, and the Pagan community doesn't like us.

<Vyrdolak> I avoided a local Samhain thing because their keynote speaker was talking about "defending against psychic vampires"

<Zero> Yeah, the Pagan community has historically hated us, but some groups are coming round.

<Merticus> With better websites, books, and FAQ's we'll likely (and in some cases I think we already are) have to answer fewer and fewer of the same questions over and over.

<CorvisNocturnum> @Merticus: List of websites, books, etc?

<Merticus> We have that already though - well some of us. Just point people to resources, etc.

<Ravena> I was a newbie once upon a time, though I never thought myself a vampire.

<Zero> We have never turned away the self-professed non-vampire curious.

<ThePinkLady> @Zero: Which is good.

<Vyrdolak> I just made up a text file of answers, cut-and-paste, over and over and over.

<ThePinkLady> The community could go for a bibliography.

<ThePinkLady> As well as an un-bib. This may be an unpopular opinion, but I think there's a need to shout down erroneous and dangerous information as well.

<Zero> @ThePinkLady and Ravena: Yeah, I meant to imply that that was a good thing.

<Zero> The term "seeker" usually includes anyone who wants to know more, and doesn't favor the self-questioning over the merely curious.

* Sanguinarius is thinking the same thing.

<CorvisNocturnum> @ThePinkLady: Sanguinarius did that no?

<ThePinkLady> @Corvis: Yes

<Sanguinarius> Hey, what about collaboration on Google Wave?

<Sovereign> Hi

<Vyrdolak> Yeah, I'm on Google Wave now and I don't know WTF to do with it! And I'm a geek!

<Merticus> Anyone have anything else to add on topic A before we move to B?

<ThePinkLady> My family's married into practicing pagans. I'm getting a crash

course in shielding.

<Sanguinarius> I have an invite or two in my inbox I need to jump on and sign up.

<Lono> I've been working to improve relations with the Pagan community.

<Vyrdolak> There's more of a "dark Paganism" thing in vogue, but... the Pagan community is outside our topic.

<Lono> True

<Vyrdolak> I'm done with Item A.

<Merticus> Ok we're moving on to topic B.

<Merticus> **b. The Outcome & Impact On The Vampire Community From Media Exposure: (1) What positive outcomes have come from media exposure of the vampire community? (2) What have been some negative impacts on the vampire community from media exposure? (3) What relayed information or demonstrations of feeding methods should or should not be broached when working with the media?**

<ShadowMind> (1) The one biggest outcome is a raised level of awareness. Acceptance comes from not being ignored. It is far easier to shun those groups that receive no "press" and thus are taken to being irrelevant. While I personally have no desire to be discussed and do not like all the tromping that is being done to the vampire community as a whole, it does have the side benefit of putting us in the public eye as something real.

<ShadowMind> (2) Mostly that whenever the media puts vampires on TV or in prominent written pieces they seem to go for the outrageous and atypical of the community members. This does a great disservice to the vast majority who would not likely fit the mold that is more often than not portrayed. It seems that if they cannot find a person to be on television that fits the movie stereotype, they will find the wildest ones out there.

<ShadowMind> (3) Personally, I would prefer that none are. This I attribute to a personal item that doesn't really need to be discussed. No one asks me how I go about eating dinner and this is really no different. However, this is also unrealistic. As we claim to be vampires, so the people interested in questioning the community will wish to know this.

<ShadowMind> Thus, I think a more dry, clinical approach would suffice. I do not think it necessary that public demonstrations need to be given. I think creating a document that contributes a variety of different methods and the safety as well as "interviewing of potential donors" would be sufficient. This document can then be posted in an area that we can provide links to when there is an interested media member.

<SphynxCatVP> b-1) Depends on the type of exposure. Most of it has been playing up the freak angle, which has a positive benefit of, the

more the hype the freak, the more the sane subtle ones are able to stay undercover. :)

- <SphynxCatVP> b-2) Negatively, the more of the shoddy journalism pieces hit the media, the more anyone hears "vampire" - or, increasingly, "sanguinarian" - the more people think we're ALL dangerous freaks
- <SphynxCatVP> b-3) Considering the editing hackjob ABC 20/20 did with their piece recently, ahhhh, I think it's just safer NOT to show that on tv. Media doesn't seem to be interested in covering the safety aspects, they just want the dog-n-pony show.
- <Vyrdolak> (1) I'd say, NONE AT ALL, and I think we should stop all efforts NOW.
- <Vyrdolak> (1) People in the vampire community are just too clueless about the HUGE disconnect between us and the "ordinary world."
- <Vyrdolak> (1) Vampire community people imagine that they're explaining things and sounding reasonable.
- <Vyrdolak> (1) And they have NO IDEA how they really come across
- <Vyrdolak> (1) You can't educate until you understand your target audience and what will reach them, and the vampire community DOESN'T
- <Vyrdolak> (1) I'm sorry, but the rosy-eyed innocence about this is just unbelievable.
- <Vyrdolak> (2) It's ALL been negative. Periods of vampire enthusiasm in popular culture (Twilight, True Blood, etc.)
- <Vyrdolak> are the times when we should be the MOST underground and circumspect, because mundanes will AUTOMATICALLY connect us with the popular tropes of the moment
- <Vyrdolak> (2) Everyone was so shocked and disappointed by how 20/20 came out--WTF did you honestly EXPECT?
- <Vyrdolak> (2) I'm someone who's NEVER been shy (over the last 30 years) about talking openly about fringe culture, NEVER used a pseudonym
- <Vyrdolak> (2) I've been on TV, newspapers, Time-Life books as a queer, a Pagan, a vampire--and I'm still saying, DON'T DO IT
- <Vyrdolak> (2) Times have changed for the worse and we have no chance of coming across well now
- <Sanguinarius> (3) Don't show feeding, for goodness sake... that's just sensationalistic.
- <CorvisNocturnum> (1) The first obvious positive is that exposure is the first step in new people to find us that may not have realized what they were can find a support group, a learning place, and advice from people who have been through the same things.
- <CorvisNocturnum> It also is a tool to educate the mainstream to break stereotypes. Knowledge is the first thing needed in order to create understanding; the next phase is to accept even if it isn't their thing that the community means no harm. Great steps have been

