

*What
is
Halloween*



What is Halloween

- It's Origins in Samhain, and its syncretism with All Saints Day and All Soul's Day.
- The Historic Lawlessness of Hallowmas
- Halloween and the LGBTQ movement
- The Secularization of Modern Halloween
- The Repaganization of Halloween
- What is the Christian Response?

It's Origins in Samhain

- Confirmed by **reliable sources** such as History.com, World History, The Smithsonian, National Geographic, and the BBC

It's Origins in Samhain

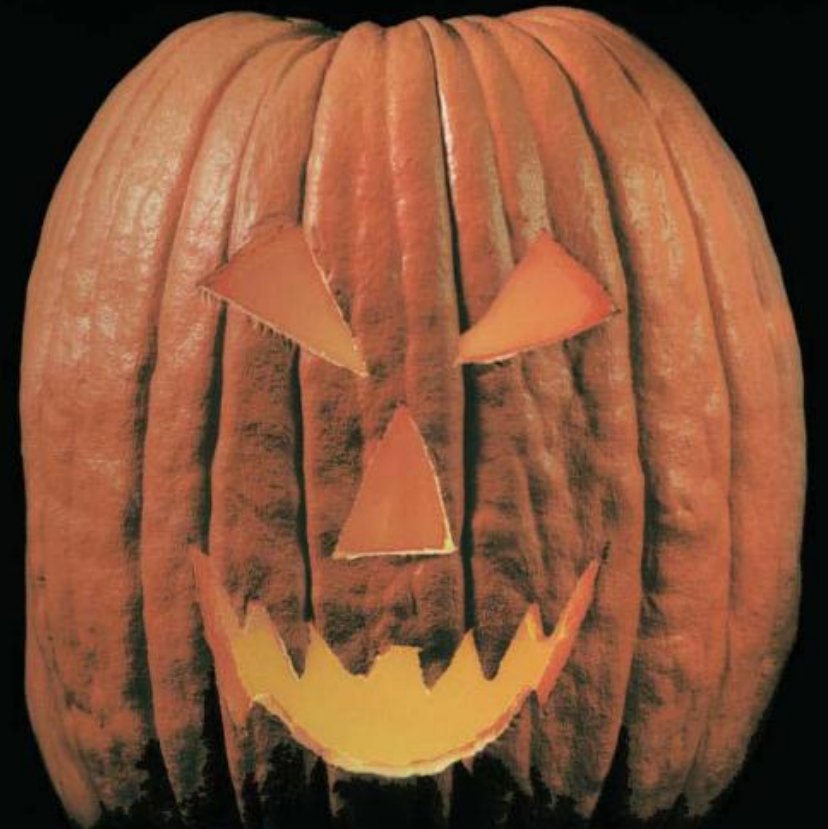
- Also confirmed by **Scholarly sources** such as the York Historian, Lesley Bannatyne, and Nicholas Rogers

It's Origins in Samhain



HALLOWEEN

From Pagan Ritual to Party Night



NICHOLAS ROGERS

It's Origins in Samhain



- Samhain was a Celtic fall festival that marked the end of the harvest.
- Celts believed that the boundary between the spirit world and the physical world was thinnest during Samhain.

It's Origins in Samhain



- As Celts believed that spirits including demons, roamed the earth during Samhain; they would disguise themselves as evil spirits to blend in among them and light bonfires to ward off evil spirits.

It's Origins in Samhain

➤ According to AN ARTICLE the York Historian – The University of York Student History Magazine,

" Many people today are indeed unaware that Halloween derives from the ancient Irish Celtic festival Samhain, but modern-day practices on this holiday are not as far from its ancient ones as we might imagine."

It's Origins in Samhain

In fact, the pagan origins of Halloween generally flow not from this sacrificial evidence but from a different set of symbolic practices. These revolve around the notion of Samhain as a festival of the dead and as a time of supernatural intensity heralding the onset of winter...

It's Origins in Samhain

...As night overwhelmed day, so the supernatural abounded. In Ireland, the fe'-fiada, the magic fog that rendered people invisible, was lifted on Samhain, and elves emerged from the fairy raths, erasing the boundaries between the real and otherworld.

Rogers, Nicholas, Halloween: From Pagan Ritual to Party Night (New York, NY, 2002; pg 20-21, Oxford Academic), <https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780195146912.001.0001>.

