

OPINION

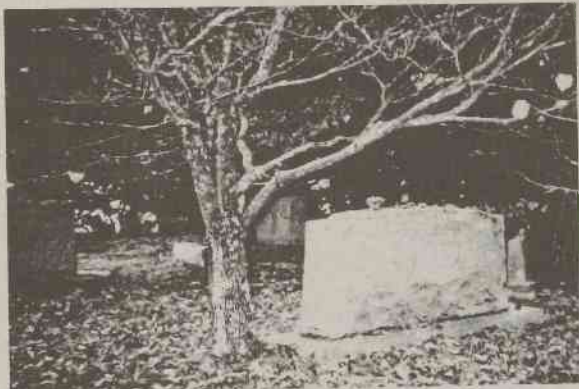
Dia de los Muertos: A Celebration of Life

SUMMER WORLEY

A rich coffee cake decorated with meringues made to look like bones, sweets and candies in the shape of skulls, and paper mache skeletons all sound like the makings of an excellent Halloween party. The holiday described is not Halloween. It is The Day of the Dead, better known as the Mexican holiday Dia de los Muertos.

The Day of the Dead festivities run the course of three days, depending on the culture. It is a celebration for deceased family mem-

bers and loved ones. The elaborate decoration of the grave sites and preparing of altars begins on October



Staff Photo t w o

Catholic observances, All Saints Day (November 1st) and All Souls Day (November 2nd).

"My father's family believes that during this time the souls of the

31st. The actual celebration coincides with

dead family members and friends return to celebrate life with them," stated Sara Cambarella, who has attended several of these gatherings with her father in Huejutla, Mexico. "It is also a healthy way to view death. There is not as much grief involved. It's more a celebration of life."

A day of activities at Dia de los Muertos may consist of gathering at the cemetery to leave some of the departed's favorite food and drink or perhaps a favorite toy or other prized possession. There are

often religious rituals involved at the altars, which are also made to the deceased. They tell stories of the loved one and engage in food, drink and good company. Children or family members exchange gifts with a death motif, such as a loaf of bread with a skeleton hidden inside or sweets in the shape of bones.

To many of us this type of ritual seems morbid, but death is an inevitable part of life. It is how we deal with it that is important. Perhaps we should consider celebrating Dia de los Muertos.

Remembering Halloween Past

KATE WILEY

The clearest, fondest memory that I have of Halloween is a particularly cold, wet night from the year I was in the eighth grade. I had worked for weeks to put together my predictable princess costume, complete with the old, pink, thrift store prom dress. I went trick-or-treating that year with my stepbrother and good friend Jenifer. My brother, being nine years old, dressed up as some monstrous grim reaper and Jenifer, who is much more creative than I, constructed an elaborate tea bag costume.



We set out from our house fairly early that evening and my parents drove us over to the next neighborhood. This was a strategic plan on our part. Their subdivision was newer, nicer and the houses were closer together. It all boiled down to the most effective way to maximize our candy returns.

The trick-or-treating process went fairly quickly and, before we knew it, the time to rendezvous with

my parents arrived. However, we had managed to get ourselves lost in the now dark, cookie cutter neighborhood. To add to our confusion, the temperature was dropping fast.

Then the rain started.

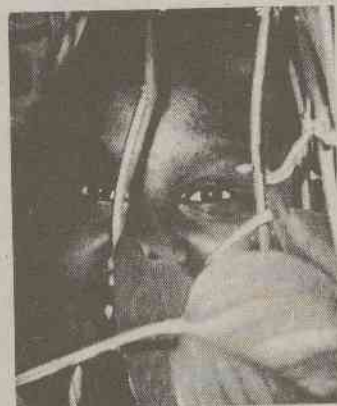
We were quite a pathetic bunch that night. With my brother almost in tears, we walked the unfamiliar roads for an hour looking for a green mini-van, eating our candy booty, and fighting off pneumonia. My brother's little legs finally gave out, and he sat pouting on the street curb as Jenifer and I tried to entertain him. After about 15 minutes of our vain efforts, our salvation pulled around the corner and

took us back home.

I didn't get pneumonia that year and the candy returns weren't too impressive, but I will always chuckle when thinking of that cold, wet night and how we all thought we were goners. The moral of my story is that the smoothest, most comfortable holidays are not necessarily the only ones remembered fondly.

CAMPUS CANDIDS

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