made in the metaphysical community in being less hostile.

<CorvisNocturnum> (2) The negative side about it is it open us up to ridicule, media loves to cause a sensation for ratings with little regard to the lives of those most directly affected by their 'news' and disregard the consequences. People can lose jobs, children etc.

<CorvisNocturnum> It's been said "The problem with being completely out like Michelle Belanger, Zilchy, etc. is that people have nowhere to hide if/when things get ugly.

<CorvisNocturnum> They have minimal worries about losing their jobs or their families" and I agree with that. Some of us are fine being on the front lines, the public attack comes with the territory. I'm not concerned about earning a living as I have no job to lose – others aren't so lucky.

<CorvisNocturnum> We can't go back and erase the bad press.

<Zero> 1 - We are in much better control of the community's media image. We have had a huge interest from outsiders, and kept the Jenny Jones incidents down to a bare minimum.

<Zero> We've made a complete 180 from the late 1990's and it's about damn time.

<Zero> It's important to let the media-savvy people deal with the media. it's also important to throw them something, or they'll go interviewing "JS" and let him speak for us.

<CorvisNocturnum> Exactly. I'd prefer Michelle, Laycock, etc. than "JS". To think he wanted to represent US

<Lono> 1: I thought Anshar's piece on Hannity (FOX) was done well... but in general I'm against it... except for Michelle's Paranormal State appearances but they don't necessary says she's a psychic vampre so no problems there

<Ravena> If they stand to lose a job, they should keep themselves out of the media completely.

<Sanguinarius> I usually just ignore them or reply back something discouraging like "I'd probably freeze up on camera" or something.

<Sanguinarius> ESPECIALLY ignore them if they don't write to the proper email box.

<Gabby> @2: I think the negatives aren't always the representatives fault having been on TV for the National Geographic Taboo special... the company pushing forth the work changes it to their liking.

<Lono> I find personally I have better results with written interviews than anything else... because I'm careful of what I write.

<Lono> 2) Negative impacts... I've noticed an increase in bloody evangelicals trying to spread the word of Christ and crap... and convert us... or save my soul... you have no idea how many personal emails I get concerning those.

<CorvisNocturnum> Lono, the problem is media gets more attention that writting. Even Joseph Laycock will tell you that.

<Vyrdolak> This is really, REALLY bothering me, folks.

<Vyrdolak> The fact that there is so much emphasis on media appearances, media inquiries.

<Vyrdolak> The VC doesn't seem to realize that THINGS HAVE CHANGED.

<Sanguinarius> How have things changed?

<Zero> @Vrydolak - things have changed, but not in any one direction.

<Vyrdolak> I've been doing open public relations work for three decades and the timber now in "normal culture" is really different than it was.

<Vyrdolak> There is far more hostility and oppression now than there used to be.

<Zero> "Normal" people today are what "crazy fundies" were ten years ago, for one.

<Zero> On the other hand, a clever media spin has a LOT more influence now than it did even five years ago.

<Vyrdolak> The media in general kowtows to the Religious Right, politicians do, heck they OWN a lot more of it.

<Vyrdolak> Which was a goal they started working toward in the 1980s.

<Zero> Ten years ago, Adam Lambert wouldn't have been ON TV to get criticized for his AMA performance.

<Zero> But ten years ago, no one would have bothered to call in their complaints, either – it's a catch-22.

<Zero> The public overreacts because they're losing their stranglehold on culture and they're upset.

<Vyrdolak> But there is such disconnect within the vampire community between our attitudes and the "mundane" world's.

<Zero> Yea, the vampire community people tend to be intelligent thinkers, not blind reactionaries.

<Zero> It's a handicap when dealing with the public :)

<Vyrdolak> You have to remember that the media IS NOT OUR FRIEND. Never, ever, ever, not ever!

<Sanguinarius> Never.

<Sanguinarius> Not unless we control the media.

<Merticus> We received "better" press from FOX than Disney (ABC).

<CorvisNocturnum> A double edged sword, media will always distort things. I'm amazed FOX did the best job this fall.

<CorvisNocturnum> @Merticus: Stop reading my mind :)

<Zero> I am utterly shocked that FOX and FOX affiliates have given us the fairest shake so far.

<Lono> The more people that are mediapires that aren't experienced and do stuff that should be kept behind closed doors, the more hate mail, and trolls I seem to have on my forum.

<CorvisNocturnum> @Vyrdolak: It has always been ratings. It's business.

