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Looking Through the Trees: An Anthropologist, a Museum, and the Sasquatch

Abstract

The Sasquatch is incredibly popular in American society. This project explores the impact of the Sasquatch phenomenon on those that live in and visit Bailey, Colorado. It focuses on how the Sasquatch Outpost museum contributes to this impact, especially through outdoor activities, visiting the museum, visiting the Outpost general store, and the sharing of sighting stories. This work takes an in-depth look at the concept of the amateur museum, or micromuseum, and how it can contribute to the larger museum world, particularly through the ideas of Outsider Art and serious leisure. By evaluating the processes, exhibits, and procedures of the Sasquatch Outpost a clearer picture of current amateur museum practices can be drawn.

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Presented to
the Faculty of Arts and Humanities
University of Denver

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

by
Carissa Kepner
June 2018
Advisor: Dr. Christina Kreps

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Abstract

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Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Chapter 2: Background	9
Museums and Oddities	22
Chapter 3: Literature Review	28
Sasquatch and Native America.	28
The Beginnings of Cryptozoology	30
The Beginnings of Focused Research.	31
New Tactics and Sasquatch Psychology.	35
Cultural Roles, Approaches, and the Dimensions of Social Research.	38
Critics	42
Popular Sasquatch Books.	44
Museums and Oddities.	47
Chapter 4: Theoretical Framework and Research Methodology.	52
Research Questions	66
Research Setting.	67
Methods for Data Collection.	69
Scope and Limitations.	76
Ethical Considerations.	77
Positionality	78
Chapter 5: Findings	82
Questionnaire Findings.	82
Visitor Attendance and Museum Dwell Time.	89
Coding Data.	91
Museum Events.	96
Sighting Stories.	100
Observations of the Procedures and Thought Processes of SORT.	102
Chapter 6: Analysis.	109
Considering the Communities.	120
Comparisons: Micromuseums and Professional Institutions.	125
Chapter 7: Conclusion.	149
Bibliography.	155
Appendices	163

List of Figures

Chapter 5: Findings.....	82
Figure 1: Museum Entrance.....	90
Figure 2: Boomer.....	96
Figure 3: Gifting Site.....	103
Figure 4: Gifting Site far view.....	104
Figure 5: Bone Hanging in Tree.....	104
Figure 6: Bone to Scale, Size 10 Men’s Shoe.....	106
Chapter 6: Analysis	
Figure 7: Gifting Panel.....	117
Figure 8: Gifting Display.....	117
Figure 9: Wasp from SEDM.....	129
Figure 10: Bailey Surroundings.....	135
Figure 11: Room Four.....	137

List of Tables

Chapter 5: Findings	82
Table 5.1: Question One Findings	83
Table 5.2: Question Two Findings	83
Table 5.3: Question Three Findings	84
Table 5.4: Question Four Findings	84
Table 5.5: Question Five Findings	85
Table 5.6: Question Six Findings.	86
Table 5.7 Question Seven Findings.	87
Table 5.8: Question Eight Findings.	88
Table 5.9: Average Text Panel Word Counts.	91
Chapter 6: Analysis.	109
Table 6.1 : Sasquatch in the Media	121

Introduction

“We have been asking the wrong question through the years. “What did you see?” ...It may be more important to ask the one question the eyewitness is not in a position to answer: “Why did you see it?” (Daegling 2004, 259)

The Sasquatch, or Bigfoot, has taken the United States by storm since the series premier of *Finding Bigfoot* in May 2011 (Internet Movie Database n.d.). It appears in television commercials, stores, webpages, museums, and is the topic of conferences all over the nation. Researchers can be found collecting evidence, publishing reports, and giving lectures. Lay people can find the beast in memes, fan art, stickers and earrings, and as plush toys. It appears almost everywhere.

This thesis is about looking at the Sasquatch phenomenon in a new way. It will not examine physical evidence of the creature, nor will it try to prove or disprove the creature’s physical existence. Those works that do focus on culture tend to approach the Sasquatch as an overall idea. These studies are based on how legends, in general, impact the lives and cultures in which they exist. Recently, more researchers have begun to see the importance of looking at creatures, like the Sasquatch, as active players in people’s lives, meaning whether or not they exist is not the question. As of yet no one has taken an in-depth look at the Sasquatch or the creature’s tangible impacts on the cultures it exists in. For my research I begin at a place of culture, like many others, but focus instead on the Sasquatch in particular, recognizing that to

many people the Sasquatch is a real creature and that their involvement in the phenomenon has real impacts on their lives. The question is, how do these creatures create real impacts on culture and people?

One example of this is the *Dragons, Unicorns, & Mermaids: Mythic Creatures* exhibit created by the American Museum of Natural History, which was hosted by the Denver Museum of Nature and Science (DMNS) from March 20 through September 7, 2015. This exhibit focused on the role mythical creatures play in society and where the stories may have originated for cultures around the world such as China, Mexico, England, and Bali. In order to better connect local visitors to the exhibit DMNS added a “Creatures of Colorado Cart” featuring the jackalope, the furry trout, the slide rock bolter, living dinosaurs, and the Sasquatch. Volunteers were asked to present the cart by providing visitors with the history and story of each of the creatures and facilitating objects, such as the featured jackalope and furry trout. It was at this cart that many people learned the strong connection these creatures have to Colorado and the impacts they made on society. For instance, the Salida History Museum still has the original furry trout in its collections. The furry trout was responsible for Salida’s recovery during the Great Depression, attracting hundreds to the small mountain town in search for the elusive creature. Since its conception, the furry trout has now spread across the United States, popping up in states with cold climates and large lakes, such as Michigan (Mythic Creatures: Dragons, Unicorns & Mermaids Volunteer Manual, Mythic Creatures of Colorado E-Station 2, 2015). While this is not a common example, it shows the significant impacts that these creatures can have without ever being found.

The display and curation of these creatures is becoming increasingly common, especially in the form of micromuseums, small, single-subject, non-professional run institutions (Candlin 1,

2016). A term proposed by Fiona Candlin in her 2016 study based on a number of amateur created and run museums in the U.K. The micromuseum is an increasingly common type of museum, where one or two people take their passion for researching and collecting certain objects, such as antique washing machines, and create a museum with little to no formalized training.

A number of Sasquatch micromuseums exist across the United States, some dedicated to research and display, others to the local community, and others to the popular fascination with the creature. These museums and research centers are often short lived, but a number have held on to become well known within the Sasquatch community. This community refers to those that are active participants in Sasquatch activities, research, and sharing around the nation (the United States). These include: The Capritaurus Bigfoot Discovery Museum in Felton, CA; the Willow Creek-China Flat Museum, in Willow Creek, CA; the International Cryptozoology Museum in Portland, ME; the Skunk Ape Research Headquarters in Ochopee, FL; Expedition Bigfoot in Cherry Log, GA; and The Sasquatch Outpost in Bailey, CO.

It is this last micromuseum that is the focus of this thesis. The Sasquatch Outpost and adjoining Sasquatch Encounter Discovery Museum (SEDM), in Bailey, CO was the feature in an in-depth case study. The SEDM's mission is "to provide a realistic view of the Sasquatch and to raise awareness of the creature and its habitat" (Kepner, The Sasquatch Outpost 2017). They also host the Sasquatch Outpost Research Team (SORT) which is dedicated to upholding the museum mission by conducting Sasquatch research in the local area and by organizing and running Sasquatch based events.

The Outpost's creation is a unique and serendipitous story. The store the Outpost is now housed in was scheduled for demolition and efforts of individual community members to buy

the building had failed. It was constructed in 1878 and has since become an integral part of the community and a landmark in Bailey. Originally the building was a hotel and was then split in two to house a general store and a soda bar. It was flooded by the local creek and sat vacant for a number of years. The last owner bought the store in 1977, opening a meat market, and staying in business until the early 2000s. After he moved out, the store was boarded up and forgotten.

When the current owners of the Outpost, Jim and Daphne Meyers, bought the building, it was as part of a church project to better integrate the church into the community. The owners were originally missionaries in both Africa and France, moving to the U.S. with their daughters in 2009. They joined a local church and quickly became active in the community. The minister of the church wanted to establish a presence in “downtown” Bailey and asked the owners to take over the project. The church bought the building and the owners opened The Bailey Country Store, a small grocery, on June 13th, 2013. During this time Jim began to talk more with community members and soon came across Kate Murphy, an eyewitness whose story has since gone viral and attracted a number of authors to Bailey as well as the popular *Finding Bigfoot* television show. Jim’s interest in the Sasquatch dates back to his childhood, but Murphy’s story peaked it again. This was the first time he had heard of the Sasquatch being reported in Colorado and was convinced that others had seen it but weren’t talking about it. In order to hear more stories and attract other enthusiasts he took the back room of the store and installed a map of Sasquatch sightings and encounters in Colorado. Word began to spread about the map and his interest and as people began to come to the store Jim and Daphne realized people expected to be able to purchase souvenirs. Jim’s handmade mugs and t-shirts with different Sasquatch saying and pictures, but found this difficult to maintain, thus spurring him and Daphne to begin buying merchandise from other sellers. This was the beginning of the gift shop.

The grocery store was proving to be difficult to maintain and they were losing money every month, which was especially difficult in the winter as Bailey thrives on tourist traffic. Jim, seeing how well his handmade Sasquatch gear was selling, began to produce more and expand his inventory, thus feeding his passion. Jim added a map of Colorado Sasquatch sightings, based on real life reports from store visitors. After two years the grocery half of the store was dead. In order to sustain the store Jim and Daphne invited another couple from the community to share the building and sell camping and fishing gear, thus creating a unique partnership between the Sasquatch Outpost and Platte River Outfitters.

In 2016 Jim and Daphne created the Sasquatch Encounter Discovery Museum. They designed and installed the exhibits themselves, using Jim's background as a graphic designer. Within the first three months the museum paid for itself. Admission is \$3, with free admission if you spend \$25 in the store. In the first year the Outpost saw over 5,000 visitors and has become increasingly popular amongst the Sasquatch community, reaching 7,000 visitors on January 1, 2018. The museum is currently undergoing an expansion, adding three new exhibits, including a section on Native American perspectives relating to the Sasquatch, footprints, and a video component, the subject of which is still being discussed. This expansion is set to open for the 2018 tourist season.

The Sasquatch Outpost was chosen as the case study for this thesis for multiple reasons. First, it is set up in the traditional style of a natural history museum. There are exhibits, wall panels, immersive environment areas, and visitor interactives. This setup provides a unique opportunity to compare a non-museum professional run area modeled after professionally run institutions. Second, it comments and reports on a topic that is immensely popular in the culture of the United States that is not considered an academic pursuit. Third, it is open daily and sees a

large number of visitors due to its close proximity to Highway 285, which is a main thoroughfare from Texas to Denver. Fourth, it is one of the only places in Colorado that focuses on a topic that involves fantastical creatures. Fifth, the Outpost hosts a large gift shop so it was an ideal place to watch interactions between visitors, relating to the phenomenon. Sixth, the museum hosts and sponsors multiple Sasquatch events throughout the year. Seventh, the museum owners have strong connections with the community, making it easier to talk with residents on the topic. Finally, the Outpost was chosen because it has seen a large number of visitors in its first year and has since began an expansion project. All of these together make an excellent case study site, where the phenomenon and the community can truly be investigated.

I also have a personal connection to the topic. I have been interested in the subject of strange and fantastic creatures since I learned to read. I collect fiction and reference books, plushies, pictures, and games all related to these beings. I spent time in undergrad investigating the beliefs on vampires around the world and the relationships people developed with them. Thus, when I began my graduate degree I knew my thesis would revolve around these types of creatures.

I have always been open to the idea of these creatures existing and in many cases I do believe they exist. While this is the case, it does not mean I accept everything without thinking. I am extremely critical when it comes to presenting evidence of existence, which admittedly, I have never really tried to do. What I mean by this is I have a low tolerance for those who make non-sequitur arguments or claim that a piece of evidence or an experience can only be explained by the existence of a strange creature.

The aim of this study is to show the reality of the Sasquatch phenomenon and its impacts for the community of believers in Bailey, CO, and to critically investigate the concept of

the micromuseum and how it conforms and departs from professional museum practices. It will add to the overall discourse on the definition of museums, the role micromuseums play within the local and museum community, and what roles fantastical creatures can play within communities and individual lives. One of the main goals is to provide a better view into the Sasquatch community. There are many stereotypes and connotations that come along with the interest and study of the Sasquatch and there has not been an ethnographic study focusing on the groups in question. Hopefully, this thesis will generate respect for and a better understanding of this community and open a dialogue about this topic.

Throughout the creature in question will be referred to as the Sasquatch, not as Bigfoot or another popular form. This is the common academic term for the creature and often commands more respect and has less negative pop culture connotations than Bigfoot, as will be explained in the next chapter. This term also applies to a wider range of research. Bigfoot is often used in pop culture sources, such as television shows and video games, but the term Sasquatch is found within academic publications.

Chapter one, this chapter, introduces the topic and aim of this thesis. Including, its main goals and my reasons for the involvement in the topic.

Chapter two covers a condensed history of the Sasquatch. It looks at where the idea and name has come from and how it has progressed in the American mindset over the decades. This section is also an overview of how micromuseums developed, beginning with cabinets of curiosity and tracing the current ideas on why people desire collections.

Chapter three is an overview of seminal literature in the field. This chapter will look at the relevant Sasquatch and micromuseum literature that has contributed to the discourse on the phenomenon over the years. It has been broken into sections including “The beginning of

cryptozoology”, “The Sasquatch and Native America”, “The beginnings of focused research”, “New tactics and Sasquatch psychology”, “Cultural work”, “Critics”, “Popular Sasquatch books”, and “Museums and oddities”. Each section contains a number of works that relate to the topic heading. For instance, all the literature placed under the “Cultural work” heading will pertain in some way to anthropology, sociology, etc. all of which look at the Sasquatch from a cultural point of view. The literature review is separated in this manner as it better identifies categories within the research and allows for a more in-depth gap analysis than other writing methods.

Chapter four covers the research methodology and theoretical framework. This chapter will outline where the study took place, how and why data were collected, and what theories will be informing the study.

