



eagle eye

OCT 2018

SPOOKY EDITION

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A History of Halloween: The Origins of the Spookiest Night of the Year

By Avinash Kumar

Every year, millions of trick-or-treaters flood the streets of just about every major city and suburb in the country. Halloween has become a pinnacle of American life and culture; yet the roots of this holiday are as far from the Americas as possible. What is the true origin of Halloween, and how has it been influenced over the years to become a day of tricks, costumes, and, above all, candy?

Ancient Origins

Halloween's origins date back to the ancient Celtic festival of Samhain. The Celts, who lived 2,000 years ago in the area that is now Ireland, the United Kingdom and northern France, celebrated their new year on November 1. This day marked the end of summer and the harvest and the beginning of the dark, cold winter, a time of year that was often associated with human death. Celts believed that on the night before the new year, the boundary between the worlds of the living and the dead became blurred.



On the night of October 31, they celebrated Samhain, when it was believed that the ghosts of the dead returned to earth. In addition to causing trouble and damaging crops, Celts thought that the presence of the otherworldly spirits made it easier for the Druids, or Celtic priests, to make predictions about the future. For a people entirely dependent on the volatile natural world, these prophecies were an important source of comfort and direction during the long, dark winter. To commemorate the event, Druids built huge sacred bonfires, where the people gathered to burn crops and animals as sacrifices to the Celtic deities. During the celebration, the Celts wore costumes, typically consisting of animal heads and skins, and attempted to tell each other's fortunes. When the celebration was over, they re-lit their hearth fires, which they had extinguished earlier that evening, from the sacred bonfire to help protect them during the coming winter.

All Saints Day

On May 13, 609 A.D., Pope Boniface IV dedicated the Pantheon in Rome in honor of all Christian martyrs, and the Catholic feast of All Martyrs' Day was established in the Western church. Pope Gregory III later expanded the festival to include all saints as well as all martyrs, and moved the observance from May 13 to November 1. By the 9th century the influence of

Christianity had spread into Celtic lands, where it gradually blended with and supplanted the older Celtic rites. In 1000 A.D., the church would make November 2 All Souls' Day, a day to honor the dead. It's widely believed today that the church was attempting to replace the Celtic festival of the dead with a related church-sanctioned holiday.

All Souls' Day was celebrated similarly to Samhain, with big bonfires, parades, and dressing up in costumes as saints, angels and devils. The All Saints' Day celebration was also called All-hallows or All-hallowmas and the night before it, the traditional night of Samhain in the Celtic religion, began to be called All-Hallows Eve and, eventually, Halloween.

Halloween in America and the Origins of Trick-or-Treating

Celebration of Halloween was extremely limited in colonial New England because of the rigid Protestant belief systems there. Halloween was much more common in Maryland and the southern colonies. As the beliefs and customs of different European ethnic groups as well as the American Indians meshed, a distinctly American version of Halloween began to emerge. The first celebrations included "play parties," public events held to celebrate the harvest where neighbors would share stories of the dead, tell each other's fortunes, dance and sing. Colonial Halloween festivities also featured the telling of ghost stories and mischief making of all kinds. By the middle of the nineteenth century, annual autumn festivities were common, but Halloween was not yet celebrated everywhere in the country.

During the second half of the nineteenth century, America was flooded with new immigrants. These new immigrants, including the millions of Irish fleeing the Irish Potato Famine and the English, helped to popularize the celebration of Halloween nationally; they brought with them customs from their native country. Borrowing from these Irish and English traditions, Americans began to dress up in costumes and go house to house asking for food or money, a practice that eventually became today's "trick-or-treat" tradition. Young women believed that on Halloween they could divine the name or appearance of their future husband by doing tricks with yarn, apple parings or mirrors.

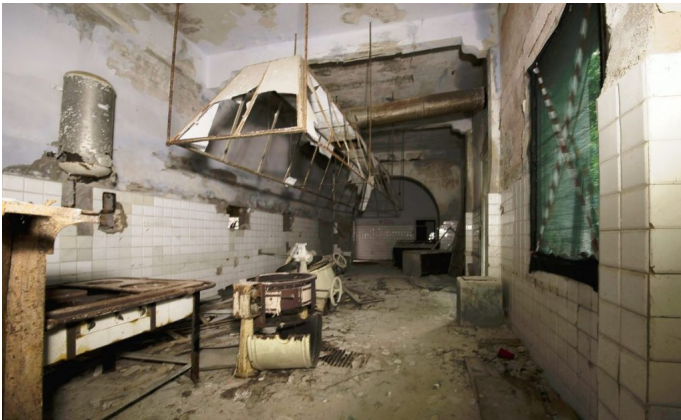
In the late 1800s, there was a push in America to mold Halloween into a holiday more about community and neighborly get-togethers than about ghosts, pranks and witchcraft. At the turn of the century, Halloween parties for both children and adults became the most common way to celebrate the day. Parties focused on games, foods of the season and festive costumes. Parents were encouraged by newspapers and community leaders to take anything "frightening" or "grotesque" out of Halloween celebrations. Because of these efforts, Halloween lost most of its superstitious and religious overtones by the beginning of the twentieth century, and became a day known for scares, tricks, and lots of fun size candy bars!



HAUNTED PLACES

By Yuchi Zhang

As Halloween approaches, stories begin circulating about certain places where the ghosts of the past still linger. They can be broken houses or forgotten graves, but some of them can be a little more surprising, such as deserted islands and crumbling hotels. Here is a list of some of the most haunted places on Earth:



1. Poveglia Island - Northern Italy

This infamous island may look rather pleasant, but in truth, it has a long and storied history. In the beginning, during the time of the Roman Empire, the island housed the dying and sick to protect the rest of the people from their horrific diseases and ailments. It was reused during medieval times to deposit victims of the bubonic plague. Here, piles of corpse were burned to the point where a large percentage of the soil was

human ash. Finally, in 1922, a mental hospital was built on it. Doctors were reported to abuse and experiment on the unfortunate patients, whose screams were said to be heard from the mainland. With this much death and horror behind this islands innocuous image, it isn't surprising that it is said to be heavily haunted.

