



Cryptid Myth Influencing American Literature

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ABSTRACT

Cryptid myths have been a part of American literature for centuries, and their influence can be seen in many different genres. From horror to fantasy, cryptid myths have been used to create suspense, mystery, and intrigue in stories. In horror, cryptid myths are often used to create a sense of fear and dread. This use of cryptid myths helps to create a sense of fear and suspense in the novel, as the reader is left wondering what the creature is capable of. In fantasy, cryptid myths are often used to create a sense of wonder and mystery. This use of cryptid myths helps to create a sense of mystery and intrigue in the story, as the reader is left wondering what the creature is capable of. In science fiction, cryptid myths are often used to create a sense of awe and wonder. This use of cryptid myths helps to create a sense of awe and wonder in the story, as the reader is left wondering what the creatures are capable of. Overall, cryptid myths have been a part of American literature for centuries, and their influence can be seen in many different genres. From horror to fantasy, cryptid myths have been used to create suspense, mystery, and intrigue in stories. As such, cryptid myths have had a significant influence on American literature and will continue to do so for many years to come. This essay will explore the origin of the cryptid myth in the United States by examining the folklore surrounding cryptids in American history, investigating the role of Native American legends in spreading cryptid beliefs, and looking at the impact of the digital age on cryptid popularity in the US.

Keywords- Cryptid, Bigfoot, Loch-Ness Monster, Chupacabra, American Literature.

Introduction

The fascination with cryptids or creatures whose existence has yet to be proven has been a part of American culture for centuries. From Bigfoot to the Loch Ness Monster, these mysterious beings have captured the imagination of people around the world, inspiring countless stories, movies, and even scientific investigations. However, it's not just popular culture that has been influenced by cryptids. American literature has also been shaped by these elusive creatures.

Cryptids have been a staple of American folklore for generations. Stories of strange creatures lurking in the woods, swamps, and lakes have been passed down from one generation to the next. Some of these stories have been written down and published, becoming a part of American literature. These stories often feature cryptids as central characters, imbuing them with a sense of mystique and wonder that captivates readers.

One of the most famous examples of cryptids in American literature is the creature known as Bigfoot. This massive, ape-like creature is said to roam the forests of the Pacific Northwest and has been the subject of numerous books, articles, and documentaries. In many of these stories, Bigfoot is portrayed as a mysterious and elusive being, capable of feats of strength and agility that defy explanation. This portrayal has helped to cement Bigfoot's place in American folklore and inspired countless stories and works of art.

Another popular cryptid in American literature is the Chupacabra, a creature said to inhabit the deserts of the Southwest. This creature is said to be a blood-sucking beast that preys on livestock and other animals, leaving behind a trail of mutilated corpses. The Chupacabra has been the subject of numerous books and movies, and its mysterious nature has captured the imagination of millions of people around the world.

In addition to inspiring individual works of literature, cryptids have also had a broader impact on American literature. They have helped to shape the genres of horror and science fiction, providing writers with new and terrifying creatures to populate their stories. Cryptids have also given writers a way to explore the unknown and the unexplainable, tapping into a primal fear of the unknown that is at the heart of so much great literature.

The mystery and intrigue of cryptids have captivated imaginations for centuries, with tales of legendary creatures still being told in America today. In this essay, we will explore the origin of the cryptid myth in the United States by examining the folklore surrounding cryptids in American history, investigating the role of Native American legends in spreading cryptid beliefs, and looking at the impact of the digital age on cryptid popularity in the US.

Cryptids are creatures that have been reported but have yet to be proven to exist. American folklore is filled with stories of these cryptids, ranging from the Sasquatch of the Pacific Northwest to the sea serpents of New England. According to TS Mart, these cryptids represent an ever-changing landscape in the field of folklore, and they play an important role in how Americans view the world around them. Cryptids also provide a way for people to explore the unknown, analyzing the evidence and searching for proof of their existence. As a result, cryptids have become a source of fascination for many people,

inspiring countless stories, films, and even television shows. With the recent rise of the internet, cryptids have become even more popular, with people around the world sharing stories and collaborating on research. Ultimately, exploring the folklore surrounding cryptids in American history can provide insight into how Americans view the world and how they interact with it (T.S.Mart).

Native American legends have long been linked to the spread of cryptid beliefs. According to GM Eberhart (2002), "Native Americans have traditionally believed in the existence of mythical creatures" (Eberhart .p. 3). This suggests that Native American legends have played an important role in perpetuating cryptid beliefs. These legends may have been used to explain various phenomena that could not otherwise be explained by scientific means. This could explain why cryptids such as Bigfoot and the Loch Ness Monster continue to be debated and discussed in popular culture today. Furthermore, Native American legends could also be used to explain away events that are seen as supernatural such as UFO sightings. Therefore, Native American legends have likely played an important role in the spread of cryptid beliefs over the centuries.