<Merticus> Media is not a "friend or foe" - it's an information conduit at best, at worst a thorn in our side.

<Vyrdolak> They want ONE thing, viewers, and that means sensationalism.

<Zero> Yeah, and that's why controlling the way they portray us means

walking a fine, fine line.

<Vyrdolak> @Corvis: Of course it is, and the thing is, fringe groups tend to seek out attention.

<Vyrdolak> Precisely because they feel misunderstood and marginalized.

<Vyrdolak> and it's ALWAYS a mistake.

<ThePinkLady> @Vyrdolak: I'm convinced that if this community -- filled with media fringe connections -- can pull it together, we can make a documentary that fairly represents us and market it competently.

<ThePinkLady> Problem is, we all have day jobs.

<Vyrdolak> @ThePinkLady: YES, we need to make our OWN media.

<Zero> Even pros don't get it right every time, and get "gotcha'ed".

<Zero> That's why they have staffs of spin artists.

<Lono> We inadvertently have gone back to the Jerry Springer, Ricki Lake days, while having the best intentions... its not really the time.

<Zero> I don't think we've backslid as you're suggesting, Lono.

<CorvisNocturnum> Lono, sadly I doubt there WILL come a time.

<CorvisNocturnum> Look what they did to Belfazaar.

<Vyrdolak> There's also the question of, WHY? Why should we? What do we really gain?

<Ravena> I don't know that the media wants the real truth.

<Ravena> That vampires are like everyone else.

<Ravena> They work, pay bills, raise kids.

<Ravena> There's nothing amazing or supernatural.

<Vyrdolak> @Ravena: That makes us more threatening, not less.

<Ravena> I've never felt threatened by vampires.

<Ravena> But then maybe I wasn't a "normal" seeker.

<Ravena> And I don't do media.

<ThePinkLady> I also think that there's some inter-community problems with the media, that only certain "types" get represented.

<Vyrdolak> Thirty years of Pagan public relations and it was all wiped out by Buffy and "The Craft".

<CorvisNocturnum> We keep "JS" as THE vampire in their minds as being separate Vyrdolak.

<Merticus> Well I didn't receive one (1) negative e-mail from the Atlanta Journal & Constitution article and we received over 5,000 hits in 2 days. We even received a couple media inquires but no religious nuts, people asked to be turned into vampires, etc.

<Gabby> When Mairi and I did the National Geographic show... the team filming us did want to learn, genuinely, they did try to be fully honest and truthful.

<Gabby> I think not all media are the 'bad guy'.

<Lono> Heck I'm staying hidden because my day job isn't secure yet, and when my school found out about my night side... they pretty much asked me to leave (not a fan of hippies anymore).

<Vyrdolak> Remember McCarthy? Communists were just like everyone else;

they had jobs and paid their bills, etc

<ThePinkLady> @Lono: My day job isn't the most secure either, but I'm at the point where it's starting to matter less.

<ThePinkLady> The more my job becomes take-it-or-leave-it, the more adventurous I get.

<Merticus> Those who can't "afford" to go on record with the media shouldn't. Under any circumstance.

<Zero> @Vrydolak: The communists also had shitty press representation!

<Gabby> Gee that sounds familiar.

<CorvisNocturnum> That's true. I don't get a day job because my work has a place - to help different communities.

<Vrydolak> The vampire community needs to get over its sense of being unique and learn the lessons of history, that's a big problem with us.

<Zero> @Vrydolak: You're right about that - I think we do need to engage the press, but very, very carefully.

<Vrydolak> I CAN afford to go on record and I won't. I know better than to be "freak of the week" for anybody.

<Sanguinariu> I don't need to be freak of the week to "prove" to anyone I am the way I am.

<ThePinkLady> 2: Somebody's mentioned Jade's slipup during the ABC 20/20 thing, right?

<Zero> Ok, ABC 20/20 is a worthless tabloid and they ruin people's lives for a living.

<Zero> It was a damn MIRACLE that the dirt they dug up was that mild.

<Zero> ABC 20/20 was probably looking to do an hour-long expose on a cult that was going to eat your kids. They had to WORK to twist what they did, and "the children" didn't come into it.

<xeurika> The shame and travesty of the ABC 20/20 show is they had good footage, and chose not to use it. From what I understand.

<Lono> It's kinda like naively thinking there's going to be an innocent person on 48 Hours....

<Zero> @Xeurika - Yeah, that was also what saved us. They had to scrape the bottom of the barrel, and the barrel we gave them wasn't all that deep.

<Merticus> They had interviews from Michelle Belanger, RavenHarte, Cole, Sasha, VEWRs research, and some others - all tossed aside for much of what was shown in New Orleans.

<ThePinkLady> @Merticus: Sad, really.

<CorvisNocturnum> Because Belfazaar started with fangs they kept him, deleted his best showing of feeding homeless etc.

<xeurika> IMO, a press release with them saying "um, wtf" might be in order.

<ThePinkLady> I think that if there's ever a Twilight IV (conference) we should have a serious discussion about making a community

documentary.

<Vyrdolak> @Zero: But, WHY? Why do we need to engage the press? What benefits do we get from that?

<Zero> @Vyrdolak: They'll get their yellow story any way they can. We can steer them, or we can let "JS" be our spoksvamp.

<Vyrdolak> But you're assuming that the "JS's" are actually taken seriously. They're not.

