LIFE

BEST HALLOWEEN TV SPECIALS ROUNDTABLE



The characters Mike, Dustin, Will and Lucas dress up in Ghostbusters outfit in Stranger Things Season 2, Episode 2 ("Trick or Treat, Freak"). The show is an excellent Halloween symbol because of its monsters and mysteries.

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ILLUSTRATION BY KIRA YOUNG, CONTRIBUTING ARTIST/THE DAILY CAMPUS

Boo! Did we scare you? Maybe not, but the Life section's favorite Halloween TV specials picks are sure to give you a fright — well, maybe some of them. Actually, they are more likely to evoke a huge sense of nostalgia, which can sometimes be more terrifying than any horror show. Keep reading to reminisce Halloweens past with us.

by Zayda Shevlin
CAMPUS CORRESPONDENT
SHE/HER/HERS
fhy24005@uconn.edu

Disney Channel's "Monstober" might hold some of the most prominent childhood TV nostalgia for most of us, or at least it does for me. So, when I think about Halloween specials, "Monstober" episodes take up most of the space in my mind. Specifically, the 2015 "Monstober Spooktacular Weekend," that consisted of eight crossover episodes connecting seven different Disney shows airing at the time.

As a kid, this crossover event was mind-blowing. I loved seeing all the shows I was watching at the time overlap. And it was even better since it was Halloween-based, which is my favorite holiday.

The crossover event had each show connect at a Halloween party held in Central Park in New York City, and included "Jessie," "Austin and Ally," "Girl Meets World," "K.C. Undercover," "I Didn't Do It," "Liv and Maddie" and "Best Friends Whenever."

Not only was the crossover entertaining, but it was also interactive; each episode showed a masked mystery person in the background, and viewers could count how many times the person showed up across the crossover event and find out who was behind the mask.

by Maleena Muzio
LIFE EDITOR
SHE/HER/HERS
maleena.muzio@uconn.edu

When I hear the words "Halloween special," Disney Channel immediately comes to mind. As a child, I was obsessed with "Monstober" — from the graphics to the spooky episodes of my favorite TV shows and endless reruns of the "Halloweentown" movies.

Solely because of the iconic song "Calling All the Monsters," I think "Ant Farm's" 2011 "MutANT Farm" takes the cake for the best Disney Halloween special. The song defined a generation of trick-or-treaters. You will probably hear it at least once trailing down the halls of your dorm this Halloweekend.

My current favorite Halloween special, however, is Season 1 of "American Horror Story's" two-part Halloween saga, with "Halloween Part 2" as the better episode of the pair. Part 2 takes viewers on a romantic evening gone wrong with iconic characters Violet Harmon and Tate Langdon. The atmosphere is beautiful, surrounded by growing tension between the two characters — stemming from both romance and Violet's confusion. The episode also gives viewers an inside look at Tate's dark past.

by Sean Aitken
CAMPUS CORRESPONDENT
HE/HIM/HIS
sean.aitken@uconn.edu

I grew up watching the big three: Disney Channel, Nickelodeon and Cartoon Network. So, I'd say I'm tapped into the 2006-2015 children's sitcoms. While it was not my favorite show, my favorite Halloween special comes from Disney's "Kickin' It."

"Wazombie Warriors" from Season 2 terrified me as a child. All things zombies did, but this specifically got me. I remember recording it on demand and trying to hype myself up to press play with all the lights on, in the dead middle of the day and with my mom watching alongside. That's how I got through the terror this episode brought to me as a child.

Another similar choice is "Epidemiology" from "Community." It fits right in with the "Kickin' It" episode; a zombie outbreak almost kills all the characters. From the ABBA bit to Dean being the cause for everything, it's a stellar episode.

by Jaylyn Davis
STAFF WRITER
SHE/HER/HERS
iue25001@uconn.edu

On Halloween, I watch a lot of TV themed for the holiday. One of my favorites is "Stranger Things." What I love about the show is the million adventures the main characters embark on. While the entire show doesn't take place on Halloween, Season 2 features an episode that does, and the entire show is an excellent Halloween symbol because of its monsters and mysteries. There are also some scenes that'll give you a good jump scare.

Another Halloween-themed TV show I love watching is "The Last of Us." It also doesn't take place on Halloween, but it can be classified as a Halloween show because of its zombies and post-apocalyptic world. One of my favorite parts about "The Last of Us" is the characters. Ellie is very dauntless and isn't afraid to fight a zombie or express her feelings to her peers, making her an inspirational person. Joel is a great character as well. While he and Ellie have their moments, they make an amazing team, especially in the first season.