Chapter five will outline my findings. This includes questionnaire data, coded data on museum text labels, observations from the field, and participant observation data. This chapter will describe the data in detail and provide the basis for analysis.

Chapter six covers the analysis of data. This chapter will look at each of the data points presented in chapter four and provide interpretation and conclusions on the findings. These interpretations will be based on the theory found in chapter three and the previous research found in chapter two.

Chapter seven will conclude the study and present any last thoughts on the matter. Including where further research can be done and how this study could further both Sasquatch and museum research.

Chapter 2: Background Information

“I didn’t know then, but it is clear now that almost everyone is interested in monsters, only most people don’t like to admit it” (Green 1978, 50)

Today’s Sasquatch is a form of belief that stretches back centuries to the First Nations, entering the European mind during first contact. For many First Nation peoples the Sasquatch or other like creatures are another tribe. Many times, they are referred to as “the forest tribe” and are said to intermarry and co-exist with humans (Suttles 1979, 79-80). Sometimes these tribes were peaceful, other times they were described in a monstrous fashion. For example, a common trait attributed to the Sasquatch is the image of a child stealing giant that carries humans off in a basket on her back (Strain 2008, 11). Despite any of these potentially monstrous traits these tribes were seen as part of the natural order and respected as such.

Unlike European constructions, most First Nation world views do not separate creatures into real and mythical or real and unreal. For example, in the Coast Salish world view, Sasquatches and bears would be placed into the same category (Suttles 1979, 42-43). Another example comes from the Chipewyan of the North West Territories in Canada. Until Roman Catholic priests came, the Chipewyan language did not separate human, animal, and supernatural entities. This changed with the influence of European world views and became human oriented, separating the other creatures and dividing them into categories of real and unreal (Sharp 1988, 38).

This dichotomy suffered a great shift when Western researchers claimed the Sasquatch as their own during early research. The word Sasquatch itself is an anglicized version of the Coast Salish word *sesqec* (Suttles 1979, 39). It was introduced in the 1920s by J.W. Burns, a reporter whose articles circulated in the U.S. and Canada. His articles began one of the first crazes over the creature, but also stigmatized it as an “Indian legend” by only quoting supernatural elements from his informant’s stories (Suttles 1979, 66). As a result, researchers refused to use the Native world view, instead regulating the Sasquatch into a mythic category.

This need to separate the world into real and mythical and to consider those who believe in the “mythical” as irrational is a Western cultural creation. It is not found in every culture and is not supported by a body of empirical evidence (Sharp 1988, 113). Most Sasquatch research has been done by Westerners who use a real/mythical world view; this has been a major challenge when interpreting data (Suttles 1979, 64-65). This world view is also the source of controversy over the creature. It is why most researchers are obsessed with proving the physical reality of the Sasquatch and why so many attack those who attempt to prove it. Anything strange like the Sasquatch is regulated to the mythical side of the line and it would be a breach in common sense and intelligence to wonder if it could cross over into reality (Shermer 1997).

This tendency was criticized by Sasquatch researcher John Green in the 1970s. He called for better treatment and respect for Native American histories: “we have failed to recognize that our Indian informants have been talking about real animals because we are predisposed by our professional interests to treat the Sasquatch by any of its various names as a mythical being” (Suttles 1979, 64). Recognizing this is an important step in understanding the cultural perceptions of the Sasquatch and why research on the topic has progressed the way it has.

Western fascination with strange and unusual creatures is nothing new. Bernard Heuvelmans, often called the “Father of Cryptozoology”, introduced the world to a new way of studying the unknown elements of nature through scientific inquiry. Cryptozoology refers to “The study of evidence tending to substantiate the existence of, or the search for, creatures whose reported existence is unproved, as the Abominable Snowman or the Loch Ness monster” (Dictionary.com). Today it is often regarded as a pseudoscience, but this has not stopped many members of the public and some from academic circles from delving into the topics it covers.

Heuvelmans viewed the study of creatures, such as the *orang pendek*, not as a dive into the supernatural, but as another credible scientific inquiry worthy of his attention. He approached these, seemingly fantastical creatures, as a question of natural history, citing that even though the creature sounded strange there had been numerous examples of other creatures, since proven to physically exist that were originally considered so fantastic they were relegated to the realm of myth and fantasy. One such creature was the okapi, a close quadrupedal relative of the giraffe that resides in the rainforests of Africa. Originally this creature sounded so fantastic that European scientists were incredulous and refused to believe its existence until an actual specimen was produced.

A large part of Heuvelmans career was taken up by his work on the *orang pendek* of Sumatra. He interpreted the creature using both zoology and anthropology, suggesting that the creature was inspired by older gibbons who had grown too heavy to go on living in trees, taking a cue from older gorillas (Heuvelmans 1965, 66). He also spoke with locals about the legend and had them take him to sighting areas and point out tracks, which he interpreted as misread Malayan sun bear tracks (Heuvelmans 1965, 73). However, Heuvelmans was known for having an open mind. He ended his interpretations with statements such as “The Malayan sun bear is,

of all the bears, the one which most often stand on its hind feet; the position is habitual, but it never walks upright” (Heuvelmans 1965, 73). And, “It is doubtful whether the legend of the *orang pendek* can be based solely on an animal which most Sumatrans know well by the name of *bruan*” (Heuvelmans 1965, 74). Surprisingly, however, Heuvelmans did not include the orangutan in his assessment of the *orang pendek*, instead turning to other forest creatures. Seeing as Sumatra is one of the only places the orangutan can be found, this is an interesting oversight on his part, as both the primate and the mythical creature share many features in common, such as reddish hair, a short stature, and a strange humanoid walk (Heuvelmans 1965, 66). He does mention the creature in passing stating that “The natives insist that the *orang pendek* is not any of the three species of gibbon to be found in Sumatra, nor is it an orangutan, though people ignorant of Malay language have often been misled into thinking that the natives believe in several species of orangutan” (Heuvelmans 1965, 63). These statements leave the question open for further interpretation and research.

Charles Fort provided another route for researchers to take. Known as a “foe of science” (Steinmeyer 2008, ix), Fort wrote four books that challenged what people believed they knew. In many ways he created the way the supernatural is thought about today, by using a mixture of belief and skepticism (Steinmeyer 2008, v). His writings eventually became so influential and popular that the term Forteanism, meaning the research into anything pertaining to extraordinary and strange phenomenon and happenings (Dictionary.com), was created (Poole 2011, 133). Today thousands of Fortean societies exist around the world, such as the International Fortean Organization and the London Fortean Society.

One researcher, inspired by Charles Fort, set out to create a new field of study that involved the collection and examination of evidence of creatures that were unknown or

unidentified by zoologists (Poole 2011, 133). This was Ivan T. Sanderson. Sanderson was a zoologist known for having an “encyclopedic knowledge of the weird and unusual” and for believing in the physical reality of the Sasquatch (Wylie 1980, 36-37). He postulated a number of theories on the Sasquatch’s origin, including a degenerate species, the *Gigantopithecus*, a sub-humanoid, and a proto-pygmy (Wylie 1980, 49). He was called in to study strange specimens such as the “Minnesota Ice Man” and investigated a number of eyewitness reports and encounters.

There are many famous accounts of Sasquatch encounters. Here I have selected two well-known cases. These appear time and again in discussions of the Sasquatch and mark important ticks on the timeline of Sasquatch studies, providing excellent examples of how the Sasquatch phenomenon has impacted people throughout the years. One of the first Sasquatch interactions, that brought widespread attention to the phenomenon, was the story of Albert Ostman from 1924, which he reported in 1957 (Napier 1972, 74). His report states that he was captured by a family of Sasquatches, including a mother, father, son, and daughter, while camping on the Toba Inlet, opposite Vancouver Island (Napier 1972, 76). He reported being with the family for six days. During this time, he was able to study them and reported that the creatures were curious but not threatening. He was eventually able to escape by distracting the father with his snuff bo (Napier 1972, 77). This is an unusual case, as it mentions an abduction and long exposure to the creatures. It is referred to repeatedly in the literature and appears to have had great impact on inspiring others to come forward with their encounters. It is also unusual in that it is cited by both advocates and skeptics in their discussions on the Sasquatch (i.e. Napier 1972, Daegling 2004).

The more famous and widely known encounter was reported by Roger Patterson and Bob Gimlin, known as the Patterson-Gimlin film, the Patterson film, or the PG film. The film was shot in Bluff Creek, California in 1967 by Roger Patterson and shows what appears to be a female Sasquatch, now nicknamed “Patty”, walking along a stream and turning back to look directly at the camera before continuing on nonchalantly (Daegling 2004, 43, 105-106). The Patterson film has been at the center of the Sasquatch debate since its creation. For many advocates, it often serves as a “beacon of hope” (Daegling 2004, 43) and is the pivotal piece of evidence that proves the creature’s existence. The general consensus among scientists is that it is a fake, but this has yet to be proven (i.e. Daegling 2004, Krantz 1993, Wylie 1980).

These and encounters like them helped spur a profession in Sasquatch studies. The 1950s saw the emergence of serious Sasquatch related research. Four main researchers emerged, setting the stage for all studies to come: Renè Dahinden, John Green, and Dr. Grover Krantz and Dr. John Napier.

Renè Dahinden saw the search for the Sasquatch as an extremely personal matter. He was concerned by hoaxes and often especially critical of evidence and encounter stories. Although he did deem the Patterson film credible enough to use it as his sole explanation for the continuation of his research (Wylie 1980, 31-32).

John Green, a journalist from British Columbia, was one of the first people to write about the Sasquatch and helped popularize the belief that the Sasquatch exists in North America and that it can be classified. He also called upon scientists to perform more research on the Sasquatch, suggesting that the stories of various Native American tribes had been misinterpreted and that scientists incorrectly placed the Sasquatch into the realm of myth instead of reality (Suttles, 1979, 39).

Dr. Grover Krantz was a professor of anthropology at Washington State University. Considered one of the fathers of Sasquatch research, some credit him with keeping the interest in research of the creature alive (Daegling 2004, 54). One of his main theories was that the Sasquatch was actually a relative of *Gigantopithecus*, a species he named *G. blacki* (Daegling 2004, 14). Krantz received backlash over this assertion. It is a rare and controversial practice to provide a scientific name to a creature before an actual specimen has been produced for research. However, he advocated for the physical reality of the Sasquatch, even going as far as publishing the anatomy of a Sasquatch foot (i.e. Daegling 2004, Krantz 1993, Wylie 1980). Krantz's legacy lives on as his first cousin twice removed, Laura Krantz, is currently working on a podcast, detailing the history of Sasquatch research and how it is being played out today.

Dr. John Napier was the Director of the Primatology Program at the Smithsonian Institute from 1967–1969. During his time there he is known for examining the famous Patterson-Gimlin footage and for examining the “Minnesota Ice Man”. Not to be confused with Otzi, this was a strange humanoid creature brought to the institution's attention by Frank Hansen, a carnival worker, in 1968. It had originally been on the carnival circuit when researchers began to take interest (Wylie 1980, 221). The Smithsonian expressed some interest in the specimen after it had been examined by other's in the field such as Sanderson and Heuvelmans. Napier had been convinced it was a hoax from the beginning and when the Smithsonian did officially express interest Hansen quickly withdrew the specimen from public view (Wylie 1980, 222-223). While Napier did believe this case was a hoax, he held an open-minded stance, based mainly on the abundant footprint evidence, believing that the Sasquatch was a real, but unidentified creature, such as had happened to the Okapi (Wylie 1980, 35). This willingness to express an open-mindedness on the topic and his calling attention to any facts or

evidence that did not fit into normal patterns made Napier stand out among his peers. The best example of this is his critique of a number of footprints that appeared too rectangular and straight, not conforming to a normal primate or humanoid pattern (Wylie 1980, 55). He also researched who reported the footprints, considering the most reliable evidence to come from people with “unquestioned credibility and character, and people who have no axe to grind”, such as police officers and park rangers (Wylie 1980, 56).

While these researchers were some of the best and definitely some of the more scientific, the 1950s were a time of stress and disillusionment with science and the government. The atomic bomb’s destructive force had been exposed, the looming threat of communism was in the air, and people who had once trusted the government and scientists to keep them safe felt those institutions may have paved the road to Armageddon. They now lived in an unsafe world (Poole 2011, 125).

Monster hunting was one of the responses to this disillusionment and distrust. Belief in strange creatures, known as cryptids, creatures whose existence is questionable, typically in a fantastical way, provided an alternative to mainstream science. It allowed Americans to profess faith in an investigative system while also doubting established scientists and their authority (Poole 2011, 135). Many university scientists avoid paranormal topics such as the Sasquatch, possibly due to concerns of reputation and credibility or because of its connotation as an abnormal science. Researchers like Krantz and Napier, however, applied scientific methods to the question, investigating the Sasquatch using the same techniques they would for their other research studies. It also opened the door to lay people who were interested in the topic and wanted their chance to investigate and contribute, such as Dahinden and Green. Scientific investigation had become a thing of the people.

The late 1960s/early 1970s saw a brief, but lasting change in Sasquatch belief. Namely, the idea that the Sasquatch harbors paranormal powers, such as teleportation and mind reading, or that the creature is actually an alien (Milligan 1990, 97). This belief was popularized by Stan Gordon who was the director of the Pennsylvania Association for the Study of the Unexplained (Milligan 1990, 89), but has not taken hold widely among Sasquatch believer, although the idea of “Paranormal Bigfoot” is making a comeback in Bailey.

Today’s Sasquatch research reflects the work done by those in the 1950s. The norm is still to find, evaluate, and analyze physical evidence. The majority of works focus on discussing the physical reality of the creature and why or why not it is supported via scientific methods and theories. Some of the most influential of these researchers are Kenneth Wylie, David Daegling, and Dr. Jeff Meldrum.

Kenneth Wylie is a Ph. D in African Studies, an anthropologist, and a historian (Wylie 1980, back cover). His interest in the creature began early in life and as he grew older he started to question his belief in the “hairy manlike monster” (Wylie 1980, VII). He recognized that the Sasquatch had emerged as a genuine phenomenon and was more than a passing fad. During this time in university, he became interested in human ancestors and primates. All of this lead to a renewed interest in the Sasquatch phenomenon on his part. His research mainly relates to his own personal inquiries, but does include investigations into physical evidence such as footprints and eyewitness reports. By compiling the evidence, he was able to come to his own conclusions about the creature, suggesting that it will probably never be found, but that, should it exist, reducing the Sasquatch to simple formulas or just another species would be a shame (Wylie 1980, 235).

