

Holiday tricks as well as treats Halloween spooks now have to fear modern world

My childhood memories have always focused around the holidays of my youth. My family's almost religious fanaticism with American tradition made holidays like the Fourth of July and Thanksgiving the most important of our gatherings. But one holiday specifically captured our creativity beyond all others. It was, of course, Halloween.

JOSEF ELCHANAN
Columnist



much, and there was a distinct feeling that the streets of our neighborhood were no longer safe. We were told to only go to houses of people we knew, and many houses were undecorated altogether. Even criminal activity, something that destroys the happiness of so many children around our country, could never destroy the holiday for me, however. There always were movements to make Halloween something evil, as if something was wrong with pretending to be a monster of some sort, but I always figured that with people out there who would try to murder children with candy, how bad could a witch or demon be?

Halloween is a time where we recognize our most basic fears and overcome them by dressing up as the thing that terrorizes each of us when the lights are out and the wind howls outside our windows. Ancient man did this, and we continue to celebrate the unknown with masks and stories of mysticism. With so much real evil in the world, I hope that children do not have to grow up without holidays like Halloween.

Tonight I will hopefully be able to read a horror story or two and watch a classic horror film to recall the days when I was young and untouched by the horrors of modern society.

Josef Elchanan is a senior business management major

Halloween may not be considered an American holiday by many people - and it certainly does not rate the respect of Independence Day - but it always held a special fascination to me that no other holiday could. The perfect mix of creativity and fascination with the unknown makes this holiday more a part of American legend than many people realize.

When the harvest moon filled the night sky, my mother and I would begin planning for the holiday with a zeal unmatched by almost any other activity through the year.

Martian creative skills passed on from our readings of horror novels, and recruiting my sister as an official decorator, the Elchanan family began its campaign to make each Halloween a little scarier than the previous years.

The big moment was the final decision on costumes. My mother carefully instilled the idea that "cute" costumes would not be tolerated, a stance my sister and I readily adopted, since we both knew that we were creative enough to look evil at least once a week. In fact, the only time my mother stepped in was when I had proposed dressing as a dead soldier, a costume she said would be in bad taste in a neighborhood filled with veterans.

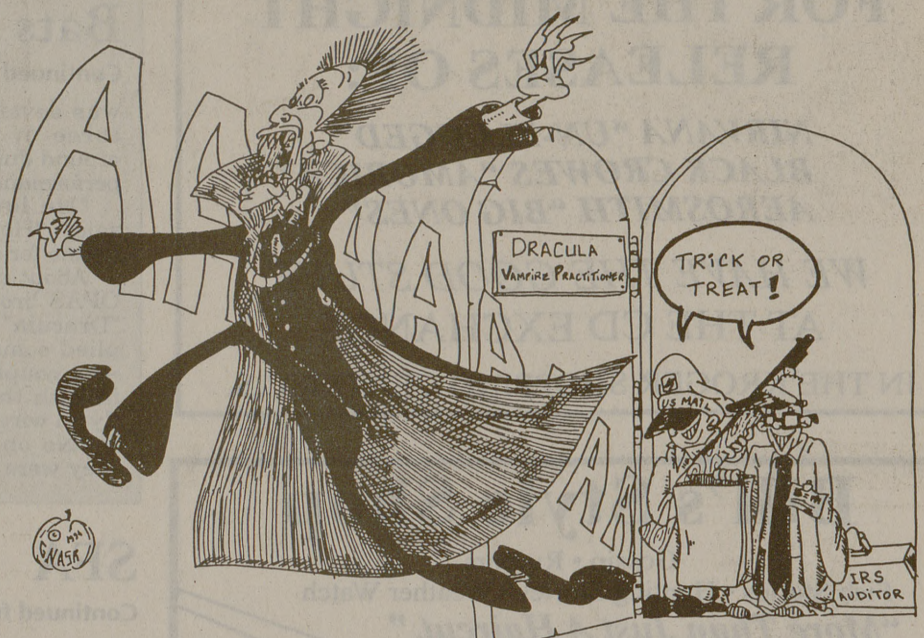
Then we would carve the pumpkin, taking the seeds out and roasting them for later snacks. Carving pumpkins should be considered an art form, the way people in communities around the U.S. take time to carve the perfect grimace or smile on a food product. After finishing off a couple of pumpkins, it came time to decorate the house.