It's Origins in Samhain

What was especially noteworthy about Samhain was its status as a borderline festival. It took place between the autumn equinox and the winter solstice. In Celtic lore, it marked the boundary between summer and winter, light and darkness. In this respect, Samhain can be seen as a threshold, or what anthropologists would call a liminal festival...

It's Origins in Samhain

...It was a moment of ritual transition and altered states. It represented a time out of time, a brief interval "when the normal order of the universe is suspended" and "charged with a peculiar preternatural energy."²⁸ These qualities would continue to resonate through the celebration of Halloween.

Rogers, Nicholas, Halloween: From Pagan Ritual to Party Night (New York, NY, 2002; pg 21, Oxford Academic), <https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780195146912.001.0001>.

Syncretism with All Saints/ Soul's Days.


- While There are antecedants from the 4th century, these Holidays in their current form were set in the 8th–9th centuries.
- The theme of death made them a natural intersection with Samhain.
- Once these holidays were moved to Nov 1–2, it was only a matter of time

The Triduun of Death.

- All Hallows Eve – Christianized Halloween, dressing in costumes representing saints and evil spirits.
- All Saints Day – Remembering departed saints
- All Souls Day – pray for saints in Purgatory

Syncretism with All Saints/ Soul's Days.

By the end of the twelfth century, the linked festivals of All Saints' and All Souls', Todos Santos or Tots Sants in Spanish, or Halloween in English,....

A glowing jack-o'-lantern with a carved face is positioned in the lower-left foreground. The background is a dark, misty graveyard at night, with silhouettes of tombstones and grass visible against a dimly lit sky.

Syncretism with All Saints/ Soul's Days.

...These were the basic church rituals associated with Hallowtide, but over time other customs were added. In Naples, the charnel houses containing the bones of the dead were opened on All Souls' Day and decorated with flowers. Crowds thronged through them to visit the bodies of their friends and relatives...

Syncretism with All Saints/ Soul's Days.

...Sometimes the cadavers were dressed in robes and placed in niches along the walls. In Brittany, the clergy led a solemn procession to the graveyard, where the local people would consecrate the graves of their kin with holy water or milk. At Salerno, and indeed elsewhere in Catholic Europe, household members would lay out food for the dead,...

Syncretism with All Saints/ Soul's Days.

... whose souls were expected to return to their former abodes on All Souls' Day. As we see in chapter 7, this practice has obvious links to the current rituals of the Mexican Day of the Dead, notably to the meticulously prepared ofrendas, or family altars

Rogers, Nicholas, Halloween: From Pagan Ritual to Party Night (New York, NY, 2002; pg 23-24, Oxford Academic), <https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780195146912.001.0001>.

The Lawlessness of Hallowtide

Hallowtide was thus one of those occasions when flagrant violations of community norms might be addressed... .. "How fit our well-rank'd Feasts do follow/All mischief comes after All-Hallow."

Rogers, Nicholas, Halloween: From Pagan Ritual to Party Night (New York, NY, 2002; pg 26, Oxford Academic), <https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780195146912.001.0001>.

When Halloween Was All Tricks

Halloween in early 19th-century America was a night for pranks, tricks, illusions, and anarchy. Jack-o'-lanterns dangled from the ends of sticks, and teens jumped out from behind walls to terrorize smaller kids. Like the pumpkin patches and pageants that kids love today, it was all in good fun—but then, over time, it wasn't...

When Halloween Was All Tricks

...As America modernized and urbanized, mischief turned to mayhem and eventually incited a movement to quell what the mid-20th-century press called the “Halloween problem”—and to make the holiday a safer diversion for youngsters. If it weren’t for the tricks of the past, there’d be no treats today...

When Halloween Was All Tricks

...Halloween was born nearly 2,000 years ago in the Celtic countries of northwestern Europe. November 1 was the right time for it—the date cut the agricultural year in two. It was Samhain, summer's end, the beginning of the dangerous season of darkness and cold—which according to folklore, created a rift in reality that set spirits free, both good and bad....

When Halloween Was All Tricks


...Those spirits were to blame for the creepy things—people lost in fairy mounds, dangerous creatures that emerged from the mist—that happened at that time of year.

Lesley Bannatyne

When Halloween Was All Tricks and No Treats.

<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/when-halloween-was-all-tricks-no-treats-180966996/>

Halloween and the LGBTQ Movement

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- Gays saw Halloween as a safe Haven for expression that was otherwise criminal
 - There is an intersect here between LGBTQ and the occult

Halloween and the LGBTQ Movement

By the end of the 19th century, Americans had become determined to sanitise Halloween and strip it of its anti-social, death-obsessed image. Instead, Halloween was reframed as a community focused event that saw families and friends get together to mark the turn of the season. Halloween parties became popular, with the focus instead being on games and fun instead of fairies and spirits...