2. Tower of London - England

An iconic urban landmark of London, this historic castle rivals Big Ben and Tower Bridge in fame. With crowds of tourists and brightly lit grounds, this is not the first place you would look for ghosts, but the castle holds a grisly history. In 1483, the two princes, Edward V and his brother Richard, disappeared here. They were rumored to have been killed by their uncle Richard III. In 1536, this castle served as the infamous execution site of Anne Boleyn, the infamous second wife of King Henry VIII. She was Queen of England from 1533 to 1536, and her marriage to King Henry led to religious upheaval throughout the country. Visitors to the castle have reported disembodied laughter and spectral figures wandering the castle grounds. Having withstood centuries of war outside its walls and torture within its bowels, this building is now known as one of the world's most haunted castles.

3. Raynham Hall - England

Pleasant and unassuming from its exterior, Raynham Hall is a rather splendid country house in Norfolk county, England. With vast, picturesque grounds and rustic architecture, it is also the origin of arguably the most famous ghost photo in history, the famous Brown Lady of

Raynham Hall. The Brown Lady has been witnessed several times throughout the building's history by guests, photographers, and investigators. Rumored to be the ghost of Lady Dorothy Walpole, she is described as having a worn brown dress and empty eye sockets. The Brown Lady is still said to be seen wandering the building, however very infrequently.

4. Bhangarh Fort - India

Said to be the most haunted fort in the country, Bhangarh Fort is a mysteriously abandoned fortress in the hills, a few hundred miles away from Delhi. Well preserved walls and crumbling buildings rise out of the grasslands, completely empty. Reports of paranormal activity are so



numerous that visitors are banned from approaching the area at night. The fort was originally built by Bhagwat Das, the former ruler of Amer, India, for his younger son. The exact reason the fortress was deserted is still unclear, but legends state that a wizard cursed the fort after he was rejected by a princess living within the fortress. Later, it is said that the fortress was invaded and sacked, killing everyone inside. Apparently, the ghosts of the both the wizard and the princess continue to haunt the fort's ruins. When one gazes upon Bhangarh Fort's eerily desolated remains, it seems as if this legend may hold some truth within.

5. St. Augustine Lighthouse - United States

Located in St. Augustine, Florida, this lighthouse is famed not only for being incredibly picturesque, but also for its numerous ghost stories. This lighthouse was built in 1874 and stands at the north end of Anastasia Island. For centuries, this lighthouse has been maintained and kept, and it still works today. Numerous people died during its construction, and several of its later keepers passed away unexpectedly. This has led many to believe that their spirits continue to roam the grounds. Many have reported hearing ghostly echoes on the stairs and seeing shadowy figures roaming around the lighthouse at sunset, but nobody can confirm these sightings for sure.

6. Greyfriars Kirkyard - Scotland

This graveyard is home to one of the most aggressive ghosts in the world, the Mackenzie Poltergeist. During his lifetime, George Mackenzie was a Scottish lawyer and writer. His spirit is claimed to be released in 1999, after a homeless man broke into his mausoleum for a place to sleep. The Mackenzie Poltergeist has been terrorizing visitors ever since. People who enter the graveyard have apparently left with bruises and scratches, as well as other injuries. There have been numerous attacks, collapses, and even deaths that can be attributed to this vengeful spirit. In addition, the graveyard is next to The Covenanter's Prison, a building that once housed several thousand members of a failed revolution under exceptionally brutal conditions.



October Playlist 2018

*For the cuffed-jean quirky
teens of the academy <3*

- ▶ **Orlando** 3:02
Blood Orange
- ▶ **Change Your Ticket** 4:26
One Direction
- ▶ **Thunder** 5:14
Roy Blair
- ▶ **Only Angel** 4:51
Harry Styles
- ▶ **Breeze Off the Pond** 4:11
Justin Timberlake
- ▶ **Everybody Wants to Rule the World** 4:11
Tears For Fears
- ▶ **Robbers** 4:14
The 1975

ASBESTOS: GOVERNMENT APPROVED DEPOPULATION

By Kaileann Villnueva

Within the span of your life, you may have heard about asbestos. According to the ever so reliable Wikipedia, asbestos is best described as “long, thin fibrous crystals, with [visible fibers] composed of millions of microscopic "fibrils" that can be released by abrasion and other processes” (Wikipedia, 2018). Back in the olden days, asbestos was praised for its ability to resist heat and fire, sound absorption, and affordability. For this reason, it was dubbed a miracle mineral and used in plenty of houses’ insulation across the nation. However, its ideal properties proved worthless when it was discovered that the material was incredibly hazardous to our health. Inhalation of asbestos fibers can cause several types of cancer, mesothelioma, asbestosis, and death. Fortunately, precautions have been taken and asbestos became increasingly banned internationally at the end of the 20th century (though 70% of the world is still awaiting its illegalization).

However, it has recently come to the attention of the media that asbestos has made a comeback in late August of this year, even among the threats of silica becoming the “new asbestos.” Where, you might ask? If you’ve ever been to a dollar store, specifically the infamous Dollar Tree, you might have seen their extensive stock of low-quality school and art supplies. That’s right—asbestos was found in Dollar Tree art supplies—particularly crayons by the brand

Playskool. Though this does reflect poorly on quality control at the Dollar Tree, it also unravels a much more ominous theory I have developed.



Asbestos was found in crayons sold at the Dollar Tree. If a parent is buying crayons for their child, the loving approach to this would be to purchase a classic box of Crayolas. However, not all families are this financially blessed and must resort to the low-quality supplies offered at the Dollar Tree to make the most out of their money. Essentially, though the Dollar Tree is open for everyone, it’s main customers will often be low-income families who need to stretch every dollar based purely on my observational studies and findings. Let’s continue. If these asbestos-infested crayons are available for purchase at any Dollar Tree, they must have missed quality control in the factory, as do most things that wind up there. Do not be fooled—the state has the statistics on who shops at what stores. This means that the state government has allowed

for these items to be available to the poor.