Another current researcher is David Daegling, a physical anthropologist and Professor of Anthropology at the University of Florida (Daegling n.d.). His research focuses on the examination of previously found evidence and applying theories of anthropology and scientific inquiry to it. His stance on the Sasquatch is straightforward. He does not believe it exists based on the current evidence, but is open to examining any new evidence that is brought forward. While he is most publicly noted for his contribution to Sasquatch research he has also contributed to the literature in primatology and physical anthropology, including biomechanical modeling of skeletal structures, dental microwear, and paleoanthropology (Daegling n.d.).

Dr. Jeff Meldrum of Idaho State University, is one of the big names in Sasquatch studies in the 21st century. He comes from a background in academia, where he specialized in primate evolutionary biology, with a focus in the “emergence of human locomotor adaptations” (Meldrum 2006, 22). His current research has focused on Sasquatch physical evidence such as foot prints, vocalizations, and DNA. DNA has become an increasingly important field to Sasquatch studies. While the studies have been controversial in terms of possible human contamination, they show a new branch of evidence being utilized. Studies have been conducted by Dr. F. Martin Duncan (hair samples), Dr. Sterling Bunnell (hair samples), Dr. Jerold Lowenstein (hair samples), Dr. W.C. Osman Hill (scat samples), and Dr. Vaughn Bryant (scat samples) (Meldrum 2006, 262-269). Meldrum has continued this work with an analysis of these various studies, tracking the conception, duration, and aftermath of each. He states that he is doubtful that DNA alone will be able to establish the existence of the species (Meldrum 2006, 270). His work deals with a less popular, but still important aspect of science, the critique and examination of previous studies. Through his work Meldrum has come to the following conclusion: “I can say that a respectable portion of the evidence I have examined suggests, in an

independent yet highly correlated manner, the existence of an unrecognized ape, known as sasquatch” (Meldrum 2006, 271).

The physical side of the Sasquatch phenomenon has been the major focus of Sasquatch studies for the majority of its life. Over the years, culture has become a more important aspect of the Sasquatch phenomenon. Researchers have investigated how these creatures play into a larger cultural picture, looking at how they represent aspects of both popular and scientific culture, and what types of demographics are found within related communities.

A common theme in cultural research relating to the Sasquatch is the investigation into the wild man myth and what it represents about the cultures they come from. The wild man myth refers to those creatures that are intermediaries between civilized culture and humanity’s’ animalistic beginnings (Simon 2017, 118). They represent the possibility for humanity to slip back to its roots and once again become uncivilized, thus representing an intrinsic fear of the civilized world, but also a longing for the past and a time of more freedom and adventure. They provide a way to think about and understand humanity with all its contradictions, difficulties, limitations, and “wonder” (Buhs 2009, 3). Wild men come in many forms such as Enkidu from Gilgamesh, the Green Men of Medieval Europe, Grendel from Beowulf, and an arrangement of fawns, satyrs, and fairies (Simon 2017, 118).

Recently the Sasquatch has been proposed as its own type of wild man. Edward Simon suggests that the Sasquatch is an example of both a “distorted reflection of our most primal nature” and our interest in the relationship between humanity and the natural world, especially as it pertains to imaginary or nostalgic rustic visions. He has termed this the Sasquatch Pastoral (Simon 2017, 118-119). This take and other wild man explanations propose that the Sasquatch has implanted itself, almost universally, in the human imagination because it represents

repressed or forbidden desires and a chance to envision a better more natural time when humanity first originated (i.e. Simon 2017, 119; Buhs 2009, 3).

The connection to wild men was one of the first cultural connections made about the Sasquatch. Connections between the Sasquatch and human psychology or culture as a general theory are still the most common type of cultural work done on the topic. Recently, the investigation into actual communities, Sasquatch paraphernalia, and media appearances has become more prominent. One of the first documented and researched media appearances was that of the 1958 Jerry Crew footprints in Humboldt County, CA. In October of that year alone, the *Humboldt Times* featured “Bigfoot” in 18 separate issues, some with more than one story revolving around the creature (Buhs 2009, 75). While no one investigated the reasons why the community may flock to such stories, they did look at the differences between the articles and what was being said. In general, there were two groups: the confirmed and the converted. Meaning those who had their beliefs confirmed in the creature and those who were converted from skeptics to believers (Buhs 2009, 76). Most other information was ignored and while there were some critiques they mostly came from outsiders who were more interested in the footprints themselves than the media storm.

One other common modern element to the cultural research of the Sasquatch is its connection with local economies. The best-case study, so far, is that of Willow Creek and “Big Foot Daze”. After the initial excitement of the 1950s with Patterson-Gimlin and Jerry Crew the area was quiet and the small towns of California began to suffer from the lack of tourism and a variety of other factors, such as the decline of the lumber industry (Buhs 2009, 126). In order to bring back the economy, towns began to focus on becoming service industries and part of that was attracting people to town. Willow Creek did this with the help of “Bigfoot” himself. Playing

off the nation's overall enduring interest in the creature they opened Bigfoot burgers, Bigfoot Golf & Country Club, Bigfoot Lumber and Hardware, Sasquatch Second Hand, and the Bigfoot Curio Shop, all rounded off with an annual Labor Day celebration with a "Bigfoot" theme, aka "Bigfoot Daze" (Buhs 2009, 125-126). In this instance the Sasquatch was a way to bring life back into the town. The Willow Creek-China Flats Museum Bigfoot wing opened in 2000 as both a response to claims that the Sasquatch was simply an economic feature of the town and to preserve the town's identity (Buhs 2009, 126). While the museum does generate money for the town and attract a number of tourists every year, their mission revolves around the community and a dedication to preserving its history for future generations: "Its purpose is to publicly inform, educate and celebrate the area's rich cultural diversity and to also maintain, preserve and publicly display the Bigfoot and Sasquatch collection" (Willow Creek China-Flats Museum n.d.). An in-depth study investigating whether or not the museum and the town are using the image of the Sasquatch for economic reasons alone has yet to be undertaken. However, Willow Creek and towns like it do appear in discussions on the commercialization and overall economic nature of the Sasquatch and similar creatures (i.e. Buhs 2009, Holloway 2010, Coleman 2003).

Today the Sasquatch is more popular than ever. Conferences and festivals dedicated to the creature occur all over the country annually attracting thousands (i.e. sQuatch Fest, Yeti Fest, Texas Bigfoot Conference). In the past year I have experienced preparations for a Sasquatch themed birthday, a Sasquatch themed wedding, and I have assisted with multiple elementary and middle school reports on the subject. A true creature of popular culture the Sasquatch has become an American icon. This phenomenon takes shape in a variety of forms and has inspired entire institutions to be created on its behalf, especially that of the Sasquatch micromuseum and research center.

Museums and Oddities

There is a wide range of publications on museums, from caring for collections and creating exhibits to what makes a museum a museum. Including all of these would not be inside the scope of this thesis. Therefore, this study will primarily focus on the history of displaying curiosities, a comparison of “proper” museum techniques to those used within micromuseums, and the studies previously conducted on micromuseums.

Displaying curiosities and wonders is not anything new in the museum world. The cabinet of curiosity, made popular in the 16th and 17th Centuries, displayed wonders of nature and man. Things like unicorn tails, rhino horns, and ancient coins, were all on display (MacGregor 2001, 202, 205). These cabinets began with the efforts of princes, but in the second half of the 16th C they became just as much for the public as for the researcher. Audiences came for pleasure, recreation, and instruction. This caused the cabinet owners to begin organizing their objects in an aesthetically pleasing and educational way (Olmi 2001, 7).

In the United States the museum began as a curiosity cabinet. The first permanent museum in the American English colonies was established in 1773 by the Charleston Library Society. Its purpose was “to collect materials for a full and accurate natural history of South Carolina” (Porter 1979, 47). Next came Eugene Simitiere who worked to preserve and display snakes and other natural history specimens (Porter 1979, 48). However, his museum was seen as disorganized, “thrown together”, and was often referred to as a “magpie’s nest” (Richman 1962, 258).

In 1786, Charles Wilson Peale opened what is considered America’s first scientifically organized museum. His collection consisted of various curiosities, that were a great improvement over the other cabinets of his day (Richman 1962, 258). He titled it the American

Museum and attracted the public through “rational amusement”, or through the display of strange curiosities, while still contributing to scholarship through the scientific study of his specimens (Sellers 1980, 332). At the same time his museum featured pure cabinet items, such as a two-headed cow (Saxon 1989, 134).

Based on Peale’s success P.T. Barnum opened the Barnum museum in 1893, whose sole purpose was to “amuse and bamboozle” the public without allowing any scientific principles to stand in the way (Porter 1979, 49). Barnum’s museum referred back to the original days of the cabinet, showing off strange, sometimes fake, wonders. However, he added more than his predecessors did. Barnum took to displaying, what he termed “ethnographic curiosities”, such as a family of albinos and other “freaks” (Saxon 1989, 136).

Peale and Barnum both set different precedents for the museums of the United States. Many others grew around them or borrowed their ideas. While the majority of museums today follow scientific principles, and have an organized system of display, collecting, and labeling, the spirit of the cabinet still exists. Today the cabinet of curiosity is displayed through micromuseums and oddity attractions. Some follow Peale’s example of strange but educational, others follow Barnum, looking for shock value and pure entertainment. Books like *America’s Strangest Museums* (1998) and *Offbeat Museums* (1997) list hundreds of small unique museums all over the United States. These typically house items that mainstream museums would not have the space or desire to focus on. They are specific and detailed in one topic and often attract large amounts of visitors based on their novelty. However, little scholarly work has been done on these museums.

Many may not consider these modern-day cabinets to be museums. Yet, the field is still unsure of exactly what a museum is. In 2006, the American Association of Museums defined a museum as follows:

A non-profit, permanent, established institution, not existing primarily for the purpose of conducting temporary exhibitions, exempt from federal and state income taxes, open to the public and administered in the public interest, for the purpose of conserving and preserving, studying, interpreting, assembling, and exhibiting to the public for its instruction and enjoyment objects and specimens of educational and cultural value, including artistic, scientific (whether animate or inanimate), historical, and technological material (Ambrose and Paine 2006, 8).

This definition has been interpreted, summarized, and implemented in many ways over the years. One of the most succinct, summaries of the definition, comes from Tristram Besterman who states: “Museums, in the broadest sense, are institutions which hold their possessions in trust for mankind and for the future welfare of the [human] race. Their value is in direct proportion to the service they render the emotional and intellectual life of the people” (Besterman 2011, 433). Currently, as of April 17th, 2018, the AAM does not provide a standardized definition of a museum on their website, instead preferring to “leave it open to the interpretation of their members” (AAM Representative 2018). However, this does not mean they have taken themselves out of the debate. In their Center for the Future of Museums blog, there are a number of posts regarding the question of what a museum is. One of the first posts that appears when searching “museum definition” is “The Museum Identity Crisis- Who the heck are ‘we’, anyway?” This post is from 2009, but mentions a number of qualities that have not found their way into previous definitions, such as for-profit museums, like the International Spy Museum (The Alliance’s Center for the Future of Museums, 2009). The fact that a more recent article does not result from the search and that there is no formalized definition published on

the AAM website is interesting, possibly reflecting a change in museum management to become more inclusive. While in 2007, the International Council of Museums (ICOM) defined the museum as “a non-profit, permanent institution in the service of society and its development, open to the public...for the purposes of education, study, and enjoyment” (International Council of Museums 2008). Does a museum need to have collections? Should it serve as a forum or a temple? What is the role of these small single subject museums and how do they feature in this debate? What role does having a formalized definition serve and what can it teach professionals about their own institutions?

This debate has since been extended to establishments previously not considered museums. Interest in micromuseums, small single-subject independently run museums, has been growing over the last few years. The work that has been done concentrates largely on micromuseums in Britain. In 1988 Peter Vergo argued in favor of a more theoretical and humanistic approach to museums, which examined their purpose, politics, values, and histories (Candlin 2012, 28). This questioning of museums and practices, created a boom in museum creation. By the late 1980s Britain saw a rise from 900 museums in the 1960s to 2,500. (Candlin 2012, 29). The majority of these museums fit into the micromuseum category. While there was some interest in these sites during the 1980s, the majority of it was through the lens of heritage and they were not considered true museums. The heritage focus was seen mostly as a negative aspect. It was argued that many of these independent sites were inauthentic, created an inauthentic representation, or created “bogus” history (Candlin 2012, 30).

As time has gone on heritage sites and heritage research have become more integrated into the field of museum studies. The line between heritage site and museum is blurry. Many of the attributes that make something heritage, such as enactors, immersive environments, and

local history, can now be found in museums. The dramatic and immersive styles pioneered by these independent museums and heritage sites have caused museologists to rethink the importance of the subjective experience and allow more leeway in regards to display and categorizing sites (Candlin 2012, 35). This has also led to an interest in how these venues play into the wider field of museum studies and what they can teach us.

Over the past five years micromuseums have been receiving more attention. While they do not appear in mainstream museums studies literature that discuss major theory and procedures, they have been providing excellent case studies in how museum studies can expand and how museums can better serve communities. Canada, like Britain, has been one of the forerunners of this project. Lianne McTavish and other Canadian museum professionals have recently begun discussions on how micromuseums can be fit into the museum studies paradigm.

The most prominent examples from Canada are small rural community museums, particularly the Gopher Hole Museum in Torrington, Alberta. The Gopher Hole Museums offers an insight into community building and nostalgic historic recreation. It is comprised of 47 cases, each with a handmade scene featuring gophers dressed as people from the town, inside historic buildings or participating in events or festivals that no longer take place (McTavish 2017, 5, 8-9). While this display of the town's history may seem unusual it directly connects and represents its concerns and identity. Gophers are seen as a nuisance and there have been multiple government programs enacted to rid the area of them, thus the use of real taxidermy gophers in the museum represents a piece of the town's culture (McTavish 2017, 6). The museum itself was created and is run by local women with no professional museum training. They plan and create all of the exhibits and offer on-site interpretation. The museum also provides an economic source for the community. Torrington is a small rural hamlet far from any main roads.

