

Excuse me, your fangs are in my neck

Researchers put the bite on vampires

by Karen Splawn

Along with ghosts, witches and other assorted hairy, scary things, vampires are very much a part of Halloween.

In fact, according to a Las Vegas Review-Journal article, they may be a part of every-day life, too.

Norraine Dresser, a writing instructor at California State University at Los Angeles, said today's blood suckers aren't conspicuous, but they do exist.

Dresser, for her book *American Vampires: Fans, Victims, Practitioners* interviewed people, many of them women, who said they drink blood.

"Many vampires are

marginal people, and having this hidden life is attractive to them because it gives mystery and glamor to an otherwise drab existence," Dresser told a reporter.

Many of these vampires, who probably don't live in caskets and wear menacing clothing, have friends who act as blood "donors." What they really are, Dresser pointed out, are "hemaholics," who need a 12-step program to break their addiction.

The Vampire Research Center of Elmhurst, N.Y., said there are about 725 princes or princesses of darkness in the country, with the most being in California and New York.

"This is only the tip of the iceberg," warned Stehen

Kaplan, executive director of the center.

People may not have to worry about the assault of vampires as much as they do the entertainment and news media, which won't let the vampire mystique rest.

On Halloween, Sally Jesse Raphael will feature author Carol Page and her book, *Blood Lust: Conversations with Real Vampires*. (One can expect at least one tabloid show to have a segment on persons who lust for blood.) Moviegoers can look for yet another version of Dracula next year.

So readers, beware—and watch your necks closely.

HALLOWEEN

from page 9

the dearly departed to celebrate El Dia de los Muertos, the Day of the Dead.

They bring flowers and eat picnic lunches on the gravesites. Some of those picnic baskets contain such spooky edibles as bread shaped like a skull and crossbones, and candy in the form of skeletons, skulls and caskets.

The purpose of the holiday isn't a time of mourning, but of celebration. In case their relatives in the afterlife get hungry, families leave sweets at the tombstones.

French mourners don't opt for lunching in cemeteries. Instead, perhaps as a reminder of their country's domination in the fashion world, they decorate tombstones.

The Belgians have candlelight processions to honor the dead. Poles believe that God visits cemeteries to count the souls of those who have been saved.



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Halloween is a varied, creepy affair in the states

by Karen Splawn

The United States has many different customs and traditions for holidays and Halloween, that creepiest of all days, is no exception.

If you're born on Oct. 31 in Maryland, it's believed you can see and read things in dreams.

Some also believe on All Hallow's Eve there are ways for a person to discover who will be her or his spouse:

—Some suspend apples, a practice done in Maryland, with names of possible suitors written on them. The name on which-ever apple the woman bites into is the one who will be her husband (this also applies to bobbing for apples)

—In Tennessee, a woman can peel an apple and them toss the peeling over her left shoulder. The letter formed from the peeling is the initial of her future hubby

—A lovelorn lady in North Carolina may look into a midnight on Halloween and see the man she will marry look over her left shoulder. Children in that state used to put corn meal by the side of their beds and wait for ghosts to use the cornmeal to spell out the

name of the man each would marry. Also, people who hold up a candle and look in a mirror will see the face of their future mate.

It may have something to do with the infamous Devil's Night in Detroit, but bonfires are popular in Michigan on the night of ghouls and goblins. Halloween bonfires originate from the Druid practice of building hilltop fires to celebrate other festivals.

Those looking to predict the future of others should try this Maryland tradition at a Halloween party: bake small cakes and place a dollar bill in one, a ring in another, a rag in a third and thimble in a fourth one. Whoever does this will be able to tell who will be rich, who'll be married, who will be poor and who will earn a living.

Strange customs aren't just for Oct. 31—there are ones for All Saints' Day, such as one where residents of New Orleans wash tombs and light candles in the cemeteries. Street vendors in the city sell plenty of gumbo, snowballs, pralines, balloons, mechanical birds and toy skeletons to help people celebrate.

Trick or Treat at:

Brewsters

Party starts at 5:30 a.m.
Johnson & Tofte will host \$200 for the best Halloween costume
ID required

Carlos Murphys

Oct 30, 9 p.m.
Monster Mudslide Party
\$4 Kaluha drinks in a glass you can keep.
ID required

Elephant Bar

Starts at 9 p.m.
Costume contest with prizes
Halloween drink specials
ID required

Shark Club

Starts at 10 p.m.
Costume contest—\$1,000 for the best costume plus other prizes.
ID required

Sneakers

Starts at 10 p.m.
Costume is required
Featuring Bio Hazard and Leisure Lizard
ID required

Sportspub

Costume Contest—\$400 for the best costume plus other prizes
Meat Puppets record release and compact disc give away
Beer—\$4 all you can drink
ID required