We would darken the house and place eerie light bulbs in the windows and doorways, strips of cloth and black plastic bags dangling in the front entrance.

I was never encouraged to use spiritualists or ouija boards, that was not what we were after. It was simply fun to go trick or treating with my sister and to scare the pants off of little kids.

Things changed radically one year. For some reason, some maniac began placing glass shavings and other dangerous material in candy that they were giving to small children. The strict order came down that my sister and I were no longer allowed to eat our hard-fought booty of the night, for it was no longer safe. There was always the option of taking our bags to get X-rayed, but that seemed to take all the fun out of it anyway.

The next year, children stopped coming around as



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EDITORIAL

WHOOP! BONFIRE '94 If we don't build it, no one will

Got a little story for you Ags. Last Wednesday, the Fightin' Texas Aggie Bonfire broke loose and its logs toppled.

Bad Bull. Students stood amazed and eager while Bonfire coordinators and school representatives met. And with a loud "Whoop!" they all decided a toppled pile of logs represented too much hard work wasted and just would not do.

Good Bull. Thanks, too, for the donations from local businesses, including:

- A new centerpole from the City of Bryan,
- A centerpole hole dug by the City of College Station,
- Food from Domino's Pizza, Albertson's, Wings N' More, Dudley's Draw and others
- Cranes from H. P. Zachry Construction,
- And monetary donations from Ags across the state.

Students started working around the clock to (re)build the hell outta the Fightin' Texas Aggie Bonfire. But there was still more work to be done.

Meanwhile, the Fightin' Texas Aggie Football Team traveled to San Antonio and settled for a tie game with Southern Methodist University.

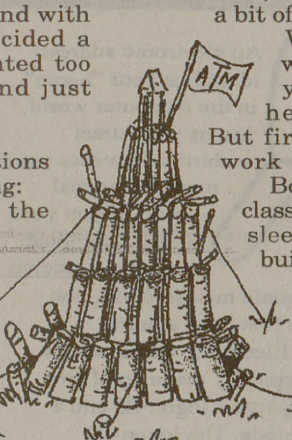
As our team will be traveling to Austin next weekend to play "that other school," t.u., they seem to need a bit of burning inspiration.

We might not be able to win the Cotton Bowl this year, but we can sure as hell saw the horns off. But first, there is still more work to be done out at the Bonfire site. So, between classes, studying and a bit of sleep, go out to Stack and build the hell this week.

All Zips, deadzips, sergebutts, pissheds, and fish are needed, whether you are experienced or not. There is no better time to learn than right now.

And if you are really red ass, you'll cut class, so the Fightin' Texas Aggie Football Team can beat the ever living ... hell outta t.u.

Besides there's no better way to trick-or-treat than with a red ass. Gig 'Em Ags!



MAIL CALL

Gentlemen giving up seats show slight sexism

It never fails. Every time the bus starts filling up, a guy offers his seat to a female. It's nice to see that sexism is still alive and well these days.

C'mon, isn't this really a holdover from the good 'ol days when women were thought to be fragile little flowers? Sure, you can argue that it's the courteous thing to do, that it's nice; but if that were the case, why aren't women standing up when I get on the bus?

What is physically wrong with a woman that she can't stand up for the remainder of her trip?

What really gets me is that women generally like this courtesy. They don't mind. They enjoy being treated special. And I can understand that.

When it's been a long day, I'd like someplace to sit, also. The next time you take the seat from the guy who is offering it to you, think about of what this may be saying.

I'm just waiting for a capable woman to yell out the next time she is offered a seat: "Who do you think I am!? Some fragile daisy? No, I am a woman, and I can stand just as good as you."
She's got my support.

Hugh Simonich
Graduate student

Reader offers opinion of Battalion columnists

I think it is about time The Battalion acquired at least a few columnists who possess a voice that would be considered

mainstream on this campus. The current staff is composed primarily of fringe-Marxists, lost souls and writers still mentally struggling through their adolescence. One would think after reading the opinion page, that you either have to be a card carrying member of the communist party or have a history of being institutionalized for psychological problems in order to qualify for a columnist position.

Joseph Elchanan: Believes that the U.S. foreign policy should be solely based on morality. He feels that the United States is imperialist because in the past we have sent troops places to protect U.S. interests.

