

PsychoBabble

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Editor's words

Special points of interest:

- Phobias
- Do's and Don'ts
- Comic

Welcome to the 2st issue of Psycho Babble for 2012-13! A psychology based newspaper with a purpose to help readers have a better understanding of psychology through the articles we bring you in every publication. It's intention is also to help students have a better grasp of psychology while still enjoying everything that psychology has to offer on and off the pages. We hope that you find each article as interesting as we have. If you have any questions or suggestions please email us at UHPsychobabble@gmail.com, and we will be more than happy to assist you.

Sergio Valerio

Editor



Trick or Treat: Do's and Don'ts For Halloween By: Amber "Frankenstein's Wife" Denson

Halloween originated almost 2,000 years ago by the Celts who lived in what is now known as Ireland, the United Kingdom, and northern France. Being that November 1st marked the beginning of a new year during this time, on the evening of October 31st the Celts held their ancient festival of Samhain which celebrated the ending of summer and the beginning of winter. For some odd reason, the Celts associated death with winter and believed that on the night before the new year began the boundary between the world of the living and the world of the dead became nonexistent. Therefore, the Celts decided to establish and celebrate the evening of October 31st as to being the night that the ghosts of the deceased returned to Earth. During this festival, the gathering and burning of crops and animals as sacrifices in a huge bonfire built by the Celtic priest served as the main event. The bonfires were believed to be sacred and the Celts often times wore costumes while in attendance. These costumes usually consist of animal heads and skins. When everyone was done giving sacrifices, they would gather around and attempt to tell each other's fortunes.



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Today, although Halloween may be considered a controversial holiday in America due to conflicting religious beliefs and what not, for those who do celebrate it is probably one of the more exciting holidays. Filled with pumpkin carving, trick-or-treating, crazy costumes, and haunted houses, Halloween is the time to have fun, where whatever you do, just make sure you are with a group of family or friends just in case anything crazy goes down; you never know what will happen on Halloween. To further ensure that your evening goes smoothly here are a few tips to keep in mind:

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Do`s:

- If you plan on passing out candy, then please be generous! No one likes the stingy neighbor...
- Go out and buy or make a legit costume. Don't be that guy who at the last minute decided to turn his bed sheet into a ghost ensemble.
- STEER CLEAR OF CREEPY PEOPLE! Yes, Halloween is supposed to be a night full of spookiness and what have you, but by all means, if someone seems like they are taking their costume character a little too seriously then beware.
- Stay with your friends and go to neighborhoods you are familiar with.
- If you are partying, designate a driver.
- Under no circumstances, drink the punk.



Don`ts:

- This might be the most important tip of them all so read carefully: DO NOT get caught if you plan on partaking in a little mischief on this evening.
- When you are about to walk up to a house and you notice that the door is shut, there are no decorations in sight, and no one is sitting outside passing out candy, then do not stop at this house. Chances are whoever lives there probably decided not to participate in the festivities.
- Keep in mind that some pranks might be going over the limit. Toilet paper on tree, ok. Shaving neighbors cat, not ok.
- When you finally make it home after a long night of trick-or-treating, do not eat any candy that was given to you without checking it for anything unusual.

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Understanding Phobia's

By: Ana "Goblin" Gonzalez

The word "Phobia" seems to call more attention during the Halloween season. It is part of what the holiday draws on: fear. There is more to phobias than a haunted house or a night of terror. There are three categories of phobias that all fall under anxiety disorders. These three categories include social phobia: the fear of criticism or humiliation while interacting with other people, agoraphobia: the fear of open spaces, and specific phobias, which can be an intense fear of anything (First, 2000). It is those specific phobias that tend to draw our attention the most. To understand specific phobias one must look at their diagnosis, the different types and their general treatments.



According to Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-IV-TR), there are seven criteria (A-G) to diagnose a specific phobia. First, there must be a marked and persistent fear of something that is clearly identifiable. Overall fear would therefore not be categorized as a specific phobia although a person may have several phobias all at once. Criterion B states that there must be an immediate response when presented with the phobic stimuli. This response usually takes the form of a panic attack. There must be an avoidance of activities that involve the stimuli and impairment to lead a normal and social life. The F criterion goes on to say that the phobia must have been present through a six month period in individuals under 18 years of age. Lastly, there must be a clear difference between the phobia and other mental disorders since Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder also involve similar symptoms, although they are not phobias (First, 2000).

Phobias have been formally divided into five categories, each describing the type of phobia an individual suffers from. The first phobia is the Animal Type. Phobias like arachnophobia: the fear of spiders, ophidiophobia: the fear of snakes, and zoophobia: the fear of animals, are all included in this category. Next, there is the Natural Environment Type, where the fear of thunderstorms (astrophobia) is included. Trypanophobia, the fear of injections and needles, is in the next category called Blood-Injection-Injury. The Situational Type, which is the fourth category, includes the fear of flying (pterygophobia), the fear of heights (acrophobia) and the fear of confined spaces (claustrophobia), as some examples. Lastly, there is a category for other phobias (First, 2000). This is where all the phobias that we find so interesting and bizarre are categorized. Here we find phobias like the fear of deformity (dysmorphophobia), the fear of vomiting (emetophobia) and the fear of the number 13 (triskaidekaphobia).