However, the museum has attracted worldwide attention over the years through various controversies, the most notable being with People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (P.E.T.A.) (McTavish 2017, 3). Tourists come to the museum, they eat at local restaurants, shop at local stores, and stay at the local hotel (McTavish 2017, 9). While this topic may not engage everyone the Gopher Hole Museum is a classic example of a thriving micromuseum and showcases the strong connection to the local community that many micromuseums have.

There is a long history of both Sasquatch research and museum studies that has led to a point in history where the research of a Sasquatch museum and its impact on the wider community can contribute significantly to anthropology and the museum profession. However, there is still more that the Sasquatch can teach us about culture and society. We must investigate the communities involved in the phenomenon, look to the micromuseums and how they interact both with their communities and the creature. Why are humans, particularly Americans, so fascinated with the idea of a large hairy creature roaming our backwoods? Are the motivations simply economic or is that only a small part of the picture? Researchers spend a lot of time in museums or on projects that revolve around “normal” science, regulating the realm of creatures and legends to folklore and only viewing them from the lenses of skepticism or incredulity. We must open ourselves up to the possibilities these creatures and the communities revolving around them have to offer.

Chapter 3: Literature Review

“We seek the shrinking wild woods for bigfoot, for is he/his kind are there” (Wylie 1980, 234)

The Sasquatch and Native America

Some of the earliest known reports and evidence of the Sasquatch comes from Native American legends and traditions. The recording and analysis of these reports and cultural stories has produced only a small amount of literature in comparison to works written by Western scientists on physical evidence. This section will look at the literature that has been compiled in the area of Native American world views.

Two of the most in-depth and thorough works published on Native American beliefs include Wayne Suttles' "On the Cultural Track of the Sasquatch" and Kathy Strain's *Giants, Cannibals, & Monsters: Bigfoot in Native Culture*. Suttles traces the various names and stories of the Sasquatch in Native cultures. In doing so he is able to provide physical descriptions of the creature and how each tribe differed in terms of behavior and attitude toward the Sasquatch. While there were differences in description, level of aggression, and of human interaction, each of the terms does refer to a creature that is a giant and lives in the wilderness. For example, he discusses both the Quinault *tsadja-tko*, which refers to mountain giants who intermarry and resemble humans, and the Klallam *cietkw*, a creature that lives in the mountains and is so fast you could never out run it (Suttles 1979, 76, 79).

Strain provides one of the most comprehensive anthologies of Native American lore regarding the Sasquatch. She breaks the book into tribal regions and then into specific tribes. It

does not provide interpretation regarding the stories other than a short introduction about why the author took on the project. It does provide complete texts of Native American legends as well as cultural maps and a list of Native names for the Sasquatch, along with their English translation and what tribe they belong to. Like many of the other publications, Strain's compilation shows a more human side to the creature. Many times, they will talk and interact with the people and animals in stories, just as the people or animals interact with one another. The Sasquatch was not seen as a completely separate entity, just a distinct, possibly dangerous, tribe.

Another important work regarding Native American Sasquatch studies comes from Henry Sharp's *The Transformation of Bigfoot*. Sharp's work follows his time with the Chipewyan of the Northwestern territories of Canada during the spring and summer of 1975 (Sharp 1988, xii). The Sasquatch is not so much the subject of this book, but plays into his overall research on the conception and exercise of power within Chipewyan communities. Chapter six focuses on the relationship between the Sasquatch, or *Bekaycho*, and the Chipewyan. It provides an up-close case study of how some Native groups interact with the idea of the Sasquatch. Sharp finds no evidence of a strong belief in the creature among the group he lives with until 1975, when it is introduced to his group by a white visitor who hired some of the Chipewyan to be his camping and fishing guides for the summer (Sharp 1988, 102). However, Sharp recognizes that the majority of Chipewyan had not heard of the Sasquatch before 1975. He instead suggests that it was simply not a motif that had caught on, as the Sasquatch is a large part of the popular culture of Vancouver and there have been multiple well-publicized sightings (Sharp 1988, 113). Sharp takes interest in this difference between Western, specifically American and Canadian, and Indigenous Canadian cultures.

He tracks the dispersion of the story among the group and how they were able to take an unfamiliar creature and turn it into a “play of power”. The Chipewyan men framed the creature like a bogeyman, which was a common figure in their culture (Sharp 1988, 104). He suggests that *Bekaycho* and other bogeymen are used to account for murder, theft, death, infanticide, and other forms of violence (Sharp 1988, 108). They are also used as a way to control women and children. Women and children tend to see and fear bogeymen more than men. This creates a culture where women and children look toward men for protection and safety, thus creating plays of power (Sharp 1988, 106-107). In this instance Sharp relays that the *Bekaycho* is both a fictional and a real figure. Those living in the community recognize that many of the things attributed to the bogeyman are done by human people and the creatures being used as a scapegoat, but Sharp also states that “a major reason the Chipewyan have a bogeyman figure is because there are bogeymen” (Sharp 1988, 110).

The Beginnings of Cryptozoology

Interest in strange creatures like the Sasquatch dates back to the early days of exploration. Cryptozoology or the study of evidence tending to substantiate the existence of, or the search for, creatures whose reported existence is unproved, such as the Abominable Snowman or the Loch Ness monster (Dictionary.com), has become an incredibly popular area of study over the years. This section will look at the big names involved in putting cryptozoology on the map.

In his book *On the Track of Unknown Animals*, Bernard Heuvelmans criticizes zoologists for their refusal to investigate “impossible” creatures, stating that “because a country is on the map it does not mean that we know all about its inhabitants” (Heuvelmans 1965, 3). His main argument for the study of these creatures, such as the *orang pendek* and the Abominable

Snowman, is that many creatures, since proven to be real, were at first thought of as pure fantasy by Western scientists. For example, scientists denied the existence of the pygmy hippo for years after the discovery and documentation of two skulls (Heuvelmans 1965, 11). Heuvelmans was a pioneer in this field. His goal was to extend the scientific principles of zoology to more remote regions and to the understanding of strange and unusual creatures, not as an act of sensationalism, but as an act of scientific discovery.

Ivan T. Sanderson, another well-known cryptozoologist, has many books, but is known for *Abominable Snowmen: Legend Comes to Life*. In it he traces the story of what he terms sub-humans across the world, during the Quaternary Period, which spans from 2.6 million years ago to the present (Sanderson 1961). Sanderson took part in many Sasquatch research projects, such as the Slick expedition, and identified possible specimens, such as the Minnesota Ice Man. In this book, he looks at his personal experiences as well as eyewitness reports, maps, and historical accounts. His goal is to make a case for the creatures' existence across the globe and to add to the discussion on why these creatures have avoided capture for so long. This book and his other work led to Sanderson losing the attention of his fellow scientists as he advocated for a new and unsubstantiated classification of the Sasquatch as a species (Wylie 1980, 146).

The Beginnings of Focused Research

Beginning in the 1950s, serious research revolving around the Sasquatch took place. In the following decades publications documenting this research became popular resources and took the nation by storm. This section will look at the main publications and researchers from this period, including Rene Dahinden, John Green, Dr. Grover Krantz, and Dr. John Napier.

Rene Dahinden's book *Sasquatch*, co-authored with Don Hunter, is an overview of Dahinden's life. It tracks his life from childhood to adulthood, charting how he became

interested in the Sasquatch and the consequences his involvement in the phenomenon had on his life. This book is different than other publications in that it does not chronicle evidence and reports in a straightforward manner. Instead, it lists the reports and events that Dahinden found important and that spurred his career. It is more personal than the works of other researchers. Chapter five chronicles Dahinden's relationship to his wife and children; "Rene was to choose between his obsession with the Sasquatch and his place with the family...the result was a separation and subsequently a divorce" (Hunter and Dahinden 1973, 110). Chapter six discusses Dahinden's review of the Patterson-Gimlin film (Hunter and Dahinden 1973, 122) and chapter nine provides Dahinden's personal conclusions about the evidence so far. While this book is more a (auto)biography of Dahinden, it also shows the personal nature of Sasquatch research and how it can impact the lives of those involved.

Another well-known researcher is John Green, author of *Sasquatch: The Apes Among Us* by John Green. In it Green covers a range of eye-witness accounts and physical evidence. He tracks reports from around the world, providing sighting reports, evidence, and research done by others as examples for scientific consideration. Green also provides an overview of possibly misleading words and/or behaviors that professional scientists and enthusiasts should be cautious of when conducting research. He is concerned with how the public may be misled and provides a list of behaviors that indicate frauds and hoaxes as well as misleading terms, that sound professional, but have no real meaning (Green 1978, 153-155). This work is meant to be a compilation of his research and the work of others to create a more complete picture of the Sasquatch. It is also used as a call to further research and a challenge to scientists to truly investigate the creature's existence.

Dr. Grover Krantz is noted for his contribution as editor of *The Scientist Looks at the Sasquatch II* and his book *Bigfoot Prints*. *Bigfoot Prints* provides a discussion on Sasquatch anatomy, ecology, society, and intelligence. He does this through an examination of footprint casts, eye witness reports, and inferences made from primates, such as gorillas and orangutans. He states that “The observation of broad shoulders puts them in the Hominoidea family” (Krantz 1993, 170). The purpose of this book is to share and provide the information Krantz found necessary to the study of the Sasquatch. He cites the fact that scientific journals refuse to publish on the creature and that lay researchers withhold their best information as reasons why a work like his has not been published before (Krantz 1993, 144).

Krantz was also responsible for editing and contributing to *The Scientist Looks at the Sasquatch II*. This is a collection of essays surrounding the scientific investigation of the Sasquatch. It was published as a response to John Green’s call for a more cohesive and serious study on the creature. Contributors were solicited from a number of fields including zoology, sociology, and anthropology. The topics include scientific investigations of the Sasquatch, its cultural capabilities, and the perceptions of both the public and scientists on the matter. Krantz also contributed a discussion on Bigfoot hands and feet, similar to the work described above.

John Napier’s main publication is entitled *Bigfoot*. In it he challenges the idea that scientists are afraid that the “frailties of their doctrines would be exposed” if the Sasquatch was proven to exist, and thus hiding evidence and refusing to conduct research (Napier 1972, 15). Instead he remarks that “nothing intrigues a scientist more than monster tales” (Napier 1972, 15). Thus, his book is a review of the evidence from a trained scientific viewpoint. His work is unique from the other three in that he discusses monster tales and how they are used and why they are popular (Napier 1972, 19-21). He provides a brief history of unknown and fantastical

animals being proven real, such as the gorilla, Komodo dragon, and the okapi (Napier 1972, 32). Napier's goal is to provide the scientific study no one else was willing to do. While he finds evidence of a definite phenomenon, he concludes stating; "I am convinced that the Sasquatch exists, but whether it is all that it is cracked up to be is another matter altogether" (Napier 1972, 205). He goes on to say that "myth and legend have survival value for mankind and are therefore subject to natural selection...perhaps it is connected with man's highly socialized state" (Napier 1972, 206). These conclusions suggest that Napier deems the topic credible, but perhaps in different ways than the other researchers. The Sasquatch definitely exists within people's minds, but there needs to be more scientifically based research and evidence before a definitive answer can be given.

Finally, Barbara Wasson published *Sasquatch Apparitions: A Critique on the Pacific Northwest Hominoid* in 1979. One of her main focuses in this work is a critique of other Sasquatch researchers and their work. This is one of the only sources that looks at other researchers in this way. However, she spends very little time on many of the professional researchers, such as Napier and Krantz. She does mention multiple other researchers; however, the publications of these investigators either do not exist tangibly or are so difficult to locate at this time that they are mute at this point in time. Wasson was able to locate these researchers either personally or through her contacts with other well-known names in the Sasquatch world such as Dahinden. However, due to a high level of territorialism, meaning researchers at the time of her work often did not share or publish their work, their contributions are often lost today. The one researcher Wasson does an extensive section on Rene Dahinden, possibly because she was a close friend of his. This work is mentioned, often passingly, in many of the works listed here and has therefore been included.

New Tactics and Sasquatch Psychology

The 1980s saw a turn in Sasquatch research, from pure physical science to the social study of the creature and the sociology behind legends and their accompanying creatures. Anthropologists, journalists, and sociologists began applying their own disciplines to the search. This section will cover work executed by researchers that look at old evidence in new ways. Each of these publications deals with viewing evidence and trying to prove or disprove the physical reality of the creature, while adding a short discussion on the cultural relevancy of the Sasquatch near the end of their study.

Kenneth Wylie discusses the phenomenon from a reporter's perspective in *Bigfoot: A Personal Inquiry into a Phenomenon*. He interviews zoologists, anthropologists, and some of the main lay researchers in the field, such as Dahinden. His book offers an interesting perspective on the people involved in the Sasquatch phenomenon and how their research has impacted their lives and careers. His is one of the few works that consolidates the research and experiences of Dahinden, Green, Krantz, and Napier in a way that is unbiased and presents their work in a matter of fact way. He also covers a number of theories espoused about the Sasquatch, including the relic-humanoid hypothesis, or the idea that earlier forms of man-kind, such as the Neanderthal, have survived into the present day, that it is an unknown species ape, that it is a surviving *Gigantopithecus*, and that it is a surviving, yet divergent, ancestor of the orangutan (Wylie 1980, 43-47). Wylie's ideas are not far from what earlier researchers, such as Heuvelmans, suggested. Heuvelmans' use of natural history and observation spurred the development of many of these theories. These theories are still in play today, although some researchers, such as those at the Sasquatch Outpost, have now added the category of a divergent human species to the list, suggesting the creature is more human than animal.

Wylie ends his book with a discussion of possible cultural interpretations of the Sasquatch and how culture has propelled the legend through time. He suggests that “we are confused by our own behavior, alternatively blaming nature and society for our malfunctions...in such a world our ancient myths...remind us of the mysteries lost, of a time when we huddled in the night in the company of our familial band” (Wylie 1980, 232-233). In this Wylie is suggesting that the Sasquatch resonates so soundly in Western culture today, because people desire a mystery and a return to a different, romanticized time. The wilderness is shrinking and myths and legends, like the Sasquatch, provide a sense of the unknown, something still left to discover.