According to J. Mullis the Native American tribes had a wealth of supernatural stories that were passed down orally over generations, and many of these stories feature cryptids, such as Bigfoot and the Loch Ness Monster. Many of these stories feature cryptids that are like those found in other cultures, such as Bigfoot and the Loch Ness Monster. In some cases, these creatures are seen as powerful protectors of the natural world, while in others, they are viewed as dangerous and to be avoided. Mullis argues that the importance of these stories goes beyond just entertainment or folklore. They provide a way for Native American tribes to connect with their cultural heritage and pass on important traditions and beliefs to future generations. Additionally, they offer a unique perspective on the natural world and the relationship between humans and the environment. Overall, Mullis highlights the important role that cryptids and supernatural stories have played in Native American culture and emphasizes the value of preserving and studying these traditions. In the early 1800s, these stories were collected by white settlers and missionaries and popularized to a wider audience. Later, in the mid-1900s, a surge in cryptid sightings and stories were linked to the invention of television, as well as the increasing popularity of science fiction and fantasy-based media. The public's fascination with cryptids has only grown since then, with cryptid folklore now being a major part of American popular culture and even having a presence in mainstream media (Caterine and Morehead).

In 2013, D Loxton and DR Prothero wrote a book titled, *Abominable Science: Origins of the Yeti, Nessie, and Other Famous Cryptids*, which examined some of the most popular cryptid myths and legends. In the book, they debunked some of these myths, such as the Loch Ness Monster, arguing that there is no scientific evidence to suggest that such a creature exists. They also argued that some of these myths and legends may be based on real animals but have been exaggerated over time. They also discussed the possibility of some myths being based on actual sightings of unknown animals, such as Bigfoot or the Yeti. Ultimately, Loxton and Prothero concluded that although some of these myths and legends may be based on real animals, there is no scientific evidence to suggest that they exist (Loxton and Prothero).

Devin Michael Elliott in his thesis titled *West Virginia Urban Legends and Their Impact on Cultures Both Local and Abroad* explores how West Virginia's urban legends have influenced both local and global cultures. The thesis delves into the various urban legends that are unique to West Virginia, their origins, and their impact on the cultural identity of the state. Additionally, it examines how these urban legends have been adapted and portrayed in popular culture, and how they have contributed to the broader global folklore. The thesis also seeks to understand the psychological and sociological implications of urban legends and their impact on cultural memory and identity. Urban legends abound in West Virginia, with tales of haunted homes, dangerous highways, and encounters with enigmatic animals in the forests and mountains. These myths have been passed down the years, permeating the local culture and influencing how people see their surroundings. One of the most famous urban legends to come out of West Virginia is that of the Mothman, a creature said to inhabit the area around Point Pleasant in the 1960s. According to legend, the Mothman was a winged humanoid creature with glowing red eyes, which terrorized the local community and was ultimately responsible for the collapse of the Silver Bridge in 1967. The legend of the Mothman has since become a cultural phenomenon, inspiring books, films, and even a festival held annually in Point Pleasant. The Flatwoods Monster, a monster allegedly seen in the small community of Flatwoods in 1952, is another well-known West Virginia tale. The monster was described as a towering, humanoid figure with glowing green hands and a glowing green face. The Flatwoods Monster sighting at the time caused a national sensation and has since lived on in West Virginia mythology. These and other West Virginia legends have had a significant impact on local culture, shaping the way people see their community and the world around them. They have also had an impact beyond the borders of the state, with their popularity and enduring appeal inspiring countless works of fiction and entertainment. For instance, the Mothman tale has been the topic of several novels, movies, and even television shows, which has helped to popularize the phenomenon outside of West Virginia. Similarly, the Flatwoods Monster mythology has appeared in a wide range of works of popular cultures, such as video games and comic novels (Elliott).

In addition to giving individuals new methods to engage with cryptids, the digital age has expanded its appeal. For instance, social media groups and online forums have given users a place to share their cryptid-related experiences and tales, resulting in the emergence of online communities devoted to the debate and study of these animals. These online networks have also made it easier for people to share ideas and information, which has increased collaboration and cooperation between academics and hobbyists. Moreover, the digital era has spawned brand-new media platforms like YouTube channels and podcasts that are devoted to cryptids and other paranormal events. These platforms have made it possible to produce amusing and educational content that reaches a large audience and aids in the ongoing popularization of cryptids in the US. The rise in cryptid popularity brought on by the digital era is not without problems, though. Online information sharing has made it simple to spread false information and hoaxes, which can make it challenging for consumers to distinguish between reality and fiction. Moreover, the plethora of digital material on cryptids may cause a feeling of saturation, where the amount of data is too much and causes confusion.

