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Politics in Horror

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An Axe

The ax might not be too terrifying on its own, but there are so many times that we see it drenched in blood in horror films and real-life horror. What is the axe's true reason for existing though?

Historians and anthropologists have found the axe has been used since all the way back in the stone age. Its original conception did not have it with the wooden handle it has today. It was reminiscent of a large arrowhead and was later fashioned to include the wooden handle for a more efficient use. They used the tool to chip away at flint and other stones, and eventually chipped away at wood.

Starting from the late Neolithic era, axe has actually be used for religious significance and symbolized the exalted status of their owner. There was also a significance that the tool had in folklore and superstition. An upright axe buried under the sill of a house was once to be believed as a way to keep away witches.

These are all just facts in the history of a tool that I doubt any of us really know. I didn't know any of these until I looked up on the history of the axe. What do we see when thinking of the tool in these modern times?

You may see a tool that is used to chop down trees, split logs, and allow people to harvest the wood for fireplaces and campfires. You may see it as a tool help build a log cabin. You may see it as a tool that people have used for survival. The axe is that tool that helps people keep you warm through the cold winter nights. How interesting that you may also see it as a weapon to end those lives as well. We have seen from film that the tool that helps sustain life can also brutally take away life. Jack Torrance slamming the heavy head into Dick Halloran's unsuspecting chest or Jason Voorhees chopping up some poor camp counselor come to mind. Even in real life a tool made to chip away at the trees for the precious commodity of lumber has also chopped away human flesh. Lizzie Borden took an axe to her parents. In Villisca, Iowa, a family slaughtered by an axe-wielding man who hid in the attic until bedtime.

The intention of the tool appears to fade away when you think of all the times it has been used or depicted being used as a weapon. A tool bore out of an innovation that was motivated for survival can so easily become a tool to cease survival for unlucky victim. The image can easily become perverted by the very versatility that makes the

axe such a useful item. The irony can't escape you when you realize the same amount of force to cut away at wood to cook your dinner can also be used by Patrick Bateman to hack away at Jared Leto.