Now, why would the government allow for these lethal items to be sold to the poor? The answer is simple: to solve overpopulation. Overpopulation is an increasing issue for the human population as time continues. The more people there are, the fewer resources become available. The chances of overexploitation of our nonrenewable resources also endanger generations to come and the earth itself. It has even recently become popular to encourage people not to procreate through the slogan, "Before your seduction, think footprint reduction." By allowing asbestos to make a return, the government can find success in killing off the poor and reducing the population state by state. Along with this, the asbestos was specifically found in crayons. Young children are often prone to eating crayons due to their colorful and bright appearances. This further proves that the government is commencing the purge and targeting the weak and underprivileged. This would mean that the entire federal government is behind this, making it a nationwide conspiracy. As for us, I recommend staying as far away from any low-quality art supplies for as long as possible. Thanks to my psychic abilities, I sense that the markers are next.



Ghosts:

Fact or Fiction?

By Rocco Tropea

Ghosts are an interesting topic. Some firmly believe in them, while others are skeptical. With the spookiest time of the year upon us, the question still remains: are ghosts real?

The truth of the matter is that *no* scientific evidence has been found to prove the existence of ghosts, spirits, or supernatural beings. Even people who dedicate their entire lives to proving that ghosts are real have not been met with a single scrap of hard evidence. What they *have* been left with is very convincing *anecdotal* evidence. If you know anything about the scientific community, you know that anecdotal evidence is useless and doesn't count as proof, but to the average person, just one "paranormal" occurrence can lead them to believe that ghosts are real without a doubt.

Because anecdotal evidence can feel so powerful and convincing, many are quick to throw logic out the window. Sadly, this phenomenon is easily exploited by mediums and TV shows that know how strong the culture is surrounding ghosts. In reality, mediums are con artists that take advantage of people's sorrow or grief to make money, and "ghost hunters" on TV are pseudoscientists that use bogus terms to make ghosts feel more believable than they actually are. Terms like "energy" are constantly thrown around without any real definition or meaning. Couple this with "real experiences" from "real people" and you

have an audience that's convinced ghosts are real, even though no evidence has been shown and everything they've seen has likely been completely fabricated.

The main point here is that anecdotal evidence can be really convincing if you're not careful, and when people take advantage of it, it's no wonder that so many people believe in ghosts.

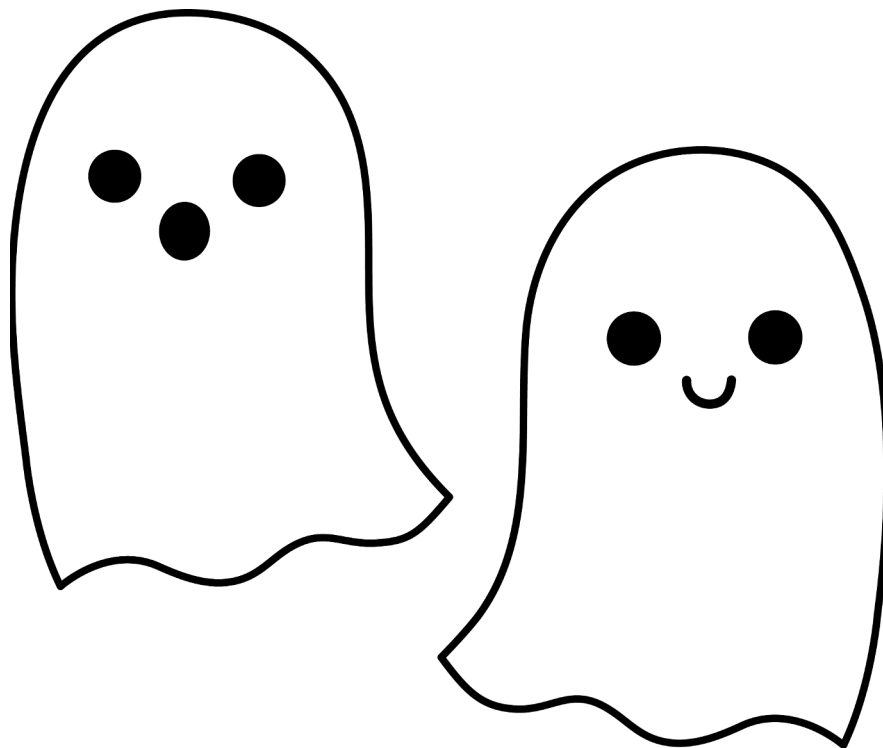


But what if *you* are convinced that you've seen a ghost? You know the TV shows are fake and the stories are completely made up, but what if *you* have truly seen something supernatural? Before you go around preaching to the world about the paranormal, remember that the human mind is very powerful. As the placebo effect has shown us time and time again, just *thinking* or *believing* that something will happen can very easily make it happen. Thus, if you believe in ghosts and your heart is beating a mile a minute, then even the tiniest unexplainable action will send you spiraling. Those "footsteps" might have been loud, but it was probably just the house settling. That

door may have slammed shut all by itself, but perhaps it was caused by a simple draft from a nearby window. The general rule is that when something “paranormal” happens, if it isn’t completely made up, then there’s probably some sort of logical explanation to disprove it.

Nevertheless, the question still remains: are ghosts actually real? At the end of the day, it’s up to you to decide. You may still be convinced that ghosts exist, but hopefully after reading this, you will at least take the stories you hear or the shows you watch with a grain of salt. Remember, people lie in this world, and your brain can easily lie to you. The movies that claim to be “based on a true story” can be easily exaggerated, and some historical “haunted house” may be exploited for tourism. Most of all, you yourself can easily fall victim to your mind’s own conviction. If you think you saw a ghost in front of you, then your brain will tell you that you *definitely* saw a ghost in front of you.

