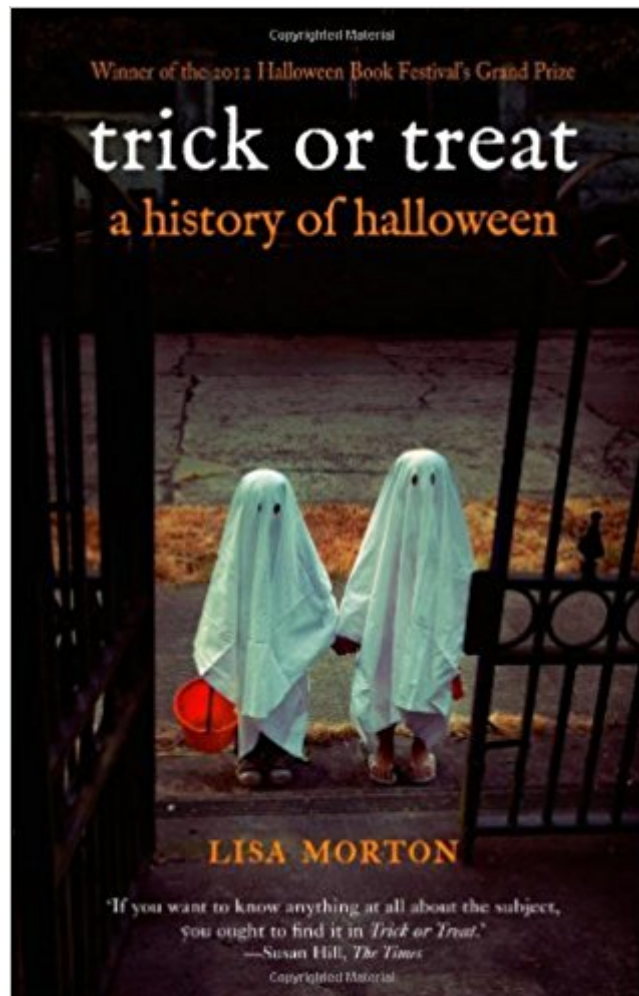




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# Trick Or Treat: A History Of Halloween



## Synopsis

Every year, children and adults alike take to the streets dressed as witches, demons, animals, celebrities, and more. They carve pumpkins and play pranks, and the braver ones watch scary movies and go on ghost tours. There are parades, fireworks displays, cornfield mazes, and haunted houses—and, most important, copious amounts of bite-sized candy. The popularity of Halloween has spread around the globe to places as diverse as Russia, China, and Japan, but its association with death and the supernatural and its inevitable commercialization has made it one of our most misunderstood holidays. How did it become what it is today? In *Trick or Treat*, Halloween aficionado Lisa Morton provides a thorough history of this spooky day. She begins by looking at how holidays like the Celtic Samhain, a Gaelic harvest festival, have blended with the British Guy Fawkes Day and the Catholic All Souls' Day to produce the modern Halloween, and she explains how the holiday was reborn in America, where costumes and trick-or-treat rituals have become new customs. Morton takes into account the influence of related but independent holidays, especially the Mexican Day of the Dead, as well as the explosion in popularity of haunted attractions and the impact of such events as 9/11 and the economic recession on the celebration today. *Trick or Treat* also examines the effect Halloween has had on popular culture through the literary works of Washington Irving and Ray Bradbury, films like *Halloween* and *The Nightmare Before Christmas*, and television shows such as *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* and *The Simpsons*. Considering the holiday in the context of its worldwide popularity for the first time, this book will be a treat for any Halloween lover.

## Book Information

Paperback: 232 pages

Publisher: Reaktion Books; Reprint edition (September 15, 2013)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1780231873

ISBN-13: 978-1780231877

Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 0.7 x 8.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 1 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars 21 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #101,891 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #10 in Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Social Sciences > Holidays #194 in Books > History > World > Religious > General #290 in Books > Religion & Spirituality > Religious Studies > History

## Customer Reviews

“Trick or Treat covers the history of Halloween from its ancient Celtic roots to its stunning growth in global popularity in the 21st century. Morton is an accomplished horror short story writer, and her ability to draw readers in quickly and keep them turning the pages shines through in her nonfiction as well. Lavishly illustrated, this solidly researched and concise work is fun to read and a great choice for readers who want to know why we seek out the scary each October.” (Library Journal)

“If you want to know anything at all about the subject, you ought to find it in Trick or Treat. . . . Morton’s interesting account of Halloween is at its best when it comes up to date and there are many entertaining illustrations.” (Susan Hill The Times)

“Full of historical nuggets and strange folklore, Lisa Morton’s Trick or Treat: A History of Halloween is the perfect bible for all devoted disciples of the holiday.” (Michael Dougherty, Writer & Director, Trick ’r Treat)

