



## Sample Media Questions for Chris Benson, author the *Vampyre 2000* series

- 1. *Vampyre 2000* is a complex and fascinating read. How did you come up with the story?**

*Vampyre 2000* (pronounced “vawm-peer”) was really a compilation of ideas that I had kept in my head and in a writing journal for years. I had read vampire novels, watched vampire movies and even seen them on television. In all those instances, it left me feeling that if I would’ve written the story I would’ve done it differently. So I finally decided to write one and do it my way.
- 2. Tell us more about the world you have created.**

I tried to create a world that mirrored our own. One where most people are completely oblivious to the dark realities that are hidden within it. Although it is a fantasy world and I had the liberty to make its environment any way that I needed to fit my needs, it is based on an actual metropolitan city in America; The Bay Area. Since no one in their right mind would truly believe that vampires actually exist, the original working title of the book was “*You Wouldn’t Believe Me if I Told You*”.
- 3. Before you began writing, you kept a journal. How did that help you create such a captivating world? Can you tell us a little more about your process?**

In the beginning, that journal was the single most important tool for writing this story. Whenever I had an idea, anything at all, I wanted to record it there. I would throw out the weaker ideas and focus on the stronger ones. When I finally began to write Book One, the characters of Rita and Cornelius had already been developed as well as his unique origin. I kept ideas in that journal for three and a half years, without it I’m quite sure that some of those ideas might never have made the books.
- 4. How is this book different from other vampire books out there?**

There are many things. It’s adult in nature without being overly explicit or excessively vulgar. It is based on a real world, one that the reader will have no difficulty in relating to. *V2K* contains a great deal of realism; for instance, the way in which the vampires feed is written with a lot of detail. But I think the biggest difference is the treatment of the vampire. Subtle things, as well as his origin, separate Cornelius from every other vampire out there.
- 5. How did your background as a history major play into the story? What research did you have to do?**

It helped me to keep everything in context while writing this story. Even though this is a fictional story, I wanted the reader to feel that the book was taking place in our world. I did this by showing that Cornelius’ world shared the same history with our own; that they were one and the same. I researched West African vampire legend, used an actual slave ship that was prosecuted in 1807 for illegal slave trading, mentioned the events that led up to The Civil War and one of its actual battles.
- 6. Your goal in writing this book was to make modern day vampires seem realistic. What are some of the ways that you accomplished this?**

I wanted to establish the theme of realism immediately with Cornelius’ origin. I wanted his back story to be believable and not come across as magical or fantastic. Another way was to define how a modern vampire would live and the extraordinary abilities that one would have. In my story vampires do not turn into bats or clouds of mist. They lie in their true state, a corpse, during the day and they need to drink human blood for survival. Although they are superior to a normal man they are also extremely vulnerable. A stake

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through the heart, beheadings and especially fire are some traditional ways to kill my vampires. As a matter of fact, since Cornelius does not hold a job, own a car, have a driver's license or pay for car insurance, he uses the subway and takes the bus. And the money that he uses to clothe himself and do the things that he needs comes from the victims that he preys upon.

**7. Cornelius is a complex hero. Did anyone from your life inspire him? And how did you balance his good qualities with his negative qualities?**

Many people have claimed that Cornelius is more than a simple extension of myself. I'm still thinking about that, but the readers must remember that even though he has become such a likeable character he is still a vampire. Whether he wants to or not, he must violently end the lives of innocent people in order for him to survive. Even though he is the perfect killing machine, Cornelius has retained his early nineteenth century morals and ideals as well as much of its dialect. Somehow he has been able to maintain a high level of dignity and sophistication throughout the dark and violent life that he has led; a life that he never wanted and never asked for. Being a good man at heart, he has always regretted and had great remorse for what he has had to do.

**8. How did your childhood fascination with fantasy play a role in creating the books?**

It taught that me that there was no limit to my imagination. My imagination is vast and probably infinite. Fantasy and Science Fiction books showed me that if I can picture it in my mind that I can write about it.

**9. What author would you say had the greatest impact on your style?**

Hmm, that's a tough one. At first I wanted to say John Milton and then I thought about William Shakespeare. Both of them were responsible for cultivating my love of the classics. But I can't forget about H.G. Wells either.

**10. What is it about love that can be so redeeming in characters like Cornelius?**

Love can make people do things that they wouldn't normally have done. It opens their eyes to what is important and shows them a path through the wilderness. Love has the power to take hold of the deepest recluse or a violent killer and give their life something worth living for. It provides purpose to those who had none.

**11. Where can we learn more about your books?**

Yes. Visit the **V2K** website at: <http://www.vampyre2000.com>

**12. Do you have anything else in the works?**

I do, a story titled "**OS**". It's a Science Fiction story set twenty five years into our future. It is a harsh and bleak world where man is forced to ask himself a frightening question. Should the activity inside of a computer chip be recognized as another form of life?

**FOR INTERVIEWS:**

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