Overall, don’t let this article ruin your ghostly Halloween fun. After all, whether ghosts are real or not, the culture around them certainly is interesting to look at. However, keep in mind that sometimes there is another, more logical explanation compared to the classic “it must be a ghost” cliché.



WHAT HAPPENS IN THE DEAD OF THE STORM?

By Shreya Ghosh

The rain fell outside, making an uneven pattern of noises. It was a melody of melancholy, on a day where unknowing sadness had filled up the hearts and souls of each and every being, like poison would fill up a cauldron. The pain even filled up the air, suffocating the birds till their wings turned to a dulled lump of metal and drowned them in the lakes, which too had turned to the ugliest shades of unruly red.

Pitter Patter,

Pitter Patter,

went the rain, crying to the silenced world: *where had everyone gone?* The wind swept in, adding to the chorus of cries that echoed throughout the empty void. The trees wobbled back and forth, pleading for the noises to stop-the pain to stop. But the sadness of nature was unbearable, and it was killing everyone left as the time agonizingly went on. The leaves had swirled away, their



bodies breaking and parting, the animals being torn apart, and then there was an inkling of pain that shot up into the most massive of volcanoes MAKE IT STOP MAKE IT STOP PLEASE I BEG YOU MAKE IT STOP THE TREES ARE DYING AND THE BIRDS ARE NO LONGER FLYING-

Drip

There was a quiet house on the highest of hills, untouched by the bawling of the storm. It was so quiet that not even the woods shifted with movement, nor did the walls.

Drip

And there stood a man, a man who had just crawled out of the deepest caverns of the Earth. He was the last man standing, the only one who had made it to the top of the hill so high up, so, so, *unreachable*. The others-they didn't matter. Their deaths would come swiftly, leaving behind a mess for *someone* to clean up. Oh, how he hated cleaning up the messes. Especially the ones left behind by the dead bodies. After all, it would do nothing more than mess up his new boots. He liked his new boots, but not as much as he liked this.

Drip

In a far, far, away land was another young gentleman. He, too, had survived the storm. But barely, for his clothes were demolished and his face, painted with the colors of nature and death. Unlike the man with the boots, he heard everything.

Drip

'What is that awful noise?' he thought, wincing as the pain engulfed his figure, making him twitch like a funny man doing a funny little dance. He, also unlike the man with the boots, was not so far away from the storm.

The noise is blood, said the ground, quivering and shaking as its mouth split open into the widest of screams.

Down and down went the observant fellow, his screams drowned out within the wilderness and the crevices of the rotting Earth all laughing at him. And as he continued to fall to his death, unknown to the man with the boots, this is the story that the fire told him, the burning, raging fire that had taken over the world.

The fire said:

I do not kill for fun, I do not kill to harm. I kill because it is my duty to, and I wish to kill the man with the boots, for he has committed a sin that must be paid for: Ignorance. He has turned his back on the storm, on you, on mankind. He did it, all for his new, shiny, boots. However, I do not kill by wish. I kill without bias, which is why I regretfully send you to the darkest part of my soul. The time will come for the man with the boots to confess and die, but as you fall, let me tell you a story, let me pretend as if I am putting you to sleep, and not to death.

The clouds were dull, drooping as if somebody had sat on it from above. The sky was sprayed with ashes, making the day seem to be the same midnight blue as the night. It did not seem that only yesterday, our liquor had sharpened the world, opening new windows to gaze from when the previous views had grown to bore. It did not seem as if only hours ago, fire had cackled, giving bright life and colors to the faces of the world.

The people of yesterday had disappeared, and with every person gone, came their counterpart; an un-lively zombie that never learned to smile at others. The sky had left too, streaks of purple showing in the way it had gone. It was as if a new world had settled in, an alternate dimension built to mimic and mock what was there that wasn't worshipped. The remains of yesterday never really left, it was there in melancholy memories and left in the strangest places for people to find. And when they were found, a wisp of smoke floated down from the burnt trees, suffocating the town until their previous cries of joy had become laughs of sadness. There was no more magic, the beauty of the mankind had stopped altogether. Every movement was a mechanism, in way turning humans into little tin men.

But there was no more oil to tend to the damages done, the rivers of fossil fuels that once flew so freely were now embedded into the crumbling black mountains. The people of today deteriorate slowly, their coils twisting until they snapped and their cogs whirring until they broke. The pain was gone too, leaving everything behind except the knowledge. Mankind has done so much to obtain knowledge, and they hadn't lost it. In the suitcase that went to yesterday's world, only one thing was missing. It was the people.

UPCOMING HALLOWEEN MOVIES

By Roshan Patel

While Halloween may bring candy, sweets, and pranks, it also brings truly terrifying movies. This year was filled with horror movies such as *Halloween*, *The Nun*, *Slenderman*, and much more. Though this year may have brought many new horror movies to theaters, critics are highly excited for next year's horror movies, many of which are continuations of previously released movies.

1. IT: Chapter 2

The film adaptation of Stephen King's *It*, released in 2017, was a major hit. At the end of the original movie, the heroes promise to come back to Derry, their hometown, if Pennywise, an evil clown, ever returns. In *IT: Chapter 2*, Pennywise returns stronger than ever and is joined by many more monsters, creatures, and demons. The new movie will take place 27 years after the first, and will feature an older cast compared to the first movie. The film is set to release in September 6, 2019, and is sure to be a scare.

2. A Quiet Place 2

Based on monsters which can only hear sound, *A Quiet Place* was a unique type of horror movie which focused on how a family of five survived in the woods where the monsters thrived. The movie was suspenseful and filled with jump scares. Released in 2018, the movie was a hit. Now, less than a year later, Paramount wants to make a second adaptation of the movie. This time, however, it focuses on a different family as they attempt to escape the monsters and live another day. The movie will release in 2020.

3. The Conjuring 3

Considered to be one of the scariest series of horror movies produced, The Conjuring Universe will be adding another movie to its series: *The Conjuring 3*. This movie will be about a man who believes he is possessed by a demon. Over the course of the movie, the Warrens will be investigating his claims and discover some ghostly activity in the process. The film will also focus on the psychological effects of ghosts and paranormal activity. According to the Hollywood Reporter, the movie will release in 2020.