The development of phobias includes traumatic events like being bitten by a dog or getting locked in a closet. Another factor contributing to their onset are unexpected Panic Attacks while the stimuli that becomes a phobia is present. A person is classically conditioned to respond with panic to certain stimuli. Also, a person could watch someone else have a panic attack or undergo trauma and acquire a phobia through second-hand experience. For example, one might see someone else fall from a high place and develop a fear of heights. Lastly, a person can acquire a phobia by the repeated warnings of others, for example parents or someone the individual looks up to. This last example is called informational transmission (First, 2000).

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Living with a phobia is not easy; it is because of this that people have dedicated their lives to creating treatments for specific phobias. For example, the Phobic Trust of New Zealand Inc. uses cognitive behavioral therapy to teach patients ways to change their behavior and to deal with the negative thoughts and feelings that are associated to the stimuli. They also use relaxation therapy, which shows the patients how to relax, something that is needed to avoid a phobia-induced panic attack (The Phobic Trust of New Zealand Inc., 2012). Exposure therapy and systematic desensitization are treatments where the patient is slowly exposed to their fear. In this way, they are able to conquer their fears in a series of levels that are individually designed based on what causes the person the most fear. If the phobia is that of elevators, the patient will begin by stepping closer to the elevator, taking it to the second floor and eventually being able to take it all the way to the top floor. There are various ways to treat phobias and there are techniques that are combined to produce the greatest result in each patient (Hall, 1997).



Many of us know people with phobias or have met someone who has this intense fear. We do not realize the impairment that this has on an individual and although the fear might seem senseless to us, it causes real distress in the individual with the phobia. Thankfully, research is being carried out to diagnose them, to separate them from other disorders, to understand them better and to treat them. So with the end of the Halloween season, we can leave our festive fears behind having learned about the fears that could be face every day if living with a phobia. References

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Understanding Meme's

By: Sergio "Road Kill" Valerio

Humor is an interesting phenomenon in which psychology has always had a difficulty in explaining. It goes hand in hand with other difficult emotions such as love and anger (Sternberg, 1984). It's a sense of humored behavior that we acquire from childhood from the people around us or the environment we're placed in. It is an interest that children don't question or explain, they simply enjoy the moment, as do teens, young adults, and older adults do. Even with these four difference aged classifications, there are still different forms of humor that people prefer to associate themselves with. Yet, a new form of humor has developed over the past few years, Meme's (Meem). These simple cartoons have become interest to many people and have been seen widely by many people either in social networks, passing of texts between friends, and mainly as a use to make a humorous remark.

Humor applied in Psychology can also be seen as a therapeutic form, as a means of relieving stress or expressing/experiencing a new way of viewing subjects through an alternative aspect. Albeit, in modern times humor is easily accessed via the internet in either social sites, or sites that are dedicated to uploading and sharing pictures that people might find interesting, humor, or raise awareness in whichever field they so choose (Taylor, 2007). These meme's can also be considered a simple form of art that consists mainly of a few implied lines and are given humanistic expressions that can be easily interpreted by anyone who views them without error. Often times you will see them as the hook line to a real image depicting something that is widely experienced or viewed in a culture. Similarly, it is also seen as a widely accepted opinion regarding some form of life, experience, or politic figure. Personality and humor can also be studied and assessed as a direct correlation between both variables. Consider the manner in which a comedian would tell a joke to an audience; now consider the same scenario with the comedian being replaced with someone of a completely different personality, the outcome of the joke might not be the same. For that reason, personality not only implicates the manner in which the person might interpret a joke to others but also how another person will interpret a joke being told.

Humor carries a form of personality, either by the person who designed them, or the person who interprets them for themselves or others. Dr. Charles C. Thomas (1988) noted the relation formed with the method of humor and the ability to spread the same humor with others. The question still remains, why are Meme's so popular in people from H.S. to college students?

So why are Meme's so attractive to people? How does a simple cartoon with very little creativity become so popular among teens and adults? One theory is the simplicity of the humor that can be easily interpreted without having to think in detail what the joke is about. With more demands and responsibilities being placed on adults, the ability to see the humor effortlessly allows the mind to quickly establish the reference of humor. In short, The easier it is to identify the punch line, the more enjoyable the humor is (Thomas, 1987). Perhaps another theory behind the meme craze is the ability to use the same image with different applications. It seems that the ability to manipulate the meme the more of a humor one gets from seeing it. For whatever the reason may be, meme's have brought us many laughs and will continue to do so for the coming future. How will the meme's develop or possibly devise an alternative form of humor is also unclear. Either way, we will still enjoy it.

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COMIC'S

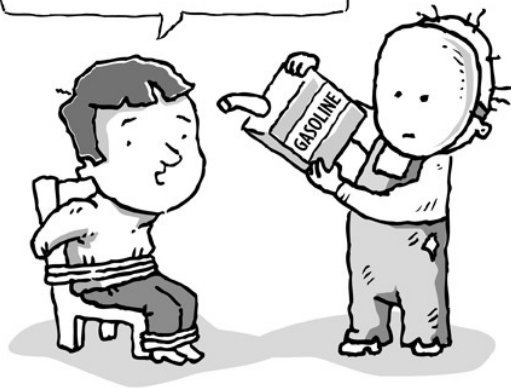
Strange
Phobias
I



A
Balloon
thats afraid
of heights...

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OH YES! YES! POUR IT ALL OVER ME!
LIGHT MY FIRE YOU DIRTY MAN!



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In one last desperate attempt to save himself,
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