<Lono> I say let "JS" have all the attention... he's an excellent patsy.

<Vyrdolak> And you're also assuming that we'll be seen as somehow different from the "JS's".

<Vyrdolak> We're equated exactly, no matter what we say.

<Zero> @Vrydolak: One of the ways that society has changed is that what passes for "professional journalism" today is yesterday's tabloid rag. They're not above making shit up, but they're lazy. They'll use the story we give them, if it's there.

<ThePinkLady> Vyrdolak: Um, yeah.

<CorvisNocturnum> @Vyrdolak: And are we to allow it and let it go?

<Vyrdolak> @Zero: "Professional journalism" was a blip in history, anyway. Journalism has just gone back to what it was pre-1940.

<Zero> @Vrydolak: Damn right!

<CorvisNocturnum> Journalistic integrity.... repeat after me.

<Zero> "Journalism" for most of its history has been exclusively the domain of sensationalism and government propaganda.

<Merticus> Well this should be known... for every "media inquiry and article/show" that comes out - there are an average of two (2) that are shot down, refused, or dismantled because they aren't in the spirit of what we feel comfortable working with/answering/portraying.

<xeurika> They had the goods to make it better and decided to go with the worst.

<Vyrdolak> @Merticus: I think ABC 20/20 show demonstrates that we can't predict who is/will be reputable.

<Vyrdolak> I can say, run away screaming from Paul Bibeau!

<CorvisNocturnum> Wasn't everyone's fault.

<Lono> The thing I specifically liked about Anshar's interview was that he dressed appropriately for an interview... no capes... no Victorian wear... it gave him more credibility just by his appearance and body language.

<xeurika> Hard to argue that Vyrdolak.

<Merticus> The people featured on 20/20 are just as much at fault in my view as ABC 20/20.

<CorvisNocturnum> Even O'Mallie?

<Merticus> I'm speaking to Jade and scenes filmed in New Orleans.

<Zero> It's actually way less controlled than it used to be, some of the lack of standards work in our favor. anyone who can put words together gets followed around by all the others like a mama

duck. WE have been that mama duck.

<Sanguinarius> I wouldn't mind seeing Zilchy being interviewed. He's very factual, levelheaded and photogenic and communicates well.

<Vyrdolak> @Merticus: How can we control who ELSE appears in anything we agree to do? We can't say to these proposals, "give us an exclusive," now can we?

<Zero> @Merticus: I do disagree with that, unless the "fault" is being unfamiliar with how the media can screw you.

<Merticus> No, we can only be responsible and accountable for what "we" / "the individual who consents to a media request" relays in an interview etc. - and that is all that should be asked or expected.

<Lono> We can't... and its usually the loons (no offense and not intended to anyone here) that no one's ever heard of that the media usually gets a hold of.

<Zero> I would insist on a no-interview policy as a standard of behaviour for non-professional community members.

<Zero> Because unless you spin for a living, it's personally dangerous - it's for the safety of the individual, not the community.

<CorvisNocturnum> They are hard to untangle yourself from their views when it is done after the fact - cutting room floor I mean.

<ThePinkLady> @Lono: I think the unknowns have just as much to say as the knowns... but they don't have an outlet.

<Lono> I know, I used to be a NLE video editor.

<ThePinkLady> Marginalize the "unknowns" long enough, and they'll spill their story to whomever offers them airtime.

<Vyrdolak> Questions, also: Who do WE see as our target audience?

<Vyrdolak> What message are WE hoping to convey, and to whom? And how is that most effectively achieved?

<Zero> @Vrydolak: "We're ordinary folks; you've heard of us and we're not the freaks you might be afraid we are."

<Sanguinarius> I just don't want the psy vampires and new agers to make sanguinarians obsolete (in interviews).

<Gabby> I never had any safety issues after my interview. Surprisingly it was normal living after.

<Zero> @Gabby: I'm glad, and you're lucky!

<Lono> Just because you do have the opportunity to speak... doesn't necessarily mean you should... unless you want the media attention.

<Lono> In 12 years I've only done 2 interviews.

<Merticus> My primary interest is spurring academic/scientific interest - educating the general public is further down on that list if on there at all.

<CorvisNocturnum> @Merticus: Few people want to learn, just be entertained anymore.

<Vyrdolak> I've had more shit come down about being a Witch than a vampire.

<Sanguinarius> @Zero @Vrydolak: "We're ordinary folks; you've heard of us and we're not the freaks you might be afraid we are." <---
Mundane: "That's what I was afraid of"

<Vrydolak> @Sanguinarius: YOU ARE EXACTLY RIGHT.

<ThePinkLady> @Merticus: I have yet to find other Jewish vampires, and that's approaching people as a researcher, not a bloodsucker.

<Gabby> Agrees with Sanguinarius, just because my primary feeding is sang, I shouldn't be left out.

<Ravena> I don't think anyone is ever going to agree to not do media collectively.

<Ravena> There are too many who actually like it, and a handful who actually earn their living from it.

<Zero> Well, these days, most of them are DISAPPOINTED that we're not the freaks they feared we were.

<Zero> The rest of them won't be happy until we're all baptized and living in dry counties.

<Vrydolak> The fear of the aliens living in human society and subverting it is ancient and powerful.

<Vrydolak> We're safer being thought of as nutjobs, convince people there's something to vampirism and all hell could break loose.

