

Halloween (Boo)

By Gonkama Johnson

Ghosts, zombies, werewolves, vampires, skeletons, witches, devils, demons, and Black Magick; what in tarnation do these things have in common with what is known as Halloween? The concept of Halloween commercially consists of merry making, from children going door to door receiving tricks or treats, to parties with costumed and masked themes. But this event, Halloween, has its historical, symbolic, and sub conscious subliminal underpinnings.

Samhain (pronounced sow-en) was/is one out of four holy days celebrated by indo-European Druidic paleopagans. These four holy days were/are known as fire festivals, with Samhain being amongst the most important. Samhain consists of three days of celebration which begins on October 31st and ends on November 2nd. Samhain represented the end of summer and the beginning of winter, or the dark half of the year. Samhain begins at sunset on October 31st, and also represents being "in between" the two seasons of summer and winter, a magical time comprised of the dead walking among the living; a time of no time, of prophecy and divination. During this time the dead are honored as living souls and loved spirits who contain the root

wisdom of their tribe. This practice can be correlated to the Roman Catholics All Saints Day or All Hallows that is celebrated on November 1st as well, hence the synthesis of "Hallow" and "en" being a combination of the two celebrations that forms Halloween (All Hallows + Samhain=Halloween). All Souls day is also a celebration observed in the Catholic Church to commemorate the faithfully departed. All Souls Day takes place on November 2nd.

Medieval Christianity conceived the notion of God and the Devil, or good and evil, being equally powerful deities engaged in an eternal struggle for dominion over humanity and the universe. These thoughts were contrived from the religion known as Manichaeism, which is a synthesis of elements from Gnosticism, Zoroastrianism, Christianity, Buddhism, Taoism, and dualism. The realm of Satan symbolized the world of darkness and material things. The realm of God was represented by



light and spiritual enlightenment. It later became known as the Manichean heresy, in relation to the Roman Catholic Church. The existence of the devil as an actual entity was officially declared by the Church's Council of Toledo in the year 447 CE. Having its European origins, this may explain the denotation and connotation of the dark arts, or Black Magick referred to in the concept of Halloween.

Now what about these creatures? Ghosts are spirits who at once were living beings, but exist as discarnate entities. Ghosts can be psychic expressions or recordings of a traumatic event replayed at the place the event happened. These are known as hauntings. Poltergeist, or "noisy ghosts," throw things around, create messes, and

plausibly may cause physical harm. Poltergeists are correlated to people who produce psychokinetic phenomena due to experiencing severe trauma. Vampires are considered creatures of the night, because the light of the sun burns their skin. Due to their soulless nature, they cannot see their reflections in the mirror. The two types of vampires require energy from either blood or psychic energy. In 1985 Dr. David Dolphin, a biochemist at the University of British Columbia, proposed that a genetic disease called porphyria is what vampires are affected by. Symptoms include skin sensitivity to light, and retraction of gums. Psychic vampires extract your energy in other ways, instead of using blood. Zombie comes from the African Congo word nzambi ("spirit of a dead person"). Zombies, or the living dead, are people who have died, who

are taken from their graves and reanimated and controlled by the re-animator. A Harvard ethno-botanist by the name of Wade Davis, in 1982, determined the zombie death formula which was a potent concoction administered to induce paralysis and simulated death. Werewolves are also night creatures, being regular during the day, and turning into best at night, during full moons preferably. A recognized psychiatric disorder known as lycanthropy is described as a sufferer having a split personality or delusion of being an animal or believing they can morph into an animal. Hypertrichosis is a rare congenital disease consisting of a pelt of long hair growing all over a person's body and face. Jose Marcia Cantu of the University of Guadalajara, in 1984, described this condition in a Mexican family.

Something interesting to talk about at the Halloween party maybe? How do you celebrate Halloween?

Viva Italia!

Study Abroad Program Offers a Chance at a Fun Education

By T.G. Schoenberg

Have you ever wanted to travel to Italy? What if it were possible to do just that while earning up to eight credits at the same? Over winter break, from January 6th through the 18th, all Concordia students will be able to seize this opportunity of a lifetime through the study abroad program. The courses offered on this trip include: History and Art classes like Western Civilization and, Approaching Art, and Digital Photo. While taking these classes, which are taught by experienced CSP faculty Dr. Thomas Saylor and Professor Cate Vermeland, you can earn up to eight credits while having the time of your life.

Some of the sites that students will be visiting include Venice, Florence, Pisa, and Rome. While in Venice, you can see historical sites like the Grand Canal, Basilica of San Marco, and Doge's Palace. Florence offers students the chance to see the Uffizi Gallery, Boboli Gardens, and many cathedrals. In Rome you will see the Coliseum and Forum, Christian Catacombs, Vatican museums, and St. Paul's Cathedral; and of course, Pisa offers tourists its most famous attraction, the Leaning Tower.

While Western Civilization is the only four credit class, the rest of the classes offered are only two credits. This gives you plenty of time to not only learn valuable information in an exotic setting, but it also leaves you plenty of time to go

site seeing and take it all in. A few of the classes offered, which also include Topics in European History and Topics in Art: Italian Art/Architecture, satisfy your General Education requirements for graduation.

The trip itself costs as low as \$1,625, which is not bad when you consider that it covers hotels, entrance fees, rail, daily breakfasts, and much more. In addition to the already low price, you can also receive financial aid that goes towards your trip. For more information on the trip, and to fill out an application form, you can simply go on the web to <http://csptrips.edublogs.org>. Why waste your winter break sitting around at home in the cold, when you could be having the trip of a lifetime? You could be having some of the most memorable times of your life.

