



HAWTHORN HIGH SCHOOL

Health, Happiness, Success



# Hawthorn High School Report

## Halloween: supernatural or superstition?

Halloween is a celebration that is celebrated worldwide; whether it's the dressing up or the spooky atmosphere on October 31<sup>st</sup>, it is undeniable that most of us enjoy Halloween. Although many see Halloween as a night of occult, the origins of Halloween is more superstitious rather than a supernatural phenomenon.

The origin of Halloween can be traced back two millennia, where Celtic pilgrims celebrated the New Year on November the 1<sup>st</sup>, this was celebrated with the festival of Samhain. Pronounced Sow-in, the festival marked the end of harvest and the start of the dark winter. Celts viewed winter as a time that related to death and that the night before the New Year, All Hallows Eve was a time where the passage of our world to the 'spirit world' was open. This 'passage' allowed spirits to pass into the world of the living which allowed for Celtic priests to make prophecies that would help the Celtic people. People would leave food and wine outside their doors for the undead and would participate in activities dressed up in costumes made of dead skin and animal heads.

However the more superstitious history of Halloween is now clouded by the more supernatu-

ral atmosphere that many associate with Halloween. While the supernatural part of the Halloween origin is minor and can be seen as over the top, the constant need for us to add to a story, and the capitalism of Halloween as the second largest holiday to Christmas has led to Halloween having a larger occult meaning than what the reality is.

However while the supernatural element of Halloween has arguably tainted the ancient origin, it has allowed the occult to be more mainstream in modern times. The popularity of the occult on Halloween has led to the growth of media and businesses activity in relation to the popularity of Halloween. This can be seen with the shift of Halloween from a cultural festival, to a capitalized holiday used to exploit the popularity of Halloween worldwide.

While it is arguable that the growth of the occult is due to numerous paranormal events such as the Enfield haunting as opposed to the actual origin of Halloween, it is undeniable that Halloween has attracted the attention of big movie studios such as Universal in the past decade.

Halloween accounts for over \$6 million spent in America alone annually from costumes to candy so it is expected that the appeal of Halloween is capitalised by Hollywood. So in 1978 the cult

classic titled, 'Halloween,' was released.

While the film didn't relate to the original Samhain festival or its traditions. In fact, apart from the use of the date of October the 31<sup>st</sup>. the film originally bared no resemblance to Hallows eve. The film itself was originally going to be called something completely different before Universal noticed that the use of Halloween as a film title had never been used before allowing for Universal to capitalize on one of the biggest holidays of the year.

Now having the title of, "Halloween," the movie became an instant classic that led to a sequel and a subsequent remake of the original cult classic in 2007. Whilst debatable-the film's success can be considered to come from the use of Halloween, regardless, it's indisputable that Halloween has become a pivotal point in anything related to the occult.



-Wrote, researched and edited by Ellis, Harry and Ben.