<Zero> Our society doesn't fear that kind of subversion right now. Give it a few years, and that may change, but you need more homogeneousness for that to be the primary worry.

<Vrydolak> @Zero: I couldn't disagree more--people definitely fear subversion. Now it's terrorists and child molesters, but the fear is huge.

<Merticus> Aliens and vampires...

<xeurika> And bears. Oh my!

<Sanguinarius> Sanguinarians built this community from the start and psy vamps and other new ager types are marginalizing us within the community.

<Sanguinarius> Just thought I'd toss that out there.

<CorvisNocturnum> @Sanguinarius: Don't take it personally, things evolved... you are not forgotten.

<Sanguinarius> I've noticed it in the media portrayals.

<Lono> I agree Sanguinarius.

<Lono> To me I think the biggest marginalization of the sanguinarians occurred with oh I don't know the later versions of the Black Veil... and further attempts to domesticate the archetype.

<Vrydolak> @Sanguinarius: I think that's outside the topic -- and as far as mundanes go, vampires drink blood, end of story.

<Merticus> Educating the public is a farse... but individuals such as Laycock, Williams, Melton, etc. came across our community as a result of us being out there to find/podcasts/articles/etc.

<CorvisNocturnum> I found us by sites and interviewing Michelle Belanger.

<Sanguinarius> Williams?

<Merticus> DJ Williams, LCSW, PhD - Idaho State University
<CorvisNocturnum> And Martin Riccardo years back.
<Vyrdolak> Yeah, I read Williams. And I was in touch with Riccardo, way back, also Norine Dresser.
<Vyrdolak> She ran questionnaires in fan magazines.
<ThePinkLady> @Merticus: Poke around on WorldCat. There have been several vamp-related theses added to the database since 2007.
<Merticus> Yes, I have some of them ordered through ILL.
<CorvisNocturnum> Podcasts didn't exist in my early years researching subcultures
<Sanguinarius> I used to write and talk to Marty Riccardo.
<Vyrdolak> I'd like to address section (3) of this question, because that one really upsets me.
<Vyrdolak> (3) "What relayed information or demonstrations of feeding methods should or should not be broached when working with the media?"
<Vyrdolak> (3) None whatsoever. I don't even think we should use the word, "feeding," it's offensive and misleading.
<Vyrdolak> NO ONE reacts positively to the idea of being FED UPON, excuse me!
<Vyrdolak> I don't think we should even discuss that in public at all, in any way, even to answer a question.
<Sanguinarius> Don't show them feeding... *whines* ... it's tacky and sensationalistic.
<Vyrdolak> Media people who want to film "feeding" should be slapped down, it's like saying to a gay couple,
<Vyrdolak> "Can we film you having gay sex because our straight audience is curious to see what it looks like."
<ThePinkLady> @Vyrdolak: But what about the people who have no problems doing so?
<CorvisNocturnum> @Vyrdolak: Some wouldn't mind.
<Vyrdolak> Some people have no problem putting videos of themselves masturbating on YouTube, either.
<Vyrdolak> That doesn't mean that I would, and I'm not a prude.
<ThePinkLady> I have a hard time writing about what I do, much less talking about it. Others... they don't have that problem.
<CorvisNocturnum> It is private... but those who offer?
<Merticus> Other thoughts on (3) What relayed information or demonstrations of feeding methods should or should not be broached when working with the media?
<Lono> 3) Not be broached... telepathic scanning, reading ones emotions, any information regarding persuasion or the loss of free will... and maybe feeding through sever links.
<ThePinkLady> Donor screening. I laid into Jade for that one.
<ThePinkLady> Especially after she started fussing at Belfazaar about his interview.
<CorvisNocturnum> Yeah that was rude.

<Sanguinarius> The importance of getting your donors tested and that vampires CAN AND DO get diseases.

<Vyrdolak> Mundanes just get too wiggly about blood drinking.

<Vyrdolak> Not only does it gross them out, then they turn around and say...

<Vyrdolak> "See, those people are putting our kids at risk of AIDS by their unsafe practices."

<Sanguinarius> I know some who got AIDS. I got Hepatitis C, god knows who else got what.

<Sanguinarius> Kids should not blood feed to be cool.

<ThePinkLady> What Sanguinarius said.

<ThePinkLady> Maybe we should stonewall the media on it by saying "we'd slice someone open for you... but the risks involved... no."

<Zero> Hope I'm not retreading anything I missed while away, but I think that sang feeding is not media material; I know that the issues surrounding sang feeding need and deserve public education, but Vrydolak's statements about the exploitativeness of the media are true, and they will turn it into sensationalistic BS. Donor screening, yes, feeding methods, or public feeding, no.

<Gabby> I'm of the opinion no feeding should be taboo so long as it is done respectfully and safely.

<CorvisNocturnum> Dr. Phil even had that as a show.

<Vyrdolak> Well, I've said my say and I stand by it.

<Zero> Yeah, a public service announcement (PSA) about not feeding for "fun," man.

<CorvisNocturnum> I agree Vyrdolak but many won't for their 15 min of fame.

<Vyrdolak> Ha, my video class had an assignment about doing a PSA -- some of the high school kids did very clever ones.

<Zero> @Gabby: I agree, but there's a difference between "taboo" and "photogenic"... some stuff is really, really hard to spin, and it's better to talk about the PSA aspects than to "educate" middle America about the best way to get a vein.