David Daegling’s book, *Bigfoot Exposed: An Anthropologist Examines America’s Enduring Legend*, is written in a way that supports rational scientific discussion. As a physical anthropologist, he is offering a different perspective. He does not believe the Sasquatch exists in the flesh, based on current evidence, but offers constructive criticisms to both advocates’ and skeptics’ arguments. Each chapter revolves around a different aspect of the Sasquatch phenomenon, such as its social history, the Patterson-Gimlin film, and the physical evidence. Daegling outlines the history, arguments, and analysis of each aspect in a way that is clear, logical, and respectful to both sides. Daegling’s chapter on the overall phenomenon of the Sasquatch is the closest the literature has come to my research topic. In it he emphasizes that many researchers are “missing the point” in arguing over the factuality of the Sasquatch. The story does not depend on whether or not a real, giant, hairy ape is walking around (Daegling 2004, 254-255), but on how and why people relate to it.

Dr. Jeff Meldrum’s book, *Sasquatch: Legend Meets Science*, is one of the most recent comprehensive studies of physical evidence, such as foot prints, hair samples, sound samples, and photos, researched by an academic. Its overall purpose is to share his own experiences,

perspectives, and insights from over a decade of investigations and research. The book works towards establishing a framework of what is and is not plausible for the anatomy, behavior, and ecology of the Sasquatch (Meldrum 2006, 33). Each chapter outlines a different type of evidence, including a short history, recent findings, the research of evidence, and his conclusions. His final chapter asks the questions “where do we go from here?” (Meldrum 2006, 276). Meldrum suggests there needs to be a challenge to the scientific community to become more open to new ideas and let go of the extreme skepticism that “is sometimes deemed a requirement for membership” (Meldrum 2006, 276).

Another work that looks at the physical evidence and provides a possible explanation of how the Sasquatch would fit into the line of human evolution, is *Other Origins: The Search for the Giant Ape in Human Prehistory* by Ciochon, Olsen, and James. The authors provide an overview of previous theories of the Sasquatch’s evolutionary past, such as Krantz and the Gigantopithecus and the studies done by the Institute of Vertebrate Paleontology in Beijing on the alma (Ciochon, Olsen, and James 1990, 228).

The scientific research of the Sasquatch has been a controversial topic for multiple generations. It is one which invites a fair amount of ridicule, but in the end credible scientists have allowed room for the existence of an unknown hominid species, whether it be a relic of the past or a new evolutionary line. It is this knowledge that suggests it is not unreasonable for a community, such as the one in Bailey, to believe in the Sasquatch.

Cultural Roles, Approaches, and the Dimensions of Social Research

There is some work regarding how creatures impact the lives of those who believe in them. Some of these include the Sasquatch, but usually to varying and usually small degrees. This section covers the work done in this area that specifically concentrates on the sociological or psychological impacts of the Sasquatch and how it plays into everyday life.

Some helpful works, in regards to the psychological impacts and roles of creatures in general, come from Carole Carpenter and Thomas Buckley in their contributions to *Manlike Monsters on Trial*. Carpenter's study, "The Cultural Role of Monsters in Canada", focuses on "the nature and function of monsters" within Canadian society (Carpenter 1980, 97). They carry significance because they have individual importance to the people of the culture, not because an institution supports them (Carpenter 1980, 106). Her goal is to provide an overview of Canadian monsters, with insights into their cultural workings and design, instead of their physical forms. She proposes that non-violent, peaceful cultural values allow for the regulation of violent or aggressive creatures to the wilderness, keeping them far from civilized society (Carpenter 1980, 97).

Buckley backs up this claim in his work on monsters and native cultures in Northwestern California, particularly in Yurok culture. His essay, "Monsters and the Quest for Balance in Native Northwest California", explores the folklore of the Algonquian people and draws comparisons between their monsters and the Sasquatch. He traces reoccurring features of monsters and uses these patterns to argue that confrontations with these creatures is a way of representing an individual's attempt to master and understand the forces of man and nature (Buckley 1980, 152). He states that "monsters are best understood as representing different things to different people at different levels of training and development" (Buckley 1980, 168).

Carpenter and Buckley represent a common theme in the cultural study of monsters: looking at general ideas and how people impact the way monsters are portrayed. Another, more in-depth way of researching the cultural ideas and influences behind monsters is the use of surveys. While the two following examples are more generalized, some of the best information comes from surveys and questionnaires given to both academics and lay believers. Two of the more circulated questionnaires are Greenwell and King's "Attitudes of Physical Anthropologists Toward Reports of Bigfoot and Nessie" and Westrum's "Results of a Questionnaire on the Sasquatch". Both collected data from academics, scientists, and other professionals such as authors, programmers, and attorneys. Like many other works regarding the Sasquatch, these questionnaires referred to the creature's physical existence with few references to culture.

Greenwell and King concluded that academics, etc., are far more skeptical about the existence of Bigfoot than they are about the existence of the Loch Ness Monster. They received 69 useable replies. 13% accepted Bigfoot as an unknown animal, whereas 23% accepted Nessie as a valid phenomenon (Greenwell and King 1981, 79). While there is great skepticism about the Sasquatch's existence, 57% of those who participated in the studies also recognized that its existence would have a great impact on science (Greenwell and King 1981, 79-80).

Westrum's study received 29 replies with 26 of those being usable (Westrum 1979, 160). He came to many of the same conclusions as Greenwell and King, in that many of the respondents were skeptical of its existence. However, the majority of the respondents simply answered "Undecided", to the question of the creature's existence, whereas only one responded "No" (Westrum 1979, 161). Respondents listed "lack of physical evidence", "lack of competent observations", and "high probability of hoaxes" as their top reasons for expressing doubt (Westrum 1979, 162).

On the other end of the spectrum, is work done with lay researchers and enthusiasts. Christopher Bader, Carson Mencken, and Joseph Baker, authors of *Paranormal America*, took this research to the general public. Instead of sending questionnaires to professionals and academics, they interviewed and surveyed those who attended conferences on paranormal topics. They were also able to look at the Bigfoot community, message boards, blogs, books, and conferences. The authors' intention was to "address the issue of involvement in the paranormal from a different perspective" (Bader, Mencken and Baker 2010, 16). A main goal was to dispel many of the stereotypes held about those who believe in and participate in the paranormal (Bader, Mencken and Baker 2010, 131). For example, even though a large number of people in the United States believe, in some way, in a paranormal topic, the stereotype is that those who advocate for these topics are strange and on the fringes of society (Bader, Mencken and Baker 2010, 51).

Through their investigations, the authors concluded that 68% of Americans believe in at least one of the following: telekinesis, fortune-telling, haunted houses, Atlantis, monsters, astrology, communication with the dead, ghosts, and UFOs. Out of those 68%, 2% believed in all nine and 11% believed in six or more (Bader, Mencken and Baker 2010, 129). The majority of books that cover these topics only discuss the physical reality of the phenomenon. This allows skeptics to criticize and complain about the interest in these topics as a sign that America is losing its critical reasoning (Bader, Mencken and Baker 2010, 193). However, this leaves out a large part of what these topics mean, produce, and contribute to society and culture.

A more recent study from 2014, "The Paranormal is (Still) Normal" by Castro, Burrows, and Wooffitt, surveyed 4,096 participants from Great Britain on their views on multiple paranormal experiences, including telepathy, ESP, mystical experience, precognition, and

contact with the dead (Castro et al. 2014, 1). While this study does not directly relate to the Sasquatch, it does provide information on different demographic and other background characteristics that may impact the belief in paranormal phenomena. The authors conclude that the study “confirms the prevalence, commonality, and normality of reported paranormal experiences” and demonstrates how contemporary evidence of these experiences is of interest and import in social sciences especially as evidence of social phenomena (Castro et al. 2014, 11).

Dr. James Taggart has furthered this research. His article “Joe’s Bigfoot” is a short overview of his larger research project. The goal was to research the cultural interactions of Mexicanos with the Sasquatch. He was particularly interested in why someone like Joe, who was well respected and honorable, would care so much about proving the Sasquatch’s existence; “Didn’t the creature come from mass media, and weren’t most enthusiasts white working-class men on the wrong side of the Civil Rights struggle?” (Taggart 2017, 13). Taggart documented interactions between Joe, the community, and the Sasquatch. He also interviewed eyewitnesses and those who reported having an encounter with the creature. Something notable about Taggart’s work is that he provides an excellent example of how the community views the Sasquatch, through a description of a novel Joe has written. In it parallels are drawn between the human world and that of the Sasquatch, where a lesser species of Sasquatch is being preyed upon by a higher one (Taggart 2017, 14). His description suggests that those in the Mexicano community in Antonio see the Sasquatch as a symbol or a parallel to their own struggles. This is one of the only studies I know of that has focused on community beliefs and interactions with the Sasquatch at its center.

Critics

As with any area of research, especially areas involving disputed claims, there are critics. Some take a look at the claims in general, others look at how research and analysis is conducted. This section looks at some of the more vocal critics of cryptozoology, Sasquatch research, and paranormal claims.

In his book, *Why People Believe in Weird Things*, Michael Shermer describes those who believe in fantastical creatures, such as the Sasquatch, as “a quirky handful on the lunatic fringe”, “without goals”, and “normal people whose normal thinking has gone wrong in some way” (Shermer 1997, 27, 40, 45). His main argument is that many researchers fall victim to logical fallacies when investigating these creatures, such as the confirmation bias and the intellectual attribution bias (Shermer 1997, 298, 300). The confirmation bias states that “there is a presumption of a relationship that predisposes one to find evidence of that relationship even when there is none to be found” (Shermer 1997, 301), meaning one finds what he/she is looking for regardless of the evidence. The intellectual attribution bias states that “the attribution of causes of our own or other’s behavior to either a situation or a disposition” (Shermer 1997, 298). This means that a researcher may attribute a phenomenon to a specific cause even if there is no real evidence for it, but simply because that is the first “logical” explanation that comes to mind. Shermer also suggests that this is more common with well-educated people as they are better at providing “intellectual reasons for justifying their beliefs that they arrived at for nonintellectual reasons” (Shermer 1997, 299). He sees his work as a defense of skepticism stating that “the key to skepticism is to navigate the treacherous straits between know nothing skepticism and anything goes credulity by continuously and vigorously applying the methods of science” (Shermer 1997, 16).

Kenneth Feder sums up his own dive into the world of strange phenomena and ideas in his book *Frauds, Myths, and Mysteries*. His main points of discussion are science versus pseudoscience and epistemology. While a large focus of this book is why pseudoscience and claims of paranormal origins still exist in archaeology today, he also discusses why these claims are so persistent and what, he believes, they are doing to society as a whole. This book is designed as a call to the public to understand the differences between scientific, factual information and entertaining, biased information, by providing examples of what makes something scientific and on the best ways to collect information (i.e. Feder 2006, 19-20, 22-23). To his credit, Feder does not assume that scientists are infallible, instead admitting that “scientists are not isolated from the cultures and times in which they live...they share many of the same prejudices and biases of other members of their societies” (Feder 2006, 39). His conclusion is not that paranormal or strange topics should be avoided simply because they are strange, but because he does not find real value in them. Instead Feder states that “we need to focus our intellectual energies on those possible explanations that require few other assumptions” (Feder 2006, 36).

Tracking the Man-Beasts by Joe Nickell is another important work in the critique of Sasquatch studies. Nickell considers the meaning of the word monster and why fantastical creatures have become so important and grounded in American culture today. It considers the history and modern versions of multiple creatures including aliens, swamp creatures, vampires, and the Sasquatch. His section on the Sasquatch includes the Yeti, the Sasquatch, hoaxes, and tracking the creatures worldwide. Each of these subsections provides a history and discussion of important events and debates that surround the creature.

The Sasquatch appears to be a main concern in the book. He discusses the habitat, the iconography, and the evolution of the Sasquatch myth. The only creature that is featured in a special appendix in the back is the “North American Bigfoot”. Nickell also devotes a separate section to the discussion of how the Sasquatch went from myth to reality. This extra section suggests that the author believes that the Sasquatch features more prominently than the other creatures in modern society.

One difference between Nickell’s book and the other critics is that Nickell has actively participated in Sasquatch investigations and interacted with the community. This comes across in his book. He unbiasedly presents the history of the creature, along with claims from both sides. He does add his own position into the chapter but writes in a way that allows the reader to consider the full range of information before making their own decisions. He cites all of the major sources listed here, with the exception of the popular sources and the other critics listed above. He openly considers the evidence and uses his personal experience to interpret it.

Popular Sasquatch Books

I categorize popular Sasquatch books as pieces of the overall Sasquatch literature that is written by lay or independent Sasquatch researchers that focus on the tracking, finding, and the search of the creature, pieces that sensationalize the Sasquatch, such as books that focus on unsolved mysteries, or fiction novels that present the Sasquatch as the main character. I have chosen to include a few popular pieces in this review as they are the works most people who interact with the phenomenon are likely to come across. This is either because they have a popular publisher, such as Animal Planet’s *Finding Bigfoot* or because they are reader friendly, not packed with technical language or debate. I feel that to leave these pieces out of the review

would be to ignore a large and popular part of the literature. While many academics would not reference these works, they play large roles in the formation of identity among those involved with the phenomenon, especially in Bailey, and have formed and encouraged belief and interest in the topic, which will be discussed later in chapter 5.

I have categorized these entries to make it easier to identify and understand the type of work being discussed, these include “popular and researched” and “fictional”. “Popular and researched” indicates a work that has been well documented and researched, sometimes by masters’ students or doctoral students, but is often sold alongside more sensational literature and has become eye-catching and popular among the public. The “fictional” category refers to a small number of works that have the Sasquatch featured prominently or as the main character.

Popular and Researched

Loren Coleman’s *Bigfoot! The True Story of Apes in America* traces the history and evolution of giants, wild men, and hairy cryptids in America. Coleman runs the International Cryptology Museum in Maine. The goal of this publication is to show the “gray” history of the subject and provide a fuller understanding of the topics historical background. For example, one of his chapters traces the legacy of the “Jolly Green Giant”, including where the image came from, how it developed over the years, and the possible links it shares with the Sasquatch and other humanoid creatures in the popular imagination (Coleman 2003, 56-58). Coleman writes for a popular audience and his book is meant to be enjoyed by lay enthusiasts. His work differs from the others in this section in that it is still presented in an academic manner, with normalized font, a non-sensationalized cover, and a well laid out and navigable plan.