Lynn Booher: In a constant state of cognitive dissonance. Thinks she is a feminist, but deep down you know there is nothing more she wants than to get married and have kids.

Elizabeth Preston: Embroiled in an identity crisis. Also does not like Ann Richards because she is not liberal enough, but she will vote for her anyway.

Frank Stanford: Has an exaggerated sense of his own entertainment value. Thinks every life experience he has had has resulted in some new revelation about his purpose in this universe. Aristotle want-to-be.

Michael Landauer: Elchanan's counter-culture protege.

Jay Robbins: Really believes that it is the government's job to deal with every little problem ever encountered. Thinks government intrusion is a good thing. Future editor of Pravda.

Erin Hill and Melissa Megliola: Never written anything of substance.

Aja Henderson: Only credible columnist on the staff. Keep up the good work!

Jim Staley
Class of '95

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Mars, Venus collide in romance

Differences between men and women stand out in account of a boy, a girl and her roommate

The remarkable differences between men and women were brought home to me recently. I was sitting at breakfast with my best friend, Jana, and we began discussing our past relationships. This is a conversation topic that we always enjoy running into the ground.

As we critiqued their flaws - and ours - I suddenly stopped. I wondered aloud how many times our ex-boyfriends actually sit around and discuss us. Jana pointed out that although they may think of us, or even miss us, they probably NEVER sit around and speak about us with their friends. It is just not a large part of the male psyche to constantly analyze past relationships.

We then began dissecting the reasons we had parted ways with these men from our past. Invariably, it was because we had misunderstood each other completely. One of my exes and I fought the last two months we were together, all over semantics. He would say something and I would ask him - in an argumentative voice - what he meant by that. I'm surprised we lasted as long as we did, we communicated so badly.

So in the interest of learning to get along with my next boyfriend - assuming I do eventually have one - I did some research and discovered an interesting theory.

Next time you are speaking to your true love, or your latest love, pretend that they are from a different planet. Picture him from a planet where efficiency, competence and achievement are the most important goals in life. Then picture a female planet. This planet regards communication, love and relationships as the highest concepts in their society.

When the planets met, they fell instantly in love. They both moved to Earth and set up life here. Unfortunately, on Earth, selective amnesia set in and

both sexes tragically forgot they were from different planets. Since that day, they have had trouble communicating.

This is John Gray's premise in his book "Men Are From Mars, Women Are From Venus."

Gray says, "When you remember that men are from Mars and women are from Venus, everything can be explained." I attempted to use this while attempting to analyze a conversation that confused me recently.

Yesterday, a male friend, "John," and I were discussing his recent breakup. In the rambling way that such conversations go, we soon were discussing how we would react to various hypothetical situations.

This was the main example he used: his reaction if a close female friend called him and told him that she had walked in on her boyfriend having sex with her roommate.

He said a large part of him would feel pity for her. Then he said another,

Next time you all speak to your true loves, pretend they're from a different planet. Men and women need to understand they are not dating someone exactly like them.

almost equally significant part of him would think: That's really cool.

I was completely shocked. In defense of himself, John said that every man in the world would agree with him. I doubted this assessment immediately. In the spirit of discovering who was right, we interviewed many of our friends.

The results were astounding. 100 percent of the men concurred with John, and 100 percent of the women were horrified at the suggestion. There were varying degrees of agreement from

ELIZABETH PRESTON
Columnist



the men's camp, but they all supported the spirit of the theory.

Now, if I pretend that these men are all from a different planet, a few more things become clear. These men were not saying that they would sleep with the roommate.

The men in our informal survey said that they were not interested in doing that, in fact they thought the guy was a jerk. What they were saying was that they envy that particular man's ability to be unemotional and to sleep with different women at the same time.

On Venus, this is seen as a betrayal of all that is held dear to the inhabitants. They look at the couple and label them horrid, disgusting and worthless.

On Mars this is seen as a betrayal, but also as an efficient and brave - remember "Hell hath no fury..." - action on the guy's part.

Jana's and my exes will never discuss us over endless breakfasts, and the men I know will always respect different things than I do.

This does not mean that the bridges between us are impassable. We just need to work harder on understanding that we are not dating someone exactly like us. Realize that you and your love can feel the same about each other while expressing emotion, and everything else, in completely different ways.

Elizabeth Preston is a junior English major