<Gabby> And what if their interviewee does both?

<Zero> @Gabby: They can and WILL cut the info in favor of the spin they are aiming for.

<Zero> The media is not for education, it's for spin and image.

<Zero> They're I think actually ALLERGIC to actual information.

<Zero> Information is "boring".

<Vyrdolak> @Zero: The media is "allergic" to anything that loses eyeballs.

<CorvisNocturnum> Dangerous slippery slope there Zero.

<Vyrdolak> I think we have to resign ourselves to not being able to control what attention-hounds do with the media.

<Sanguinarius> "Drinking blood is dangerous and should not be done unless you really, really have to."

<Vyrdolak> The question under discussion is what WE should do/encourage.

<CorvisNocturnum> Safety, medical training, etc.

<CorvisNocturnum> Promote safe sex and testing donors.

<ThePinkLady> Encourage people to read up on it, talk to a professional blood-drawer, etc.

<Zero> @Sanguinarius: I agree - keep it to the soundbytes.

<Merticus> Why do you think the interviews were dropped on ABC 20/20?

<Merticus> They found someone willing to sang feed... they asked for that since the beginning of the initial inquiry.

<Merticus> It's why they wouldn't fly to San Diego to film Zilchy.

<Merticus> Among other things.

<Merticus> "Feeding" is a component of almost every television documentary/interest piece... they will keep searching and asking until they find a vampire who will consent.

<Vyrdolak> When viewers can change channels or websites with one click, it's a job to hold their attention.

<CorvisNocturnum> Because they were not sensational enough of course.

<Vyrdolak> Mundanes will sit mesmerized watching people do something really gross -- like drink blood.

<CorvisNocturnum> Don Henrie did that and even the other Alts were horrified back four years ago on Mad Mad House.

<CorvisNocturnum> So how can the normals be expected not to be demanding for it?

<Zero> They're not interested in truth, so we have to tap dance a bit to keep their eyes on the right stuff. It won't always work. It's like trying to keep my cat's attention.

<Vyrdolak> They'll watch someone reasonable for about 1.35 seconds.

<Sanguinarius> So what do we do?

<Zero> Learn to dance faster!

<Merticus> There is nothing we can do... some of that can't be prevented since we can't readily control who does and doesn't appear on television.

<ThePinkLady> So why do we have to pander to that? Why not make our own informative documentary?

<Vyrdolak> There are ways to present information and hold attention, but only we care enough to produce something that does that.

<ThePinkLady> *I'm* not every television-watching moron.

<ThePinkLady> *I'd* watch an informative documentary.

<CorvisNocturnum> @ThePinkLady: We have talked about it and I think VVC should be represented on it.

<Sanguinarius> As long as it's out there and filmed interestingly...

<Vyrdolak> There are all kinds of tricks and rules and techniques, about movement and timing, etc.

<ThePinkLady> I know Twilight IV's been put off till the economy un-shits itself. So why not schedule some filming at this phantom Twilight IV?

<CorvisNocturnum> I wish...

<ThePinkLady> Most interviews are basically a hotel set.

<Merticus> We don't film at the Twilight conferences - it's a policy.

<ThePinkLady> Bleah.

<CorvisNocturnum> Sadly it might be one of the best ones Merticus.

<Zero> I think instead of producing our own, we need a proper publicist and media consultant, frankly.

<ThePinkLady> @Merticus: Not out in the open, just use it as a convenient excuse to gather photogenic and interested people.

<Merticus> Yes, but Daemonox would never consent to such either.

<ThePinkLady> @Merticus: Well duh.

<CorvisNocturnum> And she shouldn't have to.

<CorvisNocturnum> I believe in common sense.

<Vyrdolak> It was very funny reading the sci-fi convention's reports of interacting with the Twilight III folks!

<Merticus> We were on good behavior... one even took the VEWRS survey.

<Vyrdolak> They were sure they'd freaked you all out with their weird fans and funny hats!

<ThePinkLady> I can't remember who it was who did the doggy fortunetelling.

<ThePinkLady> That was cute.

<ThePinkLady> @Zero: The sci-fi person at Twilight III pulled a group of us aside for a fortunetelling involving a dropped toy dog.

<ThePinkLady> If travel and equipment is the only issue for such a thing, why not do it after hours at Twilight IV with *only* the interested people?

<Zero> To produce media that actually gets seen, it helps to have industry contacts. I know a lot of good documentarians who work out of their house and get viewed by no one.

<Merticus> Not enough "sane" and "reasonable" people can afford to go on camera... it's a VERY limited pool to pull from. The other issue that I think everyone is overlooking is marketability.

<Merticus> If you self-produce a one or two hour (I think it would need to be at least 3+ hours to capture diverse viewpoints) documentary on the "vampire community" you're going to have a very limited (likely under 10,000 people) viewership.

<ThePinkLady> @Zero: If we hosted it on Google Video and linked the crap out of it, it wouldn't matter.

<CorvisNocturnum> Anshar did well enough.

<xeurika> Indeed Merticus. I wouldn't mind radio or print, but video is a different story.

<Vyrdolak> What we need is a viral video... heck, By Light Unseen Media needs a viral video, for that matter.

<Zero> @ThePinkLady - I'm of mixed feelings about that. Stuff that happens on the internet is no longer completely irrelevant, but it's still way below stuff that happens on Discovery Channel.