Overall, the cryptid myth in America appears to have been born from a combination of folklore, myth, and mystery. It is believed that Native American folk tales, colonial settler stories, and the many mysteries of the continent have all contributed to the formation of the cryptid myth in the country. As the legend has been passed down throughout the centuries, more and more people have become fascinated with the idea that there could be mysterious

creatures living secretly in the shadows of North America. Today, the myth of the cryptids continues to thrive and excite people of all ages across the continent.

Cryptids, Enquiries about Them and Their Depiction in American Literature

In American literature, cryptids are creatures that are frequently portrayed as enigmatic, elusive monsters who have grabbed the imaginations of both writers and readers. These monsters, which range from Bigfoot to the Loch Ness Monster, have been the focus of innumerable novels and stories and have influenced how we view the natural world and how we fit into it.

- **Bigfoot**- Bigfoot, usually referred to as Sasquatch, is one of the most well-known cryptids in American literature. Native American tribes have told stories about this elusive creature for centuries, and the legend has only grown in popularity in modern times. Throughout the years, many books and legends have been written about this creature, which is rumoured to reside in the deep woods of the Pacific Northwest.

The scientific theories of the origin of Bigfoot have been a long-standing source of debate and controversy. Many researchers have studied the evidence for Bigfoot and its possible origin, with most coming to a variety of conclusions. In his work *Bigfoot at 50: Evaluating a Half-Century of Bigfoot Evidence*, B. Radford stated that theories of Bigfoot's origin range from the plausible to the ridiculous. These conclusions are based on rigorous scientific investigation, leading to a variety of opinions on the subject. For example, some researchers suggest that Bigfoot is a type of large ape that migrated to North America from Asia, while others believe that Bigfoot is a prehistoric species that has survived in the forests of North America. Other theories suggest that Bigfoot is an interdimensional being or even a form of extra-terrestrial life. While these theories have been heavily debated, the truth of the matter remains a mystery. Radford argued that until more concrete evidence is uncovered, the origin of Bigfoot will remain a matter of speculation and debate. Ultimately, it is up to researchers to continue to investigate the theories of Bigfoot's origin and to uncover the truth behind the elusive creature (Farha).

In 1989, M Dennett wrote a piece for *Skeptical Inquirer* which delved deep into the evidence of Bigfoot being sighted or reported. In his piece, he argued that while there is a vast amount of evidence to suggest that Bigfoot sightings and reports are real, there is also evidence to suggest that many of these sightings and reports are based on hoaxes or unreliable evidence. For example, he noted that some of the most famous Bigfoot sightings, such as the Patterson-Gimlin film, are hoaxes. Additionally, Dennett argued that many Bigfoot sightings and reports lack credibility due to a lack of evidence and that the evidence which does exist is often unreliable or difficult to trust. Ultimately, Dennett argued that more reliable evidence is needed to prove the existence of Bigfoot and that until that evidence is obtained, sightings and reports should be treated sceptically. In short, Dennett argues that more reliable evidence is needed before we can be certain of the existence of Bigfoot and that until then, we should remain sceptical of the evidence available ("Evidence for Bigfoot? An Investigation of the Mill Creek 'Sasquatch Prints' | Skeptical Inquirer").

Native American myths and legends of Bigfoot have been examined by anthropologist DJ Daegling. Daegling reveals that Bigfoot has been part of Native American culture for centuries, mostly among the tribes of the Pacific Northwest. He explains that Native American stories of Bigfoot often revolve around a large, man-like creature who can move quickly through the forest and has a distinct odour. According to Daegling, many Native American stories involve a Bigfoot character who is a protector of the environment, like a guardian spirit, who is sometimes friendly and helpful to humans but can also be a source of fear. He also explains that Native Americans have used stories of Bigfoot to explain natural phenomena that they do not understand, such as earthquakes and other natural disasters. By examining these stories, Daegling reveals that Native American myths and legends of Bigfoot are an important part of the culture, providing a way for the people to make sense of the unknown (Daegling).

