

Marjorie HALPIN and Michael M. AMES, eds. *Manlike Monsters on Trial. Early Records and Modern Evidence*. Vancouver and London: University of British Columbia Press. 1980, xvi-336.

"Sasquatch", a word derived from Coast Salish, was introduced to non-Indians across Canada and the United States during the 1920's to refer to a huge, hairy, human-looking creature reported to live in the Coast Mountains of British Columbia. In 1958 the village of Harrison Hot Springs decided to stage a "Sasquatch hunt" as its centennial project for British Columbia centennial. John Green, now author of numerous books and articles concerning Sasquatch phenomena, then began to collect reports of sightings and meetings, old and new, and to investigate material evidence, such as footprints. A surge of interest in Sasquatch followed. In May of 1978, a conference on "Sasquatch and Similar Phenomena" was convened by the Museum of Anthropology at the University of British Columbia. Journalists, physical scientists, anthropologists and sociologists, historians, folklorists and a psychoanalyst joined to explore the bases and significance of the ubiquity of humanoid monsters through time and space, from the Wild Man of Europe to the little people of Newfoundland, from the Yeti of the Himalayas to the Almasi of Russia, from the Sasquatch of Canada to the Bigfoot of the United States. The papers of twenty-three participants are here edited by Marjorie M. Halpin and Michael M. Ames.

A question raised at the conference is that of evidence: is their proof of the physical reality of the manlike-monster? Authors examine plaster casts of over-size footprints, the Patterson film of a fleeing ape-like creature in Northern California in 1967, the tape recording of purported Bigfoot speech by Alan Berry and others in the High Sierras of Northern California in 1972, specimens of feces and of hair suspected to be of sasquatch origin, but no one finds compelling evidence for the physical reality of the manlike-monster. As Michael M. Ames admits in the Epilogue "the few scientific analysis of 'physical evidence' presented were considerably more sophisticated than the data on which they were based" (p. 303). This is certainly the case for R. Lynn Kirlin and Lasse Hertel's paper "Estimates of Pitch and Vocal Tract Length from Recorded Vocalizations of Purported Bigfoot." One is amazed at the sophistication of present technics available to measure speech and noises and to extract from these measurements estimates of pitch and vocal tract length on the basis of which to determine the human or non-human likeness of the vocalization. One would expect as much sophistication in the authors' reasoning. When they write, "If Bigfoot is actually proven to exist, the vocalizations on these tapes may well be of great anthropological value, being a unique observation of Bigfoot in his natural environment", Kirlin and Hertel are begging the issue. They themselves write that "the possibilities for prerecording are many" and that there is no way to establish they were given an actual recording of a non-human, ape-like "monster". It follows that if by other means, Bigfoot was actually proven to exist, we would not yet be in a position to admit the vocalization Kirlin and Hertel analyzed as an actual recording of Bigfoot speech.

In Vaughn M. Bryant and Burleigh Trevor-Deutsch's analyses of hair and feces suspected to be of sasquatch origin we learn much about coprolite research (the analysis of prehistoric fecal specimens) and the methods of coprolite reconstitution, but we learn very little about the Sasquatch. In the abstract to Bryant and Deutsch's

paper the editors write: "The authors have examined five specimens of preserved feces and three specimens of animal hair suspected to be of Sasquatch or Bigfoot origin. They find that two of the fecal and two of the hair specimens are definitely attributable to known animals, but the remaining samples are not" (p. 291). One is led to think that the remaining samples are not attributed to known animals, hence may be attributed to the unknown animal that is Sasquatch. In fact, the authors cannot attribute any of the five specimen of feces to a specific specie of animal. Some specimen may be attributed to a cow or some other large animal (but not man, moose or bear), another sample may be attributed to an owl, but it is not certain owl is at the origin of this sample, and the other specimen are yet of undetermined source. As to the analysis of hair sample the authors state that neither they nor other scientists "can definitely attribute a sample hair specimen to being of Sasquatch origin" (p. 296).