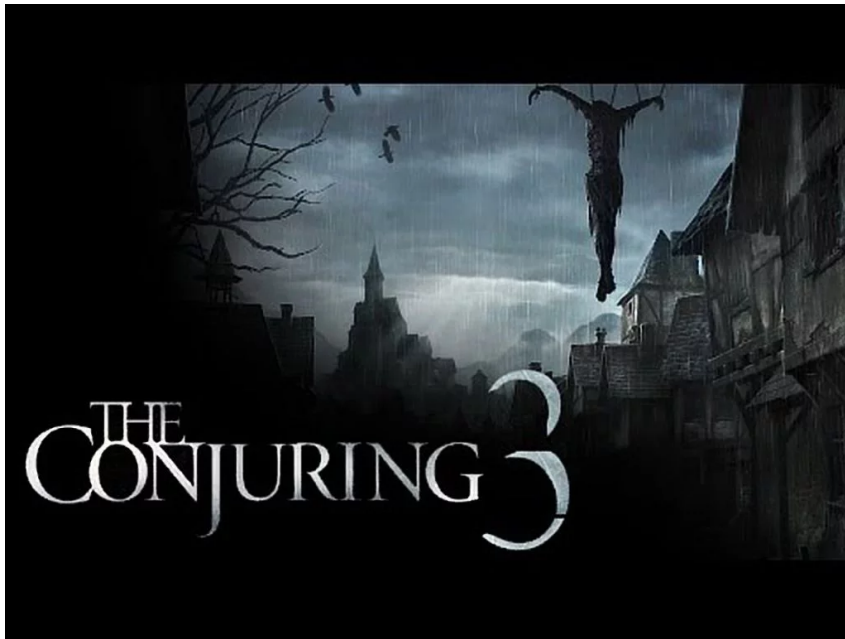
4. The Grudge (2019)

Based on a popular Japanese horror series, *The Grudge* will focus on a house which is cursed by a vengeful ghost that dooms those who enter it. The movie will be a psychological thriller and focus on a family which desperately tries to escape the house. The movie is set to release in

2019 and will feature many of the same characters as the original Japanese version.

5. Child's Play (2019)

Focused around the same evil doll, *Child's Play* will be the latest installment in the Chucky series. The movie will begin with a boy's mother giving him a doll which has an evil side. The movie will be closely related to the previous movies, and is going to include many of the same characters as the original movies. The movie is set to release in 2019.



Halloween and the American Economy

By Pranjay Kumar

We live in a dangerous time in history. Every year, Americans dress up in expensive costumes for various reasons. Children go door to door, begging strangers for candy, usually accompanied by an adult. Adults will go out with a few friends to a party. Despite the carefree atmosphere that surrounds Halloween, this harmless holiday has unexpected economic side effects on the economy.

First of all, it is a time old tradition for families to buy candy to distribute to children on this night. One might say that the price of candy is too low to fret about, however, about ninety percent of Americans celebrating buy candy during the Halloween season. This vast majority is predicted to spend upwards of 2.7 billion dollars on candy for this night. This massive amount is small when compared to how much Americans are expected to spend on costumes this year.

Costumes are the next thing that comes to mind when someone says Halloween. Around 75 percent of Americans celebrating Halloween will purchase costumes and accessories for one evening. Moreover, most people never reuse their costumes. With a projected 3.2 billion dollars being spent on costumes this year, it is an enormous waste of money. An interesting statistic shows that twenty percent of Americans, especially millennials, buy outfits for their pets. These outfits were mostly for cats and dogs, which it goes to show what lengths people will go in order to celebrate this holiday.

Surprisingly, Halloween supplies some positive impacts on the environment, although they do not outweigh the negative impacts. The impressive sum spent on Halloween helps kick off the holiday season, which includes the Thanksgiving and Christmas shopping season. The retail industry produces about 5.9 percent of America's GDP, and Halloween helps contribute to this massive amount. However, the effects that it has on American society far outweigh the economic benefits it holds. Besides costumes and candy, money is still wasted in the country. The total estimate for Halloween expenditures this year is nine billion dollars. With 175 million people celebrating and a record-breaking average of 86.79 dollars per person, Americans frivolously spend much money every year on Halloween. Every year with Americans spending increasing sums on costumes and candy, we must find a balance between fun and expenditures on this holiday.



THE FRESHMAN VS. SENIOR EXPERIENCE

By Shivam Syal

The following article comprises of a set of interviews conducted with a freshman and senior regarding the following questions:

- For the Freshman
 - What was your first impression of the Academy?
 - How do you see yourself as a senior?
- For the Senior
 - What was your experience as a freshman?
 - How has the Academy changed for you in the past four years of high school?

So, let's get started!

Freshman

Q: What was your first impression of the Academy?

A: My first impression was that this school would be super hard. Having all honors classes, I thought that the teachers would be crazy hard and won't even listen to us freshman. Also, I thought that I wouldn't understand engineering at all. But in all, that view has completely changed. The teachers are really nice and are always ready to help you. Engineering did not turn out to be rocket science, and I actually quite enjoyed it.

Q: How do you see yourself as a senior?

A: As a senior, I see myself as a busy student, as I will have to do college applications, and if needed, complete SAT subject tests, or the SAT or ACT. I'll also have to cope with school work, as the senior project will be going on at the time.

Senior

Q: What was your experience as a freshman?

A: As a freshman, we had an administration that really did not give us the best experience. The people in our grade didn't even know each other until the middle of October, after school started. Even at things like the freshman picnic, we didn't really have anything to do at all. It was not comprehensive at all, as at the time, we were just scared newcomers.

Q: How has the Academy changed for you in the past four years of high school?

A: I feel that it would definitely be the administration and the workload. The administration, as you guys had a good experience after coming to the Academy. Also the workload, as we have testing and college applications and all of that stuff, while we have to stay on top of school work.