The Bigfoot Book: The Encyclopedia of Sasquatch, Yeti, and Cryptid Primates by Nick Redfern is the next step on the ladder in this area, namely the well-researched, but over

sensationalized. It lists, alphabetically, numerous topics related to the Sasquatch, such as festivals, debates, famous encounters, and biology. While this publication is well researched and provides a plethora of information not normally encountered in the Sasquatch literature it is presented in a non-academic manner. The text is larger, there are many pictures featuring men in gorilla suits, sketches of ferocious creatures, colloquial language, and pictures of the public partying at Sasquatch festivals. The cover is eye-catching and entertaining to look at as well.

The last step on this ladder includes works that contain good information, but is presented more for entertainment than for education, instruction, or knowledge building. One example is *The Sasquatch Seeker's Manual* by David Gordon. This publication provides the reader with proper Sasquatch research techniques, such as how to make plaster casts (106-110), fun tidbits of information, such as a Native American children's song used to protect children from bogeymen (53), a list of references for Sasquatch festivals, museums, and entertainment media, and lists of eyewitness encounters, categorized by state. Bailey is featured in this book, listing its appearance on the Finding Bigfoot television show and the eyewitness account that spurred the popularity of SEDM. It is full of entertaining pictures, anecdotes, and the pages are modeled after that in a stereotypical archaeologist field notebook. Overall, it does provide excellent cultural information in regards to the Sasquatch that many other publications ignore.

Fictional

I have come across three main books that fit into this category over the course of my research, that are in print and available at mainstream book stores. *Lemons* by Melissa Savage is not only featured in bookstores, but in schools. Savage tours the country speaking with elementary and middle school students about her book, her research process, and on the Sasquatch and writing in general. The book is set in Willow Creek, CA at the end of the Vietnam

War, and follows two young children through a summer of adventures looking for the elusive Sasquatch. The Sasquatch is presented as human-like in this work and spurs the bonding process between the two main characters.

The other two books are a series in progress: *The Littlest Bigfoot* and *Little Bigfoot Big City*. These books are about two girls from different worlds, one a Bigfoot, one a human, who both feel ostracized from their families and communities. In these cases, the little Bigfoot is presented as human-like with dreams and aspirations the same as the little human. The Bigfeet in this book are presented as their own species with a culture all their own.

All three of these books are written for elementary and middle school students. There are a few books written for adults, but the appearance of the Sasquatch in them is confined to a paragraph or a few passing phrases. One exception to this is *Summerland* by Michael Chabon, however this book contains many creatures, not just the Sasquatch. It is meant for higher level readers, most likely high school and above. Unlike the books for younger readers this one incorporates Native American characters and lore. However, like the other books, it features children with emotional trauma as the main characters.

Museums and Oddities

Not much work has been done regarding these small passion projects. They are often ignored or overlooked, so the museum world does not have much insight into their impacts or functions. The majority of micromuseum work is conducted outside of the U.S. Fiona Candlin took it upon herself to publish one of the first studies, terming the small, independently run establishments, micromuseums. In her book, *Micromuseology*, Candlin discusses what makes a museum a museum and traces examples of some successful micromuseums and how they interact with and relate to the public and the professional museum world.

The purpose of her book is to “show how the study of these small venues can impact upon the international sphere of museology”, suggesting that the study of micromuseums can lead to changes and greater understanding within the wider world of museums (Candlin 2016, 5). In order to do this, she separates the book into sections based on different museum ideas and problems. For example, she discusses the idea of keeping exhibits and museum objects alive through the context of the Museum of Witchcraft in Boscastle, Cornwall. She provides a discussion of how objects typically “die” within the museum by taking them out of their original context and changing their status (Candlin 2016, 53). However, Candlin is able to offer a unique example that combines alternative ways of knowing, living objects, and an old-fashioned idea of museum display. At the Museum of Witchcraft many of the objects are considered living. Staff members are witches who practice magic and are responsible for taking care of, protecting, and defending against the objects in their collections (Candlin 2016, 59,74).

The rest of the book is filled with similar examples of taking a common museum concept and showing it through a new and unique perspective that is often overlooked. She discusses the problem of balancing perspectives (chapter three), managing gifts and donors (chapter four), and different types of display techniques (chapter five), among other things, all through the lens of the micromuseum. Candlin calls for a shift from culturally dominant to marginal organizations, as a way to demonstrate the heterogeneity of museums and show that museums offer much more than what is conventionally thought of (Candlin 2016, 2). Candlin’s contribution contains multiple case studies but focuses on British museums.

Another of Candlin’s works is titled “Independent Museums, Heritage, and the Shape of Museum Studies”. In it she focuses on the small museums of England. She traces the formation of many independent, amateur museums to the attempts of the Conservative government in

the 1980s to restart the economy (32). These amateur museums were seen as creating “inauthentic environments” and “bogus history” (30) and were not welcomed into the traditional professional museum studies world. She then discusses the debate over museum versus heritage and how the definitions were seen as separate and unequal during the 80s and how this concept has changed over the decades. Candlin presents these museums as places of community with the potential to help further museum and heritage studies, citing important cases and debates, such as the 1990 re-categorization of museums by the Association of Independent Museums (AIM). The goal of her publication is to show the similarities between museums and heritage, to argue for an equal place at the table for small amateur museums in museum studies, and to show the direct relationship these small museums can have on larger museum and heritage studies.

The study of micromuseums is beginning to pick up pace in other countries as well. Lianne McTavish recently, 2017, published “Middle of nowhere: contesting rural heritage at the World Famous Gopher Hole Museum”. The goal of this publication is to consider how this museum acts as a site of contested heritage through the eyes of both locals and visitors. The author evaluates the museum on its own terms and not as an inferior version of large, urban institutions (3-4). McTavish investigates the history of the museum and its connection to the local community and how this connection influences museum decisions. Another major part of the article is looking at the micromuseum and how it compares to larger institutions especially in procedures and display practices. She considers the interpretations of museums that visitors are bringing with them and how those views impact the museum and the discussion of what a museum should be. This article argues for the importance in looking at these small museums to study how institutions can better serve communities and encourage debate and discussion.

The importance of an analytical approach to micromuseums is also prevalent in studies done by Mariona Moncunill-Pinas and Liisi Taimre. Moncunill-Pinas' article "The Practice of Everyday Museum Making" focuses primarily on how the practices of production and consumption are shown through amateur museums, her term for these small independent institutions, used to the same effect as Candlin's micromuseum. She tracks the power relations between three amateur museums in Catalan and Colombia, larger museums in the area, and the publics that visit them. Her main focus is the naturalization and empowerment of these amateur spaces within the larger museum community, stating that "most evidence states that amateur museum makers sincerely believe in the qualities and legitimacy of the museographic institution" (Moncunill-Pinas 2017, 11). She also proposes that further research into the results of these processes of production and empowerment, especially in how they reproduce and resist museum conventions and in how their status has changed over the years (Moncunill-Pinas 2017, 15).

Taimre focuses her attention on museums of Estonia. Her goal is to provide a clearer understanding of the motivations behind the creation of amateur museums and the unique uses of museum techniques behind the displays (Taimre 2013, 27). While she uses a few museums as evidence her main focus is on how these amateur museums fit into the New Museology and the democratization of the institution (Taimre 2013, 26, 33). One of her main discussion points is that these amateur museums serve as personal contact zones between the museum maker and the community, the visitors, and the theme of the exhibits (Taimre 2013, 30). Taimre sees the amateur museum as a place where visitors are brought into the personal world of the maker, dissuading him or her from simply walking through the exhibits, allowing for personal connections to the place and the pieces presented (Taimre 2013, 32). She believes these

personal connections could lead to a new way of professional interaction with audiences and a reinvention of what the museum is, "If...the audience is taken and accepted as an equal partner to museum professionals...perhaps one day the museums which are run by non-professionals will also be viewed and accepted as equal colleagues" (Taimre 2013, 34).

Micromuseums are often considered descendants of the cabinet of curiosity. *The Origins of Museums*, edited by Impey and MacGregor, provides an excellent background of these cabinets as well as how museums have been viewed through the centuries and how practices have changed. This work consists of multiple chapters, each written by a different professional in the field, from multiple countries. Some of the prominent chapters for this thesis include; "From the Royal Kunstkammer to the Modern Museums of Copenhagen", "Alive or Dead: Zoological Collections in the Seventeenth Century", and "'Curiosities to Adorn Cabinets and Gardens'". Each of these sections investigates specific case studies of smaller collections and museums and how they have grown and transformed over the centuries.

The wide range of texts for both the Sasquatch and museum studies provides an excellent basis for my study. These topics have been thoroughly studied previously, but there are still many areas that are emerging and need more attention. My study will fill gaps in the literature, specifically in the realm of micromuseums in the United States and the cultural impacts of the Sasquatch. Most of the literature concerning these two subjects are either young and still in development or being ignored by researchers. *Looking Through the Trees* will be a step toward filling in these gaps and possibly encouraging more research in these areas.

Chapter 4: Theoretical Framework and Research Methodology

“They are not dangerous or mentally ill, they simply live in a different cultural universe than the rest of us” (Bader et al. 2010, 157)

In terms of the paranormal, anthropology has typically treated rituals, magic, and fantastical beliefs as case studies of symbolism and/or as explanations for naturally occurring events and elements that natives do not understand. Anthropology’s engagement with paranormal topics goes back to the 19th C with the work of Sir E.B. Tylor. He investigated spiritualist mediums and proposed that the belief in spirits arose from the misinterpretation or mistaking of dreams for reality (Hunter 2016, 172).

Another early engagement with the paranormal, in a uniquely anthropological way, was the research of Bronislaw Malinowski on magic, ritual, and religion. Typically known as the father of field work, Malinowski conducted research on beliefs in magic and myth. His work centered on understanding native views and processes and providing explanations for them.

Malinowski focused on non-Western countries and cultures, such as the “natives of Kiriwina” in the Trobriand Islands and the Melanesian and Papuo-Melanesian tribes of East New Guinea during the 1940s and 50s (Malinowski 1954, 27, 149). In his work, myth is what strengthens traditions and gives them more value. They are constantly regenerated through the generations (Malinowski 1954, 146). Myth is thus a direct expression of a reality. It reveals social submissions and assertions, enforces mortality, and expresses beliefs (Malinowski 1954, 101).

Mysticism and magic are all considered a means to an end, and often involve the same

processes and procedures as science, such as a hypothesis, tools, and a proper methodology (Malinowski 1954, 70, 110). Malinowski viewed the paranormal as a scientific method used to explain natural processes and to ensure certain aspects in culture, such as the success of gardens (Malinowski 1954, 28).

The next major involvement of anthropology in the paranormal came in the 1970s. Two conferences were held in Mexico City and London concerning the implications of parapsychological research and acknowledging the need to recognize researcher's own experiences in the field as valuable research data. The publications and discussions from these conferences lead to the creation of the Society for the Anthropology of Consciousness (Hunter 2016, 173-174). Edith Turner was one of the most influential anthropologists to participate in this society. She specialized in religion, ritual and consciousness, beginning her career in the 1970s continuing through the 2000s until her death in 2016 (E. Turner n.d.). She suggested that the only way to understand rituals and other religious or paranormal phenomena was for the anthropologist to see as the natives see, that they must "endorse the experiences of spirits as veracious aspects of the life-world of the peoples with whom [they] work" (Hunter 2016, 174). E. Turner's work in turn influenced Fiona Bowie, a British anthropologist who worked around the same time as Turner and now specializes in the anthropology of religion (Bowie n.d.). She expanded on E. Turner's ideas of the anthropologist seeing like a native and proposed that the anthropologist must also adopt the categories of his/her informants and be willing to use their knowledge and world view to interpret observations and paranormal phenomena (Hunter 2016, 174). More recently, 2001, George Hansen has suggested that paranormal events and manifestations are liminal events. This idea is based on Victor Turner's views on the concept of liminal space. This is the middle phase of any ritual, where the "individual undergoes a transition

from one social status to another”, where the participant is neither one or the other (Wels, et al. 2011, 1). Using this perspective, a paranormal event, such as a shamanic ritual, could bring back order for the patient by helping them make sense of anomalous experiences and re-integrating them into society (Hunter 2016, 176).

Victor Turner’s concept of the dominant symbol is another example of anthropology’s engagement with the paranormal, specifically rituals. Unlike Tyler and the others, Turner engaged in a more traditional anthropological way. Turner observed, recorded, and analyzed rituals in other cultures, applying Western concepts and world views to interpret symbols, not so much to interpret cultural processes. Turner worked primarily during the 1950s through the 1970s and was one of the pioneers of symbolic anthropology. The dominant symbol is “a means to the fulfillment of the avowed purposes of a given ritual, but also and more importantly refers to values that are regarded as ends in themselves” (Turner 2012, 451). It is a physical object which stands for the custom itself. Here, ritual means a “formal behavior for occasions not given over to technological routine having reference to beliefs in mystical beings or powers” (Turner 2012, 449-450). The ritual is the context in which symbols and signs are found.

Turner based his work on the Ndembu *Nkang’a* puberty ritual and the milk tree. This tree is used in multiple contexts and rituals and can be a symbol of unity, division, and maturity (Turner 2012, 453-454). During the ritual, the young girl is wrapped in a blanket and laid at the base of the tree. Groups of women from the girl’s home and surrounding villages come together. The girl’s mother cooks a large feast for all those in attendance. Women eat in their village groups and then circle the tree with the girl in the center. When this occurs, the mother of the girl brings forth a spoon of cassava and all the women try to grab it. It is considered good

luck for a woman from the girl's home village to grab it, as this means she will not move away from her mother or her village (Turner 2012, 451, 454). After the ritual is completed the girl is considered a mature woman, fruitful and ready for marriage (Turner 2012, 453).