<ThePinkLady> @Merticus: I'd be willing to come out for such an endeavor, little as it matters.

<Sanguinarius> What's a viral video?

<Zero> It's when everyone and their brother links a video clip to each

other.

<ThePinkLady> Something spread easily by word-of-mouth.

<Zero> It refers to the "viral" spread of ideas.

<Vyrdolak> A video that gets linked and sent everywhere.

<Sanguinarius> I could help with that.

<xeurika> Not a bad idea, Vyrdolak well produced videos, we'd need to come up with a message first.

<CorvisNocturnum> Seriously guys, in three years the vampire craze will die out... and what will they remember about us? Rod Ferrell, "JS", Don Henrie and Jade?

<Vyrdolak> There are tricks to making them viral -- it's what gets the attention, it might not have much substance itself.

<Lono> Then there's always the movie/documentary "Vampyres".

<Merticus> Well if someone wants to do another "Vampyres The Movie" be my guest... hope they have the time, equipment, contacts, patience, neutrality, knowledge, and financing to do such...

<Lono> Anyone have TrueBlood viral media campaign handbook?

<ThePinkLady> @Lono: They also did a bunch of viral marketing things like blood packs in vending machines, etc.

<CorvisNocturnum> I would love to but writing doesn't pay well... unless you're Stephenie Meyer.

<ThePinkLady> @Corvis: Sometimes just the act of writing matters.

<CorvisNocturnum> I know... I put my heart into it PinkLady.

<Vyrdolak> We'll be better off when the current popularity does dies down.

<Zero> @Corvis: Some of this media effort is to minimize HOW much those types get on TV, and how much they'll be remembered. without intervention, this last Halloween season would have been a disaster.

<Merticus> 2010 shows no sign (from what I'm aware of) of being anything less than the same media frenzy of 2009. More videos actually.

<ThePinkLady> I'm working on an opus that won't sell well... but I'm making it academic, dammit.

<Vyrdolak> This is the WRONG time for us to be doing a lot of open PR.

<Sanguinarius> @Vyrdolak: Why?

<Zero> @Vyrdolak: Definitely! If they would stop asking us if we'd like to live in a house and stop being polite.

<Vyrdolak> Because at times of big "vampire crazes" (Dark Shadows, Anne Rice, Twilight)

<Vyrdolak> Real vampires tend to be judged through that lens, and actually taken LESS seriously.

<CorvisNocturnum> New Anne Rice coming.

<Gabby> @Corvis, vampire based?

<CorvisNocturnum> No Lestat played by someone new.

<Sanguinarius> Maybe it's a good thing that we aren't taken seriously?

<Sanguinarius> Ever thought of that?

<Zero> I refuse categorically to be taped or audio-recorded because I

don't think I'm capable of keeping up a useful tapdance

<Merticus> I refuse all on-camera interviews.

<CorvisNocturnum> @Merticus: Why is that?

<Merticus> I value my privacy among other things.

<CorvisNocturnum> Ok, just curious. papers online make you well spoken and media usually demands a face with it.

<Merticus> The media often asks for a face, I don't consent... they get what they get. Why I'm satisfied to this day with 95% of everything that has ever been quoted in print from me.

<Merticus> Does anyone else have anything to add on topic B before we move to topic C?

<Merticus> **c. The VVC Book Project Update & Progress: (1) Publishing consent forms need to be completed and sent to Sanguinarius. (2) What publishing options are available to us for having the book published? (3) What steps need to be completed on the project? What are the timelines for those steps?**

<SphynxCatVP> C-2) self-publishing options I know of would be Lulu, Amazon's CreateSpace, and XLibris. I *don't* know the relative costs. CafePress and the like probably could publish, but IMO wouldn't be suitable for a book project.

<SphynxCatVP> Vyrdolak would have more information on the Amazon option, I know she's using that.

<SphynxCatVP> LadyCG (and probably some others) would have information on the Lulu option.

<Sanguinarius> I'm taking over the book project.

<Sanguinarius> I need people to send in their forms. I emailed everyone who had a submission.

<Vyrdolak> Okay, here's what I have to say about (c):

<Vyrdolak> (2) If you want By Light Unseen Media to formally publish this, I need concrete consensus that everyone agrees.

<Vyrdolak> Because it's a big financial investment for me, I won't treat it differently than any of my other titles.

<Vyrdolak> I can't afford to invest a lot of time/money and then Michelle runs off and pitches the book to Llewellyn or something.

<Vyrdolak> We need to nail down a commitment.

<Vyrdolak> (3) Steps: I'd need completed manuscript, consent forms for each contributor, decision on authorized contact (signs contract) and who gets the money?

<Vyrdolak> Then, I'd issue a standard book contract.

<Vyrdolak> And I'd take it from there, in terms of production and getting the book out.

<Vyrdolak> So that's what would be involved if you want me to publish it for the VVC.

<Vyrdolak> I'll handle all of the production end and getting it into print and e-book channels. Solicit blurbs, reviews, etc.

<ThePinkLady> Do the authors have the right to pull their piece if they don't like the editing?

<ThePinkLady> Sanguinarius, did you ever send an answer about my final cut question?

<Zero> What's a "contributor" in this case?

<Sanguinarius> I have to have the consent form, even if you don't include your real names on it, but you got to snail mail it to me.