Thanks for tuning into this interview!



By: Rocco Tropea

It was a chilly night like any other, and late as usual. I had been staying up late a lot more often than usual over the past few weeks, mostly because I just didn't want to sleep. Looking back, I can't really explain it; it was just the way things were.

That night, I was in my room watching TV. I wasn't really paying attention, just letting the calming sounds blend with the saturated pixels as I lay on my bed, thinking. My parents were working late that night. "No leaving the house," they had said, as if I had somewhere to go in the first place. I was content with where I was at the moment. Tomorrow was a Friday, no homework was due, the TV was on, it was late and I was up, tonight was....

Suddenly the phone rang. It was one of those digital landline phones with an annoying, clattering ring to it. I was jolted awake before I could doze off, pissed off at the fact that I had to get up from my comfortable position on my soft sheets, with the pillow against my head, the TV on....

The phone kept ringing, blaring and screaming throughout the calm, quiet house. I rolled off my bed and quickly walked out of my room to the kitchen. I needed to see the caller ID, because if it was my parents, I definitely *had* to answer. The room was pitch black. Switching on a light, I went over to the phone and squinted my eyes to read the caller ID: XXX-XXX-XXXX. I'd never seen something like that before. It wasn't a name, but it wasn't a *number* either. I knew better than to answer the phone from a stranger at 11:20 at night, but my curiosity got the better of me, and looking back, that's where it all really started....

"Hello?" I answered. The other end was silent, except for a faint rumbling noise in the background. It kind of sounded like a car or a washing machine running, but I couldn't tell. All I *did* know was that someone was there listening. A little freaked out, I went to hang up the phone, when out of nowhere a deep voice called out:

"I'm here."

What the hell was that supposed to mean? My heart began pounding, with my brain trying to rationalize the words that were just spoken to me. Words spoken from a creepy *thing* on an old phone in the dim light of my kitchen at 11:23 at night, a time I didn't feel so safe.

"Who is this?" I answered. I could hear breathing on the other end now, and the grumbling in the background had ceased. Whoever they were, they seemed calm and collected, whereas I could barely stand up. My fear quickly turned into anger as I went to hang up again, but this time, I was stopped by a light tap on the kitchen window. That was bad enough, but what made it worse was that the tap came through the phone, too.

"Are you ready?" the mystery man asked, breathing even more heavily now that he knew he

was closing in on me, closing in on my one-story house where my parents were gone and the kitchen lights were dim and I stood there with a phone shaking in my hands at 11:28 at night, vulnerable.

Ready for what? I thought, terrified. I wanted to lock myself in my room right then and there and call the police, but I was frozen. Plus, I didn't want to hang up. Within a matter of minutes I was experiencing the single most terrifying moment of my entire life. Never before had I felt so scared, so vulnerable, so frightened. I *should* have hung up and dialed 911, but looking back, I can't really explain it; it was just the way things were.



Suddenly music began to play over the phone. It was a slow, solo piano, coming out grumbled through the speakers of the phone, a tune that would have been calming in any other circumstance, but here it made me shiver.

Next there was a loud bang at the front door. I jumped, the phone slipping out of my hands and crashing to the ground. Now my daze was broken.

“WHO THE HELL IS THIS?” I shouted, bravely, yet shakily. The piano tune kept playing, somehow louder now than it was when the phone was next my ear. It seemed to fill the whole room, the dimly lit kitchen in my one-story house at 11:34 at night where some man, some *thing* was about to break in. There was another bang at the door, *and* at the window, *and* from the walls...from *everywhere*. It was methodical now, banging to some constant rhythm as I scrambled back into my room, the piano still playing its gentle melody over the phone....

I grabbed the baseball bat off the shelf in my room. I wasn't a gun, but at least it was something to make me feel somewhat protected. The banging continued, and my mind was racing. The air, which felt calm a moment ago, was now heavier. I felt like I couldn't hide and nowhere was safe. The house shook with each bang, the piano continuing to grind out its repetitive melody, not stopping, just like the banging, the banging of my one-story house in my dimly-lit room with the TV on at 11:37 at night and my heart pounding against my chest.

I looked over at the window in my room, which faced the street outside. Two yellow eyes stared back at me. I screamed, pushing my back against the wall with the bat held out in front of me.

“I see you, hear you, feel you,” the eyes echoed. It was the same voice as the man on the phone, this time clearer. Then the piano stopped, and the phone rang again, this time louder, much louder. There was not pause in between the ringing. It just kept going, filling the air more and more with its annoying blaring, the banging of the walls right along with it. My ears

began to bleed.

I stared into the eyes, breathing heavily and unevenly. I almost wanted to cry. Within a matter of seconds, I was cornered in my own room with my baseball bat out in front of me at 11:40 at night in my one-story house that was banging and yelling and screaming and ringing and surrounded by some being with glowing yellow eyes about to kill me. It was getting closer, the noise getting louder, the shaking of the house getting stronger.

“Oh god, oh god, oh GOD!” I cried.

Suddenly I lifted my head off my pillow, taking in a huge breath of air. The TV was on in front of me, on some channel with a man playing a dreary piano medley with a band....

My heart was still racing. What the hell had that been? Was it really a dream? It had to have been. Thank god it was, oh thank god it was. I breathed a sigh of relief, sinking my head back onto my pillow and looking up at the ceiling. My parents would never believe it when I told them. That was really something. At least now I was able to relax. After all, tomorrow was a Friday, the TV was on, it was late, I was still tired, I could feel my eyes getting heavy again....

Then the phone rang.

A CRITICAL VOTE

By Ariana Novo

Being aware of upcoming elections, especially such a major one in New Jersey, is crucial in our political environment today. Citizens next week will be voting for the one of the state's Senators. Although most students are not old enough to vote, it doesn't mean they are not old enough to have intelligent opinions on candidates that could affect their futures to share with their parents, siblings, or older friends. However, sometimes, people don't educate themselves about their potential representatives because of the sheer amount of information out there. I feel the struggle and thought that a quick article might provide some of the most divergent issues between the candidates running for the Senate position in the November 6th election.