“With Trick or Treat Lisa Morton gives us a charming, creepy, insightful and thoroughly fascinating history of Halloween. It’s a delicious blend of cultural history and pop-culture savvy that is a true delight to read!” (Jonathan Maberry, author of Flesh and Bone and Assassin’s Code)

“This is an excellent survey of the Halloween scene, informative and accessible, far more treat than trick.” (Kim Newman, author of Nightmare Movies and Anno Dracula)

“In a modern world, increasingly filled with pop culture fads and gimmicks, Lisa Morton reveals much of the underbelly history and unknown facts regarding the biggest pop culture event in history—Halloween. Her sheer delight and well-researched enthusiasm in tackling many of the unrecognized aspects of this monstrous topic makes one wonder what we don’t know about everything else that should be as commonplace to our psyche as a bag of candy.” (Del Howison, editor of Dark Delicacies and Book of Lists: Horror)

“[Morton] playfully sets the record straight on the origins of Halloween. . . . This book is an excellent example of the scholarship on holidays as a means of accessing many facets of history. Highly recommended.” (Choice)

“From an authority on Halloween lore comes all you need to know about this misunderstood festival. . . . Well written and illustrated, informative and entertaining.” (Fortean Times)

Lisa Morton is an award-winning author and one of the world’s leading authorities on Halloween. Her work includes The Halloween Encyclopedia and A Halloween Anthology: Literary and Historical Writings Over the Centuries. She lives in Los Angeles.

This is the very best most informative Halloween history book that I have ever read. If you want to know the true roots of this spectacular holiday, not the heresay, or muddled assumptions, but the truth with facts, then look no further than this book. I have a massive Halloween book collection and I have never read a book yet with so much information about the true roots of Halloween. The book was a great read and I could not put it down. I am so very glad that I bought this book, and if you are a lover of Halloween, or history, then pick up this book. You will be very glad that you did.

Halloween has been my favorite holiday for the past 3+ decades. As a child it meant making my own costumes and decorations, hosting the big Halloween party for all my friends, and hearing stories from my dad about scrounging through trunks of old clothes in the attic and tumbling through his little Midwestern hometown with all his brothers. "Adult" Halloween and I never meshed. My version of the holiday now involves upping the ante when it comes to decorating the house, handing out treats, and roaming the neighborhood in a more elaborate homemade costume. My "adult" version of Halloween has also come to involve reading everything I can find about the holiday. I want to know about its origins, earlier practices, how and why it has changed since I was a kid, etc. It's not reading, but I also go to historical recreation Halloween dinners and celebrations (yes, these exist). I'm a cultural historian (doctorate in art history and archaeology, but it's really cultural and visual history), so that's the kind of viewpoint I can offer here: From where I stand, this is absolutely the best book on Halloween and its history as a cultural phenomenon. I've read *Halloween: From Pagan Ritual to Party Night* by Nicolas Rogers and though that book is supposedly more scholarly, I honestly don't think it was as interesting or informative. Whatever your level of interest, I'd recommend Lisa Morton's book over that one. In fact, if you just want to learn enough about Halloween's past to recreate a 19th century party, I think this book would be a great resource for you. I guess I have two caveats: 1) this isn't a book of Halloween stories, it really is a cultural history; 2) this is not meant as a practical guide to those who want to perform pagan rituals, etc. It offers some interesting history but if you want to celebrate the holiday a la wicca, I don't think this book is going to do the trick. Oh, and I do recall there being interesting material about recent controversies over Halloween related to safety and to modern religion. If you are curious about those things I think you can read about them here. But this is not a book by someone with an "agenda" about Halloween, and I am pretty sure Lisa Morton genuinely likes Halloween, so if you're here to find a book warning against the celebration of this holiday...well, I'm afraid this is the wrong place. Long story short: loved this book as an accessible cultural history. Not meant to teach you how to practice Halloween as a Wiccan. Not meant to teach you to avoid Halloween, either. Just a good and

readable cultural history.

This is the best researched, most comprehensive, and most beautifully illustrated history of Halloween I've seen. I highly recommend it!.

Great in-depth study of the history of Halloween.

Lisa Morton astounds with her attention to details and story telling skill. Wonderful additions of 20th and 21st century history included. Bibliography is outstanding. A great book to read as well as a fantastic historical reference.

Great book, great service. Buy with confidence.

Amazing history of Halloween and more. This book always contains something to peak my interest!!

I haven't even had the chance to finish this book yet. I've gotten about halfway, and it is chock full of information. That could actually be it's downside. It has so much information that you could probably read it several times and not remember half of it.

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