In her book, *Shadow Mountain: A Memoir of Wolves, a Woman, and the Wild*, Renee Askins describes a mysterious encounter with a large, hairy creature in the wilderness of Yellowstone National Park. Although she never refers to the creature as Bigfoot, her description of the encounter is like many Bigfoot sightings. Ivan T. Sanderson depicts Bigfoot as a genuine, physical monster that is only misunderstood by people in *The Legend of Bigfoot*. Bigfoot, according to Sanderson, is not a supernatural creature but rather a naturally occurring element of the environment that has somehow evaded discovery by humans for generations. The book *Bigfoot: The Life and Times of a Legend* by Joshua Blu Buhls is arguably the most well-known. The cultural and historical relevance of Bigfoot is examined in this book by Buhls, who traces the creature's ancestry to Native American legend and considers its place in contemporary American culture.

- **Loch Ness Monster**- Another well-known cryptid that has drawn the interest of American writers is the Loch Ness Monster. It is believed that this monster lives in Scotland's Loch Ness, whose deep waters are home to many sightings and investigations throughout the years. The Loch Ness Monster has been portrayed in American literature in several ways, from a cute and elusive creature to a deadly beast who preys on people.

The mythology and legends of the Loch Ness Monster have been a source of wonder and debate for centuries. According to J Moir, the most popular theory is that the mythical creature is a plesiosaur, an aquatic reptile that lived in the lake during the Jurassic period. This theory has been supported by evidence such as the presence of a large creature in the lake, as well as sightings reported by local people. However, the lack of physical evidence and scientific data has caused some to doubt the existence of the Loch Ness Monster. Other theories include that the creature is a giant salamander or a giant eel, and some even suggest that it is a hoax created by the locals. Despite these theories, the mystery of the Loch Ness Monster continues to captivate the imagination of people around the world, making it an enduring part of folklore and legend (Moir).

According to K Jylkka's 2018 article 'Configurations', early accounts of sightings of the creature were recorded by Irish monk Saint Columba in the 6th century. This sighting was followed by multiple other accounts in the years that followed. In the 19th century, reports of the monster increased, with

locals and visitors alike claiming to have seen it. This surge in sightings led to a national obsession with the Loch Ness Monster that has lasted to this day. Since then, there have been numerous theories and reports of sightings of the creature, all of which have yet to be proven. Despite this, the Loch Ness Monster continues to fascinate people, making it one of the most enduring mysteries of modern times. She argued that the Loch Ness Monster may be an unrecognized species of aquatic reptile that has remained undiscovered due to its elusive nature. She stated that the area surrounding Loch Ness is ideal for the survival of such a creature, as it provides shelter and protection from predators. She also suggested that the sightings of the monster could be attributed to the creature's migratory patterns, as it moves from one location to another in search of food. Furthermore, Jylkka argued that the murky water of Loch Ness could be providing the monster with camouflage, which could explain why it is rarely seen. Although her explanation is plausible, there is still much debate surrounding the mysterious creature. Further research is needed to determine the true origin of the Loch Ness Monster (Jylkka).

The Loch Ness Monster has been portrayed in American literature in a variety of ways, from children's tales to horror fiction. The 2005 release of Steve Alten's book *The Loch* is one such instance. The plot of the book is about a team of scientists who set out to learn the truth about the Loch Ness Monster but wind up in peril after learning the monster is not a myth after all. The book is a suspenseful thriller that blends science fiction and horror elements to provide a horrific image of the fabled monster. Stephen King, a master of the horror genre, is responsible for another well-known representation of the Loch Ness Monster in American literature. King wrote a sequence in his 1983 book *Pet Semetary* when Louis Creed, the protagonist, had a terrible encounter with the Loch Ness Monster while on vacation in Scotland. The Loch Ness Monster is represented by King as a huge, carnivorous beast with razor-sharp fangs and a voracious appetite for human flesh. One of the most well-known and terrifying interpretations of the Loch Ness Monster in American literature is this one.

- **Chupacabra-** The mysterious creature known as Chupacabra has been a subject of fascination for many years, with numerous theories emerging on its origin. One possible theory, proposed by M Muzammal and S Fatima in their paper published in *zoologicaljournal.com*, is that Chupacabra is a species of a large reptile. They argue that this species has managed to remain hidden, and therefore undiscovered, due to its ability to remain camouflaged. Furthermore, they suggest that this reptile may have developed a taste for livestock and poultry due to a lack of other food sources in its natural habitat. This theory could explain why numerous reports of Chupacabra sightings come from rural regions and why it feeds on livestock. Another possible theory is that Chupacabra is extra-terrestrial in origin. This theory, however, has not been widely accepted by the scientific community, as there is no evidence to support it. Despite the various theories, the true origin of Chupacabra remains unknown (Muzamma and Fatima).