Note: There are independent party candidates running as well but considering the minimal likelihood of any winning as well as the purpose of this article, I have decided to omit their information. However, I strongly recommend each reader to learn more about these elections beyond what is written here, including the independent candidates and the House of Representatives race.

Double Note: These are the positions the candidates are supporting right now. There have been some discrepancies between current stances and past actions but that is not covered in this article.

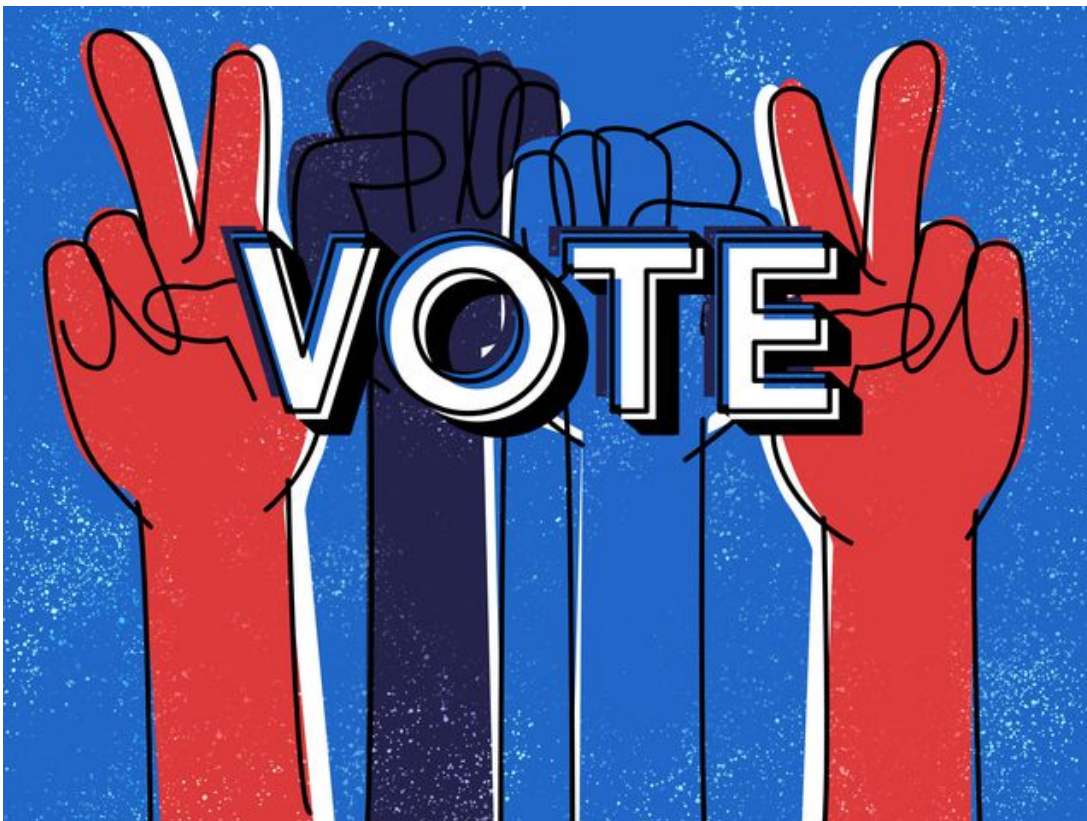


TABLE FROM "A CRITICAL VOTE"

| | | | |
|-----------------------------|------------|---|--|
| Bob Menendez (Incumbent) | Democrat | Health Care Menendez is sponsoring bills to slow the costs of medication. He is for the Affordable Care Act and against further decentralizing Medicaid. | Tax Reform Menendez does not support the law that among other things, sets a \$10,000 cap on tax deductions. |
| | | Gun Control Menendez wants to ban large capacity ammunition weapons and increase controls on obtaining firearms. | Legalization of Marijuana Menendez supports the decriminalization of marijuana but did not definitively respond to the idea of legalizing the drug, stating that he would like more health data first. |
| Bob Hugin | Republican | Health Care Hugin agrees that the cost of prescription drugs should be lowered. He would like to transform the Affordable Care Act to take out its “biggest flaws” and further decentralize Medicaid. | Tax Reform Hugin does not support the cap on tax deductions but demurred when asked about other aspects of the Tax Cut and Jobs Act of 2017. |
| | | Gun Control Hugin appeared reluctant to ban assault-style weapons but would like to expand background checks and bar those with mental illness from obtaining a gun. | Legalization of Marijuana Hugin supports the decriminalization of marijuana but strongly disagrees on the legalizing the drug on account of public health and safety. |

This chart depicts some of the most controversial topics between each candidate running for the New Jersey Senate seat.

MONSTER HOUSE ANALYSIS

By Shefali Awasthi

The thrill of sPoOkY halloween movies has stirred excitement among kids for centuries. Us millennials and generation z are no different. From Stephen King's "It" to "The Nightmare



Before Christmas," every age group can get a shot at being frightened in a fun, little way. However, "Monster House" is a complete and utter waste of time.

This disturbing movie has an even more vulgar storyline. The movie follows three very gullible, slightly delusional, but observant children voiced by Mitchel Musso, Spencer Locke, and Sam Lerner that believe that the house next door is alive...yes, I mean living. The trio think that they are some sort of heroes who need to destroy the structure before it eats trick-or-treaters alive on Halloween - because we all know that

our neighbors have a house that randomly eats people alive - and (oh no, SPOILER ALERT!) the "Harry, Ron, and Hermione" of the movie end up saving the day just in time... just like every other cliché movie ending...

There is honestly nothing special about this movie besides watching the animations dance away across the screen - which, by the way, doesn't even match up with the character's voice at times. For a movie released in 2006, I guess there is some limit to how advanced the technological aspect can be, but there is no real reason for the lack of creativity.

