



PSYC 4900 History of Psychology Fall 2020

Design Your History of Psychology Halloween Jack O' Lantern

Upload to Blazeview Assignment Folder (labeled "Jack O' Lantern") by Halloween,

Saturday, October 31, 2020 (11:59 pm – pre-witching hour)

Select a famous (or infamous) historical moment (and/or person) in psychology (avoid Freud – too common). Then, graphically depict the historical event and the key player(s) involved by copy and pasting images or drawing. Also write a description of this psychology moment in time. Be sure to identify, describe, explain, analyze, validate, and frame the event within the historical context of the times (the zeitgeist). Have fun with this! Gosh, you deserve to have some fun.

What would I do? I would address my favorite psychologist, Stanley Schacter, who along with Leon Festinger, and Henry Riecken, studied a group (cult) of people who prophesized that extraterrestrials (via UFO) from the Planet Clarion would appear over Las Vegas on December 21, 1954 – signaling the end of the world. Schacter and his colleagues (in their book, *When Prophecy Fails: A Social and Psychological Study of a Modern Group That Predicted the Destruction of the World*) reasoned that the cult used cognitive dissonance to rationalize why their prophecy of the invasion and Earth's destruction failed to become reality. Think of what was happening at this time. The Korean War was over, the cold war and fear of nuclear annihilation was growing, Julius and Ethel Rosenberg were executed (1951), the Soviet Union invaded and occupied Hungary (1956), and the UFO movie genre was the rage, e.g., *The Day the Earth Stood Still* (1951), *The Thing from Another World* (1951), *Invaders from Mars* (1953), *The War of the Worlds* (1953), *Earth vs. the Flying Saucers* (1956), and *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* (1956).

