

Questions for Cristina Limpiada

by Anthony Hogg

Hi Cristina. Here are my questions about your article, “Weird Looking Romanian Skeleton Unearthed in Transylvania Suspected as the ‘Vampire’ Myth” (*Science Times*, February 18, 2017).

You can add your answers to the questions in **bold**. If you would like me to add your website or anything else to the bottom of the article, let me know.

1. Hi Cristina. Can you tell me a bit about your writing background? How did you get into it?
2. I notice from your resume¹ that you are currently employed as a Website Content Writer, writing content for the Electric Scooter website and product reviews for Amazon. Can you tell me a bit more about what’s expected from you in these roles? Are you one of those people who get paid to write fake reviews² that I’ve read about?
3. Let’s focus a bit more on your article. How did you come across the story? It hasn’t been given too much media coverage. Why did you decide to write about it?
4. Did you read about the dig in any other sources apart from the two you cited, Phys.org and CityNews.com.au?
5. Did you contact anyone associated with the dig? Were you aware that it had actually been arranged by ArchaeoTek? You didn’t mention them in your article.
6. Unfortunately, I also noticed a few mistakes in your article. I wrote about them, too.³ For instance, you referred to moving graves, when your sources were actually referring to the migrations of Szekely people to the area. You also said Coco James lead the team (she didn’t). Are you surprised the site’s editors didn’t pick up on errors like that?
7. The biggest sticking point, to me, was the vampire angle. Despite acknowledging Coco James’ theory that the body had been accidentally dropped into the grave, you added: “While the confusing grave number 42 is still questionable for the common people thought it will give a clue to the vampire myth in Romania.” Neither James, nor your sources said anything about vampires.

In fact, ArchaeoTek’s director, Andre Gonciar, said: “The Science Times presentation has added the fantasy factor in order to boost ratings – no vampires were directly involved.”⁴ Is this correct? Did you make it up or do you have an undisclosed source for your claim?

¹ <https://talent.hubstaff.com/profiles/cristina-limpiada/resume> [accessed March 2, 2017].

² Jessica Carson, “I Get Paid to Write Fake Reviews for Amazon,” interview by Evan V. Symon, *Cracked*, August 31, 2016, accessed March 2, 2017, <http://www.cracked.com/personal-experiences-2376-i-get-paid-to-write-fake-reviews-amazon.html>.

³ Anthony Hogg, “Vampire Burial Uncovered in Romania? The Strange Case of Grave 42,” *Vamped*, March 2, 2017, accessed March 2, 2017, <http://vamped.org/2017/03/02/vampire-burial-uncovered-in-romania-the-strange-case-of-grave-42/>.

⁴ Andre Conciar, email message to the author, February 24, 2017.

8. Cristina, were you reporting on the dig or sensationalising it? If so, why?
9. You've written lots of articles for *Science Times*. Can you walk me through the process involved in getting articles published on their website?
10. I've had a look through your resume and don't see any science background mentioned. What qualifications did *Science Times* require when they agreed to publish your articles?
11. As a professional writer, you've probably come across a lot of commentary about our "post truth" era, "alternative facts" and "fake news" in the media. How important is truth in journalism to you?