



# Vampires Today: The Truth about Modern Vampirism

*Joseph Laycock*

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What does it mean to be a vampire? Is vampirism a religion? Is it a fantasy? Is it a medical condition? Based upon extensive interviews with members of the Atlanta Vampire Alliance and others within vampire communities throughout the United States, *Vampires Today: The Truth about Modern Vampirism* looks at the many expressions of vampirism. In this book the reader will meet "lifestyle" vampires, who adopt a culture and a gothic ascetic associated with the vampires of art and legend, and "real" vampires, who feel that they must actually consume blood and/or psychic energy for their well being. The reader will hear from members of the Atlanta Vampire Alliance and will learn about the Order of the Vampyre, the Ordo Strigoi Vii, and the Temple of the Vampire.

Throughout the world, untold numbers of people are identifying as "vampires" and following the ways of "vampirism." In the past two decades, modern vampirism has come under increased study, yet most scholarship has portrayed the vampire as a cultural phenomenon and at worst as a religious cult.

Having interviewed many vampires across the country, both "lifestylers" and "real," even those "reluctants" who try not to be vampires, Laycock argues that today's vampires are best understood as an identity group and that vampirism has caused a profound change in how individuals choose to define themselves. As vampires come "out of the coffin," either as followers of a "religion" or "lifestyle" or as people biologically distinct from other humans, their confrontation with mainstream society will raise questions about the definition of "normal" and what it means to be human. Here, readers will find the details of real vampire life—including vampire role-playing games, grimoires, "vampyre" balls, vampire houses like House Sahjaza and House Kheperu, the vampire "caste" system, and other details—utterly fascinating.

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