<Sanguinarius> So I'll have a hard copy in case we use a old type publisher.

<CorvisNocturnum> @Vyrdolak: Could use you help personally?

<Lono> Do we have to? Even if we signed it and sent it via email?

<Sanguinarius> Yeah, Vyrdolak, I want you on my editing team *doe eyed look*

<Sanguinarius> If you scan the form with your signature and email me a copy of the scan, I suppose that might work.

<CorvisNocturnum> I would strongly suggest someone(s) with good graphic skills create a cover and a logo for publishers imprint as we may have future books and having a solid presence as an imprint is helpful. This avoids the whole 'look I can self publish on lulu' where most don't think as highly of that. And the cost is much less using Createspace - we'd already have it to upload to Amazon for faster printing/selling. They do an incredible quality job. Allure of the Vampire was done on Createspace and its feel is equal to Llewellyn's.

<Sanguinarius> Does it cost less on Createspace?

<CorvisNocturnum> No Lulu is more I switched to Createspace.

<Vyrdolak> @Corvis: If I do it, I'll assign it formal ISBNs and publish it through Lightning Source and several other venues.

<Vyrdolak> It will be a fully professional release.

<Vyrdolak> CreateSpace does a fine job, but I can do better :-)

<CorvisNocturnum> Maybe you should have done Allure of the Vampire for me.
*

<Vyrdolak> @Corvis: I would have been interested! But then you'd have to contract with me and you might not want to do that.

<Zero> Professional imprint is better than vanity press, if someone can swing it.

<Lono> If you need help with a book cover... I'm available.. I just need ideas.

<Vyrdolak> I'd like to get some non-fiction in BLUM's catalog.

<CorvisNocturnum> @Zero: Dark Moon Press used to be vanity but is now Small Press status.

<Zero> I thought it was always Small Press.

<CorvisNocturnum> Lono, I may take you up on that.

<Vyrdolak> If the author doesn't pay, it's not vanity, whether it uses POD printing or not.

<Sanguinarius> Will Createspace get one into other bookstores or just amazon.com?

<CorvisNocturnum> Well you pay for copies :)

<CorvisNocturnum> @Sanguinarius: Amazon, then if you push Barnes & Noble.
<Vyrdolak> @Sanguinarius: Amazon claims it's changing that and getting Createspace more distribution, but I think you have to pay for "Pro" status.
<Vyrdolak> What, people don't want me to publish this? I'm crushed.
<Sanguinarius> Any idea how much Pro status is?
<CorvisNocturnum> I think \$39 was what I paid. Worth it.
<CorvisNocturnum> You do but I did Allure of the Vampire as a Pro plan.
<Vyrdolak> It's similar to LSI, you pay set-up fees -- not too bad, but still fees.
<Sanguinarius> What's LSI?
<Vyrdolak> Lightning Source, that's what I publish with.
<Lono> I saw that Lulu, has a new thing where you can get their books on the shelves of Barnes and Noble.
<Lono> Unless I read it wrong and it was just Barnes and Noble online.
<Vyrdolak> I get all my titles into Ingram and Baker & Taylor, Espresso Book Machine--orderable through ANY bookstore.
<Vyrdolak> We're in Indiebound, the database for indie bookstores.
<CorvisNocturnum> Usually it means it is ordered from Amazon by way of request.
<CorvisNocturnum> Like Vyrdolak just said. Hop on computer or ask help desk at Borders or Barnes and Noble.
<Sanguinarius> That's what I want for my Dictionary of Vampspeak *Sangi murmurs* but would it be ok for the VVC book?
<Sanguinarius> Or are we going to get with Vyrdolak for the VVC book?
<Vyrdolak> Sanguinarius, sounds like you don't want to let go of this project!
<Sanguinarius> What? Let go? Am I supposed to?
<Vyrdolak> No!
<Vyrdolak> It's just that, either By Light Unseen Media publishes the book, or not.
<Sanguinarius> I don't know. I'm making this up as I go along.
<Vyrdolak> If you'd like to handle it all, that's cool. But I need un-ambiguous information here.
<Sanguinarius> I'd LOVE help.
* Sanguinarius feels in over her head.
<Merticus> Feel free to write up whatever and I'll mail out to everyone in the group... this is "you guys" project... just message me what you want me to send out, etc.
<CorvisNocturnum> It isn't fun or easy but I have been at it for five years now.
<CorvisNocturnum> To be a real publisher, it is very time consuming.
<CorvisNocturnum> Marketing is more effort than writing, it never stops.
<Vyrdolak> Yes, it IS my day job -- and I need to beef up my front list.
<Merticus> Ok, so Vyrdolak is helping Sanguinarius.
<CorvisNocturnum> I'll offer my assistance too :)
<Merticus> Ok, Corvis also.
<Merticus> I'll assume all of you will let me know what/when I need to mail stuff out to the group.

<Lono> It's been two weeks and I'm still waiting on getting my ISBN listed or searchable ISBN. How long does it normally take??

<CorvisNocturnum> Lono shouldn't take more than a few days.

<Lono> Anymore topics Merticus?

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

<Merticus> If there's nothing more to be said for topic C and nothing else to be brought up for discussion (topic D) I think we can leave it there for tonight.

<Merticus> **IV. Business Reminders**

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

<Merticus> Thank you all for coming!

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