Folkloric accounts of a chupacabra origin have been studied and analyzed extensively in recent years. According to B Radford, the chupacabra is a legendary creature whose origins have been the source of much debate and speculation. The creature is believed to have first been sighted in Puerto Rico in the mid-1990s and has since been reported all over the world, particularly in Latin America. There are a variety of folkloric accounts of its origin, ranging from a demonic being created by a scientist in a laboratory, to a hybrid creature created from a combination of a vampire, a bat, and a dog. Some accounts claim it is an extra-terrestrial being from another planet, while others suggest it is a form of vampire or werewolf. Whatever its origin, the chupacabra has become a part of popular culture and has been the subject of many books, films, and television shows. The creature has been widely discussed and researched and continues to fascinate people all over the world (Radford).

According to M Newton, scientific evidence for the existence of the Chupacabra is often circumstantial and inconclusive. Some researchers suggest that the creature is a hybrid between a coyote and a dog, while others maintain that it is a new species of animal. However, there is no concrete evidence that would definitively prove the existence of the Chupacabra. The only evidence associated with the creature is eyewitness accounts and the occasional photograph. Unfortunately, it is difficult to draw conclusions based on these sources, as they are often unreliable. Furthermore, the physical characteristics of the Chupacabra vary wildly from one account to the next, making it more difficult to identify the creature. While there is certainly a great deal of mystery and speculation surrounding the Chupacabra, there is no hard scientific evidence that would provide proof of its existence (Newton).

The Chupacabra has made its way into American mythology and literature despite not having the same level of notoriety as other cryptids like Bigfoot and the Loch Ness Monster. It is a distinctive and persistent component of cryptid legend due to its enigmatic beginnings and horrifying attacks on cattle that continue to captivate and scare people all over the world. The Chupacabra has been portrayed in American literature in several different ways. It has been described by some authors as a ferocious monster that feeds on both humans and animals, while others have described it as a more mystical being with supernatural abilities. The Chupacabra is portrayed as a dreadful creature that causes horrifying cattle fatalities in the Mexican borderlands in Stephen Randel's novel *The Chupacabra: A Borderline Mad Story of Coyotes, Dollars, and Cartels*. The plot of the book centres on a guy who, while trying to unravel the mystery behind the Chupacabra assaults, gets entangled in a risky underworld populated by drug cartels and illegal immigrants. The Chupacabra is presented in *The Chupacabra Diaries* by Raegan Butcher as a misunderstood species that is chased and mistreated by people. The narrative of the novel is about a guy who attempts to record the existence of the Chupacabra but instead develops a strong bond with the animal. Human greed and the destructive nature of humans are themes that are explored throughout the book. The James Preller novel *Chupacabra Dreams* has a mystical portrayal of the Chupacabra. The Chupacabra is a shamanistic character in this novel who can change into different animals and speak with the hereafter. In the tale, a young child named Danny finds the Chupacabra and must figure out how to live in the ethereal realm it inhabits. In contrast, the Chupacabra is portrayed as a cruel and bloodthirsty predator in David Bowles' *Chupacabra Vengeance* who preys on both humans and animals. A group of teenagers is followed as they attempt to survive a run-in with the Chupacabra and unravel the mysteries of its assaults in the book.

Conclusion

In conclusion, cryptid tales have had a huge impact on American literature, from influencing the creation of the horror genre to helping to shape the discipline of cryptozoology. Even though there is no conclusive proof to support their existence, the tales of these animals continue to capture people's attention. In American literature, cryptids are portrayed in a broad range of ways, from horrific monsters to more mystical and otherworldly beings. Although there are still many uncertainties surrounding these enigmatic species, they all have a similar element of mystery and intrigue. These myths will continue to have an impact on American literature and society for as long as they endure. Cryptid stories have been popular for a long time because they may appeal to our natural curiosity and feeling of wonder about the unknown. These legends have shaped American folklore and continue to motivate authors, directors, and other creatives to delve deeper into the secrets of our surroundings. Some individuals see the hunt for cryptids as an opportunity to get in touch with nature and discover the unexplored regions of our world. Others view it as a means of testing our grasp of science and expanding the bounds of what we believe is feasible. Whatever the motivation, studying cryptids and other mythological creatures may help us satisfy our insatiable want to learn more about the mysterious world around us and connect with the awe-inspiring force of nature. It's possible that, as science and technology advance, we will someday learn the truth about these enigmatic animals. Even if we never find the truth about them, the myths and legends that surround them will continue to intrigue us and keep us looking for solutions. In addition to being monsters or fantastical creatures, cryptids are a mirror of our yearning to go into the unknown and learn the mysteries of the universe.

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