Turner relates five contexts for the milk tree during the *Nkang'a*. In the first context, the milk tree stands for the unity of all Ndembu women. It "distinguishes women as a social category and indicates their solidarity" especially against men (Turner 2012, 453). Second, the tree stands for the young girl herself. The tree becomes a symbol of her new social personality as a newly mature woman. As each girl is initiated alone, the tree separates her from all other women, at the same time it is meant to represent the unity of them all (Turner 2012, 453). Thirdly, the tree "expresses the conflict between the girl and the moral community of adult women she is entering". The tree as a source of conflict is also reflected as a place of death and suffering, as it is also the site where boys are circumcised. The young girl must respect the ritual and the power of the space by not moving during the entire day (Turner 2012, 453). The fourth context sets the tree as the opposition between the mother and the rest of the adult women. The Ndembu society is matricentric and the marriage pattern is virilocal, meaning that the mother is losing control of her daughter to the mother of her future husband (Turner 2012, 453-454). Finally, the milk tree represents the girl's matrilineage. It is the unity of her own matrilineage against the other matrilineages in attendance (Turner 2012, 454).

Like the milk tree, the Sasquatch appears in multiple contexts and "rituals" in Bailey. I am using Turner's definition of ritual here, in that there are formal behaviors expected in each, even if they occur in informal contexts, and that they all revolve around a mystical being/power, the Sasquatch. Community members participate in active research, organize community meetings and conferences, create Sasquatch memorabilia, and take part in active discussions

and story sharing. In each of these circumstances the Sasquatch takes on a different role, sometimes it plays a different role within the same context.

These various contexts and meanings lead to a few problems when it comes to interpreting both the symbol and the ritual. The main problem is that the different meanings and goals are not made explicit by the informants, and it is left up to the anthropologist to determine them based on observed behaviors and patterns (Turner 2012, 464). This, in turn, leads to another problem. What are the limits of anthropology? How much can the anthropologist be expected to understand from observations and informants? Many informants contradict each other, sometimes themselves, and the interpretations of the anthropologist. Turner suggests that the anthropologist can only understand what is happening if he/she “takes in the entire field situation from the start” (Turner 2012, 466). He/she cannot start within the details of the ritual, to do so would mean losing important background information. This leads to another question. If the informants do not see anything more than what they tell the anthropologist, does it really matter (Turner 2012, 455)? Turner would say yes. He suggests that the place of the anthropologist is to offer an outsiders perspective. Informants are participants and construct the ritual from their own point of view with their own interests, purposes, and sentiments in mind, making him/her too close to the activity to have a real view of it. It falls to the anthropologist to offer a less biased view and observe what is really happening during and as a result of the ritual (Turner 2012, 455-456).

Turner suggests three main steps to analyze rituals and symbols. The first is to examine the widest field-action context. To see the circumstances that determine what ritual takes place and what goals are being achieved. The second is to examine the context of the specific ritual. In this step, the anthropologist should interview informants and begin to pull apart the different

levels of interpretation. Here, the anthropologist should look at the contradictions supplied by the informants and what he/she observes to distinguish the layers (Turner 2012, 465). Third, the anthropologist should examine the behaviors “directed toward each symbol”, meaning he/she should become aware of the conscious aims and purposes of the behavior, but also the unconscious wishes and goals (Turner 2012, 466).

Anthropologists have slowly been embracing the idea that paranormal events and beliefs have something valuable to contribute to our understanding of human nature and culture, beyond an understanding of symbolism and natural explanations. To be clear, the paranormal is generally defined as topics that are outside of “normal” science, such as cryptids, ESP, telekinesis, and communication with the dead. One of the largest studies in this field was conducted and published by Bader, Mencken, and Baker in *Paranormal America*. The goal of their study was to “address the issues of involvement in the paranormal from a different perspective” (Bader et al. 2010, 16), specifically in the United States, meaning how and why people interact with paranormal phenomena, based mostly on demographic data, questionnaires, and observation. The authors were able to pull from multiple Gallup polls as well as their own survey and interview data to answer this question (Bader et al. 2010, 6).

One of their main findings is that the paranormal is difficult to predict. It cannot be explained or understood in simplistic or broad terms, Americans are fascinated, repulsed, intrigued, and dismissive of the paranormal (Bader et al. 2010, 5). In their words “not only do different types of people become attracted to different paranormal beliefs and have different types of paranormal experiences, it is quite possible that different types of people will be more attracted to different levels of involvement in a paranormal subculture” (Bader et al. 2010, 127).

Another relevant finding is that the belief in the paranormal is more common and less strange than stereotypically thought of. Their study found that 68% of Americans believe in at least one paranormal claim, thus suggesting that non-belief is actually the deviant behavior (Bader et al. 2010, 129). Negative connotations and perceptions come about due to the reality that the most eccentric believers and researchers are the ones who receive the most media attention and thus are the public face of the phenomena (Bader et al. 2010, 142).

It is important to note that the way anthropologists interact with the paranormal is strictly through cultural and theoretical beliefs. Anthropologists do not suppose the physical realities of paranormal claims, but they do respect and accept the beliefs of those involved. While paranormal anthropology studies are conducted on unusual topics, anthropologists still rely on scientific principles and theory to inform their decisions and analysis. Those involved in paranormal anthropology have also kept up with anthropological trends, especially in the realms of identity and self-reflexivity.

Identity is no longer viewed as part of a continuous culture or tradition. Instead, anthropologists recognize that individuals and groups often improvise and draw on recollected history and foreign media, symbols, and languages to form their own culture (Clifford 1988, 14). This has led to an overall challenge of ethnographic authority, which is still debated today. Viewing cultures as assemblages of various pieces and recognizing the individuality of representatives has contributed to the “defamiliarization of ethnographic authority” (Clifford 1988, 41).

This is considered a discursive model in which ethnography allows for intersubjectivity of speech and performance, instead of simply observing and applying theory. This is important as many past ethnographic studies have been purely dialogical, which represses “the ever

indispensable textualization”, meaning the overall cultural and individual context of the situation (Clifford 1988, 41-42).

Self-reflexivity in ethnographic writing has also become increasingly important to the field. Understanding one’s own position and biases and how they relate to the interpretation of ethnographic material allows for better critique and examination of information.

Anthropologists now recognize that culture is not merely for collection and study and those who are members of those cultures are not merely informants but participants and collaborators.

Anthropologists recognize that representing a culture, subculture, or any activity is always a selective process based on biases, cultural background, and other personal factors within the anthropologist (Clifford 1988, 231). The proper consideration and reflection on these biases is now an integral part of any research study that directly informs the anthropologist’s analysis and understanding. This reflexivity reflects back to the call for anthropologists to connect more and report on their own experiences within paranormal research. Typically, anthropologists will distance themselves from any of their own potential paranormal experiences in order to remain credible to their colleagues. However, in terms of self-reflexivity and openness it is important for the researcher to report on all their experiences and the possible causes and outcomes from those experiences.

These updates show that anthropologists realize that culture is constantly changing and that Western belief systems must be challenged in order to truly understand other cultures. The theories, ideas, and views held about the world and its cultures must change as culture changes in order to stay in tune with the reality. Instead of viewing objects and cultures as icons,

symbols, or systems it is necessary to restore their original cultural context and meaning and to allow objects to play their intended role, creating a more informed understanding (Clifford 1988, 201, 229).

The field of museum studies has also been undergoing a change of identity for the past few decades. What is a museum? What role do museums play in society? Who should museums serve and how should they do it? Originally, museums were meant to be the gatekeepers of knowledge, the ones who stored culture and history for future generations in perpetuity. With the rise of the new museology in the 1960s this began to change. The movement focused on the social role museums play in society as educators. It held that the museum is primarily an educational instrument not a center of research nor, primarily, a collecting institution. This transformed the museum from a place of expert accounts into a site with multiple voices and different “educational engagements” (Srinivasan et al. 2009, 266), leading to an increased role of the educator and education collections in museums. The idea is to have educational accounts and experiences at the forefront of learning, not objects (Srinivasan et al. 267). This opened up the museum field to new ideas, ways of knowing, and new techniques of display and public interaction.

Around the year 2000, the second wave of the new museology began. This wave called for museums to reconnect research and practice (Srinivasan et al. 267). This meant bringing back expert accounts, but not returning to the previous 19th and 20th C models. Instead, these expert accounts would come from both museum professionals and community members that held a “deep and engaged understanding of the objects” (Srinivasan et al. 267). This wave has led to community engagement projects, collaborative exhibits, and a wider range of expert knowledge coming into museums. These and other types of public engagement are becoming

the standard for museums today. Museums are opening their doors and collections in new ways to the public and invite communities to directly engage with objects. These two waves have directly influenced and changed the way museums operate.

There are many questions that have been raised by these movements and even more that have come about based on new technology and changing public perceptions and use of museums. What about institutions that are not officially considered museums? Those that are amateur created and curated and run, usually, for profit. Can these places fit into the paradigm or should they be placed elsewhere?

Many of these micromuseums could be considered akin to Outsider Art, or art created by those “on the margins of society”, those with little or no training in the field and whose works are so far removed from “normal” expectations in concept and material, the creator may not even think of themselves as an artist (Maclagan 2009, 7). The term was coined in 1972 by Roger Cardinal in his book *Outsider Art* (Maclagan 2009, 8). Cardinal used the term to look at art and artists that defied the “normal” values and concepts of academic art. He classified Outsider Art as art outside of culture, meaning it did not conform to any official standards or rules. For example, pop art and abstract art were still well within the realms of academic art for him, as they followed certain rules and were often put on display in museums as exemplars of the field (Cardinal 1972, 9-10). Outsider Art on the other hand was more about the artists need for expression and creation. It was a chance to break old habits and challenge official culture, to provide an alternative place for artists who did not wish to “content themselves with a mediocre revisionism” (Cardinal 7-8). The concepts behind this art are originality, automatism, madness, and authenticity (Maclagan 2009, 21).

Outsider Art has since become an excellent case study for the relationship of micromuseums to professional museums. Like the micromuseum, the definition and concept of Outsider Art is one that spurs debate. Outsider Art, once a fringe discipline, is now commercialized. Today collectors can purchase Outsider Art from galleries alongside “normal” works and it is often used as inspiration for trained academic artists (Maclagan 2009, 15-17). Can one really be “outside of culture” or is this simply a label added to the art of those who are not trained in academic arts? Is there really anything outsider about the pieces or is it meant to differentiate between amateur and professional? Is this distinction important?

David Maclagan has tackled this last question in his book *Outsider Art: From the Margins to the Marketplace*. He does not believe that one can be considered outside of culture and that there are many unspoken assumptions one must be critical of, such as a fundamental or original mode of creativity that is more pure than others (Maclagan 2009, 24 -25). Outsider Art’s main claim to fame is that it strikes its audience as extraordinary, usually through a combination of crude and innocent elements that appear to have been created “out of the blue”. Maclagan argues that reactions of fascination, surprise, and shock are not limited to Outsider Art, if a work is new or different enough it will always make some striking psychological impact (Maclagan 2009, 15, 17). In general, Maclagan is arguing that Outsider Art is a part of art, not something that exists simply on the fringes of society and culture. He does express his interest in its uniqueness, especially in the works themselves and the stories of the creators (Maclagan 2009, 24), but does not believe the creators are fully outside of culture.

Adding to his argument is the existence of the American Visionary Art Museum in Baltimore, MA. It was originally created from “an idea for a unique new museum and education center that would emphasize intuitive creative invention and grassroots genius” (American

Visionary Art Museum, *Museum History*, n.d.). It displayed a wide variety of visionary art pieces, referring to “art produced by self-taught individuals, usually without formal training, whose works arise from an innate personal vision that reveals foremost in the creative act itself” (American Visionary Art Museum, *Stuff Everyone Asks*, n.d.). The museum has over 4,000 pieces in its permanent collection and operates with a board of directors and professional staff (American Visionary Art Museum, *Stuff Everyone Asks*, n.d.), therefore asking the question of what truly does make something outsider vs insider.

This relates directly to micromuseums. Like Outsider Art, micromuseums are often seen as being on the fringe of the museum world, created by those with no academic training. Often the creators are seen as doing something completely “off the wall” or “out of the blue”, but are usually found to be following some sort of standardized museum practice or relying on the connotations being a museum brings. These museums, like Outsider Art, break convention and provide an alternate place for those who want to be involved in the community, but do not consider themselves professionals or akin to those already in the field. The debate over micromuseums has only just begun, thus looking at the work done on Outsider Art will provide excellent points of reference and argument.

The concept of the outsider or the amateur is prevalent in this thesis. Amateur is often conceived of as a negative term, but if one considers the actual meaning and use of the word it is not necessarily negative to be an amateur. Amateurs are those who are not professionals, but are engaged in their field in a committed and knowledgeable way. They are typically adults who engage in activities part time, whereas professionals engage in the same activity full time (Stebbins 1992, 41). Amateurism evolves alongside professionalism, often occurring first. In the 19th C amateurism was considered honorable. Those involved in activities were dedicated, giving

their own limited time, in pursuit of a love for a profession. When the first attempts at professionalism and full time employment appeared in many areas, such as music and sports, it was considered “despicable” to make money by doing what one loves (Stebbins 1992, 9). In many cases, the amateur does not become a professional, but dedicates a large portion of his/her time, self, and money to certain projects that are not involved with his/her full-time employment. This is where the concept of serious leisure is useful.

Leisure is usually considered an antithesis to work, a pleasant expectation, something which requires a minimum of social obligations, allows for freedom, and is characterized by play (Stebbins 1992, 5). Serious leisure is defined as the “systematic pursuit of an amateur, hobbyist, volunteer activity that is sufficiently substantial or interesting for the participant to find a career there in the acquisition and expression of its special skills and knowledge” (Stebbins 1992, 3). Serious leisure is the pursuit of a leisure activity past what others may consider relaxing or in the realm of leisure time, such as a sport, hand magic, or music. Those involved are dedicated to their activity, which often requires training, equipment, and significant amounts of time (Stebbins 1992, 6). While serious leisure can often become frustrating and stressful, due to lack of time or family commitments, it does provide a number of benefits. Those involved in a serious leisure activity often report a rise in self actualization, self enrichment, self expression, enhancement of self image, feelings of accomplishment, and social interaction and “belongingness” (Stebbins 1992, 7).