It's slightly ironic that Jane Boursaw, who's writing on behalf of *Common Sense Media* (an organization that writes media reviews based on parent and viewer experiences) believes that 'Monster House' boasts a top-notch crew, memorable voices that fit the characters perfectly, a great story, an ingenious backstory, and a twisty-turny ending." Everything about this statement is false and it obviously lacks all sensibility. People shouldn't be finding a carnivorous house that eats children up entertaining. It's horrifying. Another review describes the movie as "absolutely repulsive and garbage" and the Washington Post even calls it "... a grisly, often cynical piece of work whose joyless, aggressive spirit is made even less appealing by its soulless visual style." There was even one parent that was deeply concerned about why the movie wasn't rated PG-13. I honestly think this rated PG movie should be rated NW for "not worth it" or maybe a DW for "don't watch." The face shown in the picture above evidently shows the horror that is displayed in this *children's* movie and it is clearly inappropriate.

This movie, for whatever reason, also doesn't seem to have an ending. The plot takes so long to develop that the end seems rushed. It just stops and feels maddeningly unfinished compared to all the other spectacular Halloween movies out there.

How NOT to Carve a Pumpkin

By Archi Parekh

1. Carve with a kitchen knife.

Use a pumpkin carving kit specifically made for pumpkins. Kitchen knives are usually sharper than necessary for your pumpkin. Instead, opt for carving tools. You need your fingers to trick-or-treat!

2. Cut off the pumpkin's stem.

You're killing your pumpkin faster. The stem keeps the nutrients flowing into the pumpkin before it dies. It's like a battery for the pumpkin. By cutting the stem off, you diminish the nutrient source that will keep your wonderfully carved pumpkin from rotting. But, how can you get the seeds out? Cut a hole in the back of the pumpkin to scoop out the insides.

3. Leave seeds inside the pumpkin.

Speaking of the insides, do not leave any goop. The pumpkin will rot and get moldy.

4. Go freestyle.

Unless you are a professional artist, it is likely that you will ruin a pumpkin by not planning. As they say, if you fail to plan, you plan to fail. Use a template or sketch your design on the pumpkin before carving.

Here are some Awesome Pumpkin Carving Ideas!



LIGHTNING TREES

By: Adhya Khare

Disoriented wasn't the word I was looking for. It seemed too light for what I was going through.

It's 6:37 AM. Dark. A lone beeping sound playing in the background.

ti-du. ti-du. ti-du.

I squinted in the dark trying to make out shapes I could recognize, but it was all a black blur. I fumbled around my nightstand for my glasses, finding them did not help. I tried turning on my night lamp, but that failed too.

Power outage. Great.

I looked around the room again, seeing if anyone else was awake. I counted two odd human shapes. The third..... where was the third? Sophia?

I stumbled my way across the room to the window and drew back the curtain with my hands. Outside, it was starting to get lighter, coming closer to dawn. The drone of droplets on the roof echoed throughout the silenced room. Leaves rustled against each other in the tree outside.

A flash of lightning showed me what I never asked to see.

Sophia was in the oak outside our window. She wore a thick necklace and her eyes were empty. No..... no.

Another flash of lightning.

I saw a face. Distorted. The left side bigger than the right. But the eyes the same. Pitch black. No iris. He smiled.

There was no more lightning.

The next day, I rose from my bed. I didn't know how I managed to sleep, but I knew I was late. Rushing to get dressed, I ran to class. I didn't see three girls getting ready behind me.

In school, people whispered throughout classes. I tried to make out what their saying, but my mind was too rushed and panicked to find out. Did someone find Sophia? Should I call the authorities? Wait, why didn't I do that last night? How did I fall asleep?

"Alright everyone settle down."

I glanced toward the source of the voice. Distorted. Left side bigger than the right. Black

eyes. Iris. It was him. His eyes bored right into mine. He smiled.

Knock.

We all turned towards the front door. Sophia. Drenched. Wearing white.

“Ah yes. A new student to accompany the new teacher. Come here, Soph-*ie*.”

Sophia walked hypnotized to the front of the class. Around her neck, I saw marks.

Bruised marks. I whipped my head back the teacher. This time he wasn't smiling. And his eyes. No iris.



OCTOBER HORRORSCOPES

| | | | |
|---|---|--|---|
|  | <p>KEYWORD: BALANCE</p> <p>Find a happy medium between you and other's desires. Stay focused and embrace change.</p> |  | <p>KEYWORD: INSPIRATION</p> <p>Reflect on the people, places, and things that inspire you the most. Focus on staying in touch with your sense of self.</p> |
|  | <p>KEYWORD: ORDER</p> <p>Structure your life in a way that helps you, not hinders. Give yourself some space and find a balance.</p> |  | <p>KEYWORD: WISDOM</p> <p>Strive for a higher way of thinking. Seek advice and lessons from your most stable peers.</p> |
|  | <p>KEYWORD: PEACE</p> <p>Participate in things that make you feel calm. Having fun can also be restorative and re-balancing.</p> |  | <p>KEYWORD: JUSTICE</p> <p>Speak up for those most important to you. Embrace your community to avoid emotional drainage and defeat.</p> |
|  | <p>KEYWORD: STRENGTH</p> <p>Flex your emotional muscles, even when it's tough. Find what needs more stability and figure out how to adjust it.</p> |  | <p>KEYWORD: COURAGE</p> <p>Step into the spotlight. Let your voice be heard and use your platform for good by helping others to do so as well.</p> |
|  | <p>KEYWORD: CRAFT</p> <p>Learn new ways to think, speak, and write with clarity. Stay in touch with your emotions and feelings.</p> |  | <p>KEYWORD: CIVILIZATION</p> <p>Take time to explore new interests and topics. Use it to become more well-rounded and balanced.</p> |
|  | <p>KEYWORD: STRATEGY</p> <p>Plan out how you'd like to build up certain aspects of your life. Keep a balance between your wants and needs.</p> |  | <p>KEYWORD: LAW</p> <p>Set ground rules for others. Establishing boundaries where you know you need them is a key to a life of balance.</p> |

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