Halloween and the LGBTQ Movement

...That shift proved essential for America's burgeoning queer community. Halloween was a time when people could wear whatever they liked without facing repercussions – even if that meant wearing clothes traditionally associated with the opposite gender...

Halloween and the LGBTQ Movement

...It's worth bearing in mind that many places actually criminalised what was referred to at the time as "crossdressing" – so Halloween presented a welcome escape for early queer communities...

Halloween and the LGBTQ Movement

...By the time the 1920s rolled around, queer communities were hosting drag balls on Halloween as they knew it was a time of year they could escape harsh, puritanical ideas about gender expression.

The Pink News

<https://www.thepinknews.com/2021/10/31/halloween-samhain-history-celtic/>

The Secularization of Modern Halloween

- Around 1920, there was a concerted effort to sanitize Halloween, cleansing it of its rowdy and dark elements.
- It was entrenched enough in popular culture that asserting the police power was not an adequate solution.
- There was a concerted effort by community groups to distance it from, both its occultic underbelly and the raucous behavior that came downstream from it.

The Secularization of Modern Halloween

Shootings on Halloween made good news copy. So, too, did the tales of fatal accidents and fires that accompanied the pranks of the night. While these stories undoubtedly exaggerated the mayhem of the holiday, they probably reinforced the idea that Halloween had to be tamed and modernized, at least among security-sensitive citizens. This could not be accomplished by the traditional forms of crowd control, for police forces were always stretched to capacity on this annual mischief night...

The Secularization of Modern Halloween

...It had to be effected by community groups who strove to channel youthful energies into more respectable, law-abiding activities. All manner of clubs and societies went out of their way to provide alternative events for Halloween.

Rogers, Nicholas, Halloween: From Pagan Ritual to Party Night (New York, NY, 2002; pg 80–81, Oxford Academic), <https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780195146912.001.0001>.


The Repaganization of Halloween

- There is a growing presence of groups who celebrate Halloween as a full embrace of the Pagan occult meanings.
- Modern Druids are a thing, and they fully embrace Halloween as Samhain (albiet a modern interpretation).

The Repaganization of Halloween

- Wiccans are also drawn to Halloween as Samhain.
- As the culture is in a clear Neo-Pagan trajectory, a movement towards embracing Halloween's pagan roots is to be expected.

What is the Christian Response?

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- Flee Idolatry (Repaganization)
 - Christian Liberty (due to Secularization)
 - Constructive Christian Life

Flee Idolatry

1Co 10:14-31 Therefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry. (15) I speak as to wise men; judge for yourselves what I say. (16) The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? (17) For we, though many, are one bread and one body; for we all partake of that one bread...

Flee Idolatry

1Co 10:14-31 ...(18) Observe Israel after the flesh: Are not those who eat of the sacrifices partakers of the altar? (19) What am I saying then? That an idol is anything, or what is offered to idols is anything? (20) Rather, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice they sacrifice to demons and not to God, and I do not want you to have fellowship with demons...

Flee Idolatry

1Co 10:14-31 ...(21) You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons; you cannot partake of the Lord's table and of the table of demons. (22) Or do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger than He?

Use Christian Liberty Constructively

1Co 10:23-31 All things are lawful for me, but not all things are helpful; all things are lawful for me, but not all things edify. (24) Let no one seek his own, but each one the other's well-being. (25) Eat whatever is sold in the meat market, asking no questions for conscience' sake; (26) for "THE EARTH IS THE LORD'S, AND ALL ITS FULLNESS."

Use Christian Liberty Constructively

1Co 10:23-31 If any of those who do not believe invites you to dinner, and you desire to go, eat whatever is set before you, asking no question for conscience' sake. (28) But if anyone says to you, "This was offered to idols," do not eat it for the sake of the one who told you, and for conscience' sake; for "THE EARTH IS THE LORD'S, AND ALL ITS FULLNESS..."

Use Christian Liberty Constructively

1Co 10:23-31 ...(29) "Conscience," I say, not your own, but that of the other. For why is my liberty judged by another man's conscience? (30) But if I partake with thanks, why am I evil spoken of for the food over which I give thanks? (31) Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

Happy Reformation Day