A number of essays are cast in the mode of functional explanations. These essays, rich in descriptive material, suffer from the limitations of functionalist explanations: hypothetical functional relationships between myths and beliefs on the one hand and human needs on the other hand are postulated, but they are not tested, nor established. R. D. Folgeson's analysis of myths from the Eastern Woodlands (especially from the Cherokees) concludes that these myths and the monstrous beings they portray concern universal human problems: "They involve rationalizing the inevitable existence of evil in this world, particularly in the form of fear, suffering, disease, and death" (p. 140). The myths are presented as part of a Native American theodicy adapted to a finite and transitory world. In a similar vein, C. H. Carpenter's "The Cultural Role of Monsters in Canada" holds the view that tales of monsters in Canadian society "permit the existence of evil in a culture which has denied violence, aggression, and rebellion. These negative characteristics are invested in supernatural beings" (p. 106). The author notes that as French settlers were less prone to having a garrison mentality than were the English, the French view of wilderness and of monsters therein was not so wholeheartedly negative. O. P. Dickason discusses how the tradition of the Renaissance figure of the Wild Man, along with earlier European analogues, influenced early explorers' perception of New World natives, and how consideration of the natives as "savages" rather than as civilized peoples helped justify colonial attitudes to aboriginal property, religious and legal rights. Similarly, Marjolie M. Halpin's remarkable paper on "The Tsimshian Monkey Mask and Sasquatch" concludes with saying that "Tsimshian beliefs about *ba'vis* can be interpreted as expressing aspects of themselves that they normally deny but cannot eradicate" (p. 226). The above authors argue that monster-like figures are part of a culture as the expression of the ethnic unconscious, an expression of the collectively repressed tendencies and wishes viewed as evil and destructive. These authors argue on the socio-cultural plane as psychoanalyst W. A. Mully does on the level of the experience of individuals. In the mental life of psychoanalytic patients, monsters represent an objectivation of that part of a person's self which is felt to be repulsive.

Other authors prefer a more phenomenological, culture-bound description of "real" human-like monsters. R. J. Preston's and R. Riddington's contributions on the Algonkian Witigo and the Athapaskan Dunne-za Wechuge respectively, argue for an intra-cultural interpretation of the phenomena individuals in these societies believe in, fear and experience. Both authors marshal data they have expounded in previous

publications. They underline the limited value of "western based" ideas to understand Alonkian or Dunne-za based myths and concepts.

Michael Taft, John Green and Wayne Suttles deal principally with problems of belief, perception and reportage. J. S. Kassovic describes how the growth in manufacture of ceramic devils and monster figures to satisfy tourist trade disturb the local villagers of Ocumicho, Mexico, who fear that this increase in production of the ceramic figurines might increase the influence of evil forces in the community. N. H.H. Graburn explores the Inuit classification of manlike and non-human like creatures. Since 1948 the Inuit have produced art for sale, in the form of soapstone carvings, lithographic prints and other media. Some of these art forms represent mythical monsters and creatures. In an informative review of the development of recent Inuit art Graburn argues that the gradual change in the Inuit communication system from oral to literate has affected their art-style. The open-ended suggestive descriptions of creatures by elders in story-telling have given way to closed pictorial representation of the same creatures by a younger generation. Pictorial representations of mythological beings have fixed, and limited, the younger Inuit's conception of these creatures.

This is in many ways a fascinating book, rich in information and descriptive material. It does not only debate but also attempts to reconcile the sometimes conflicting attitudes and views of the experts, amateurs and scholars in their quest for understanding what is "real". Those who believe in Sasquatch and who wanted very strongly to have its existence validated and explained by the scientific establishment will find no consolation here. Nonetheless the search for Sasquatch will go on.

This book will be of interest to all the readers of John W. Green's book, *Sasquatch: The Apes among us* (1978). This book is also rewarding reading to folklorists, students of native mythology and art and to all those interested in those issues anthropologists study in terms of "cultural relativity" and sociologists investigate in terms of "social construction of reality".

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Frederick Hadleigh WEST. *The Archaeology of Beringia*, New York: Columbia University Press. 1981, 268 p.

The Archaeology of Beringia is F. H. West's thorough synthesis of his own and of all recent findings on the inland hunters of Beringia. From 23,000 to 12,000 B.C., in the context of full glaciation and the consequent lowering of sea levels in excess of 100 meters, the "Bering Land Bridge" emerged. Beringia denotes the resulting vast expanse of land extending over 2,000 kilometers from north to south and almost as much in its maximum width. The then emerged land did not primarily constitute a bridge from the Old to the New World. Rather, as F. W. West convincingly argues, the Bering Land Bridge, together with vast expanses of adjacent Siberia, most of Alaska and a portion of northwesternmost Canada then formed one complete biotic province unto itself. The Beringians inhabited this province over two thousand years (10,000 to 8,000 B.C.) before drastic environmental changes forced part of the inland hunters of Beringia to move south into the American continent.