Micromuseums can be considered an example of serious leisure. Museums began as an amateur project in the cabinets of curiosity and have since progressed to becoming more and more professionalized. Yet, with the roots of museums being in amateurism and with the field’s young age, there are still opportunities for new innovations and an openness to new voices and

amateurs. Moncunill-Pinas looked at serious leisure in relationship to micromuseums, which she calls amateur museums, having the same meaning. These fit into the Professional-Amateur-Public (PAP) system. This system refers to the complex relationships between the professional world, the amateur world, and the publics that both interact with. Professionals begin as amateurs and amateurs often reach out to develop intellectual relationships with professionals (Stebbins 1992, 39). Amateurs and professionals are also both potential publics for the other, meaning that professionals will often visit amateur museums, as seen in Candlin 2016 (Moncunill-Pinas 2017, 22). Amateurs are oriented by standards of excellence, the same as professionals, in which they often specialize and limit their collections and policies, often creating taxonomies, categories, and processing systems on their own and later updating these systems to meet professional requirements (Stebbins 1992, 39).

In the case of micromuseums, serious leisure is often viewed as a form of empowerment. Museum makers use their collections, unique knowledge, and museographic constructions to create their museums, giving them creative control and the ability to be an expert in a limited, but interesting field (Moncunill-Pinas 2017, 24). Many micromuseums are created from a personal collection or passion that professionals may not consider important or cover topics that have no specific training program, such as the Sasquatch or antique washing machines. The same processes that legitimate and naturalize professional museums provide a chance of empowerment for amateurs by allowing them to create their own discourse (Moncunill-Pinas 2017, 26). By creating a museum and relying on museographic language and techniques the owner is able to share his or her knowledge in a legitimized way.

This work looks at theory surrounding how humans consider ritual and religion, how humans interact with their own culture, the anthropology of the paranormal, and studies in

museums and art. This combination of apparently unrelated topics will provide insight into the workings of the Sasquatch Outpost, the Sasquatch phenomenon, and their impacts on the local Bailey community.

Research Questions

How do people interact with the Sasquatch and what is the impact of the Sasquatch phenomenon on the town of Bailey, Colorado? This question can be broken into two subgroups: Museum and Sasquatch Based Activity. These groupings make the project easier to conduct and the data easier to analyze. Museum questions will refer to the Sasquatch Outpost's status in both the professional and amateur world, as well as its impact on the community. Activity questions will refer to the activities people can participate in: Squatching, Gifting, sharing sighting stories, visiting the museum, and visiting the general store. While some of these activities are coordinated by the museum, they do not necessarily reflect the museum exhibit or the community's idea of the museum itself; therefore, they received their own category.

Museum Questions

Is the Sasquatch Outpost a museum?

How is the museum viewed by the community?

What did guests learn from the exhibits?

How much impact do economic aspects of the phenomenon have in museum decisions?

Sasquatch Based Activity Questions

What activities, relating to the Sasquatch, do most people participate in?

Why do they participate in these activities/how did they become involved in them?

Do these activities filter into everyday life? How?

Research Setting

The Sasquatch Outpost and adjoining SEDM reside in Bailey, CO, a part of Park County, and rests within the Lost Creek Wilderness area. A small mountain town located directly off Highway 285, blue attraction signs sit on either side of the highway to catch the eye of would be guests. Bailey has not been included on past census', but studies have been conducted by smaller, local organizations. These studies report that Bailey is home to around 9,414 people, averaging 64 people per square mile (Location Inc n.d.). The average age is reported as 45 with about 55% of the population being male and 44% being female, with an average household income of just over \$65,000. The majority of residents are married, with high school aged or grown children. Bailey's population is primarily Caucasian (87.4%), with the next largest group being Hispanic (7.5%) (Location Inc n.d.).

The study took place during the summer, June through August, which is the busy season in Bailey, where tourists and locals going to other mountain areas, via 285, pass through town, often stopping for food and/or gas. During the later summer months, July and August, there were afternoon storms almost every day, otherwise the weather was typically warm and clear. There were multiple fire warnings and on a few occasions smoke could be seen in the distance or in the sky above Bailey. During the majority of my study, there was a fire ban in effect for all of Park County.

The Outpost sits along main street, attracting attention with a large wooden Sasquatch set off against white paneling. It is one of the main buildings in Bailey and also works as the general camping and fishing supply store. To the left is a restaurant to the right an apartment building, in front of it is an out-of-business Chinese restaurant, down the main road is an abandoned building, a brewery, a cannabis shop, and a gas station, with some tourist gift stores

sprinkled in. Across the highway is another restaurant, a small art gallery, the laundromat, and a small historic park.

When guests first enter the Outpost, they are greeted by Frank, a 6ft Sasquatch statue, which faces the door. Frank also serves as a semi dividing line. To the right of Frank is the fishing and camping gear and Carhart clothing. To the left of and behind Frank is the Sasquatch gift shop and entrance to the museum.

The museum can be divided into four “rooms”. The first room presents an introduction to the Sasquatch and its history. It includes a timeline of events, answers to some frequently asked questions such as “Is the Sasquatch dangerous?”, various cultural names of the creature, and a list of gear one would need to go out Squatching. Room two is an environmentally immersive mine complete with danger sign and lantern. This section contains a panel about the connection between Native Americans and the Sasquatch as well as a cave painting, originally found in California, which features the creature. Room three dives deeper into the details of the phenomenon, discussing twisted trees, footprints, its habitat, and encounters with humans. Room four is the largest. It contains a map featuring Sasquatch sightings and encounters all across Colorado and hosts Boomer, a seven-foot hand-made Sasquatch who sits in a heavily forested corner with a raccoon, squirrel, and other forest friends. This room also contains two interactives: a “measure-up” wall where guests can measure themselves against a life-size cut out of the Sasquatch and a self-reported encounter binder, where guests can read real-life encounters of others who have visited the museum and record their own. Lastly, this room features a Gifting rock and a sketch artist drawing of a local encounter.

Throughout the entire museum the owners did their best to create an immersive environment. The visitor is both inside and outside at the same time. Rooms 1, 3, and 4 all have

wood paneled walls with ivy and foliage hanging from the ceiling and rocks and ferns on the ground. The trees within the museum are real, donated by neighbors of the owners or found on friend's property. Some of these reflect evidence of Sasquatch inhabitation, such as the twisted trees, and others are used simply as environment.

The museum also shared space with a temporary winery connected through a small hallway and a separate door. This was not a permanent fixture and was not present after September. However, it was fully functioning during the time of this study. The winery is run by a separate party. It is usually located across the highway, but was temporarily located within an extra room at the Outpost for the summer as their permanent location was being rebuilt after being demolished by a semi-truck. Above the museum is an apartment, rented out by the museum owners. It was rented for only part of the time during which the study was conducted, however the owners were having it remodeled for the majority of the summer.

Methods for Data Collection

A variety of methods for data collection and analysis were selected for this study. In the field I conducted interviews, collected visitor questionnaires, and took part in participant observation. I selected my methods based on other studies of museums, folklore, and the paranormal (i.e. Bader, Mencken and Baker 2010; Candlin 2015; Castro, Burrows and Wooffitt 2014; Hunter 2016).

A mix of informal and semi-structured interviews were conducted. This was done for a variety of reasons. First, formal interviews would not work well in this setting. They are time consuming and can create a significant amount of possibly irrelevant data (Bernard 2011, 191). Not everyone in the community takes part in each of the Sasquatch activities; it would not be fruitful to ask everyone the same questions when that time could be used focusing directly on

the activities the interviewee does participate in. Second, this structure allowed me to ask a wide variety of questions. While I had a list of guiding questions, which can be found in Appendix A, I wanted to have the freedom to have a conversation with the participant and ask questions in the moment based on what was naturally occurring. Third, this made it easier to change questions in the long run. I was able to eliminate irrelevant questions and add pertinent questions.

My original intent was to conduct random sampling by interviewing every few museum guests about their experiences and thoughts. However, as my field work progressed it became clear this was not a viable option. I was only obtaining short interviews, the max being about 4 minutes, which did not provide about the same information as the questionnaires. This being the case, I conducted interviews specifically for members of the SORT team, Bailey business owners, and guests involved in Sasquatch activities for long periods of time, generally meaning three or more years. The questionnaires took the place of general interviews among the other museum guests.

The selection of interview participants was non-probabilistic. In this sampling type the researcher chooses participants or cases on purpose through a selection process. The selection is not completely random as the researcher decides who they do and do not talk to. While this does not create an absolutely random sample, it is necessary for projects that are based on smaller samples, meaning each participant or case must count (Bernard 2011, 158). This sampling type was chosen as the study was conducted over a short amount of time, meaning I did not have time to talk to every visitor. Each general public participant, meaning he/she was not a business owner in Bailey or a Sasquatch researcher, had to meet two selection criteria: that they had gone through the museum and expressed they had a sufficient amount of time to

spend being interviewed. For business owners and Sasquatch research participants I looked at their level of involvement with the museum. For those who entered the Outpost, but did not go through the museum, I selected those who were freely sharing stories or encounters with the owners and expressed they had time to participate in an interview. No individual or group was interviewed that did not meet these criteria. An exception to this was if a visitor came in specifically to talk to the Outpost owners, expressed an extreme interest in the Sasquatch, but did not want to view the museum at that time, or was a member of SORT.

Before each interview was conducted participants were given a sheet of informed consent detailing the nature of the project, their voluntary and confidential participation, and that interviews would be recorded. After this copy was signed by the participant, a copy was presented to him/her for their records, see Appendix B. Interviews were recorded using a WS-853 Olympus recorder, they were then self-transcribed using Windows Media Player and Microsoft Word.

Another main component of the data collecting was a self-administered questionnaire, see Appendix C. It included a mix of 8 multiple choice and open-ended survey questions. Questionnaires were kept at the front desk where visitors were asked to complete them after exiting the museum. The only interaction I had with the participant was to ask if they were willing to complete a survey. Surveys were then immediately put into a folder face down so that the participant would be absolutely anonymous. Answers were tallied at the end of each day. All questions were self-created with the exception of number 8, which was requested by the owners of the Outpost.

The questions were designed to obtain data referring to visitor expectations and attitudes. The only demographic data collected was if the guest was a resident of Bailey or a

visitor. Was SEDM utilized more by residents or visitors as opposed to the store? Residents were easily identifiable as they typically came into the store weekly and had friendly affiliations with the owners. Many also asked who I was and why I was there, this was another way I was able to tell they lived in Bailey and build rapport. It should be noted that visitors from Conifer are being considered as residents for the purpose of this study. Conifer is only a 10 to 15-minute drive from Bailey and many Bailey residents go to Conifer daily for shopping or entertainment. Conifer residents, in turn, come to the Outpost and restaurants in Bailey almost as frequently. Thus, the overlap between the two towns is large and residents could be considered close to the same population.

SEDM organizes community events and programs. It also hosts a research group, SORT, that collects evidence and conducts its own research. In order to understand the Bailey Sasquatch community and the museum better I conducted participant observation, a strategic method, that usually produces qualitative data and involves the anthropologist physically participating in the community, by immersing yourself in the culture and learning to remove yourself from that immersion so you can intellectualize what you've seen and heard (Bernard 2011, 257-258). In my case I was specifically a participating observer. This means that I was a guest to community events, but interacted as a community member, while still taking notes and asking questions of those I interacted with (Bernard 2011, 260). I joined SORT for a session of Squatching and Gifting that took place over two days and one night. During this time, I participated as a member of SORT, assisting in photographing possible evidence and setting up the Gifting site, which included clearing my mind, inviting the Sasquatches to come, and promising I would cause no harm. Participant observation is important to this study for a few reasons. First, it provides a better understanding of the feelings and actions of those involved.

Each of the SORT members was interviewed, but to genuinely understand what their interactions were like I needed to interact in the same ways. I mimicked what the members did: how they talked, the way they interacted with the Sasquatch and how they treated each other. In order to make sure I was not allowing bias to slip into my observations, I recorded any feelings and thoughts I had toward what was happening or how I felt on a separate page in my field notes. Second, I wanted to lessen the extent of participant bias. By going into the situations myself, I was able to see and experience what participants were describing. This allowed me to compare their interviews to the physical experience and try to pick out details on their behaviors they may have overlooked.

I also attended and participated in programs led by the museum for the public. These included three lectures, two town hall meetings, and the Mile-High Mystery Conference. At the lectures I situated myself in the back row and observed the audience as well as how the presenter spoke and conveyed the information. At town hall meetings I did the same thing, but I also made note of how speakers from the audience were asked to come forward and what types of stories were shared and in what circumstances. I did not share at these meetings, but I did ask a few questions during each session. At the conference I was participating as a staff member of the museum, not as the general audience. This meant I assisted with selling merchandise at the table, coordinating with speakers, running Twitter, and taking notes on the presentations. I still observed audience members and speakers, but I interacted in a more professional manner. Instead of mimicking the audience I mimicked the speakers and other members of the organizations present. This allowed me to converse with and better understand how the speakers interacted with each other, how they viewed the audience, and why they believed this conference and their research is important.

Throughout my time at the Outpost and during my observations I took extensive field notes. I recorded my location, times of events, weather, and observations I believed to be pertinent. In order to keep my notes unbiased, I divided my notebooks into two sections. The left side of the book was reserved for my personal opinions and thoughts that came to mind. These also included observations I believed to be true, but were my interpretation of events, such as “People are really expecting a road-side attraction, always hearing it’s a lot better than they thought it would be”. In this way I am able to check my biases and be able to go back at a later date to reinterpret my data and see if I come to the same conclusions.

To conduct text analysis, photos were taken of every text panel. These panels were then typed word for word, including any spelling errors or spacing issues. To create codes, each panel was read multiple times to identify patterns. These include, sensational, connotation of science, scientific/credible, humanizing, strong claims, and questioning. The sensational category includes words and phrases like ‘anonymous correspondent’, ‘fang marks’, and ‘escape’. Sensational, in this context, means any word or phrase that causes a strong, almost Hollywood like, feeling in the reader. It provides the impression of mystery and action.

The connotation of science category includes phrases such as, ‘eyewitness accounts’, ‘communicate with Sasquatch’, and ‘located approximately’. It is meant to include all words and phrases that sound scientific, but are not providing any concrete information. In contrast, the scientific/credible category includes words and phrases that are based on scientific observation and methods or can be seen as a credible way to obtain information, such as ‘behavior’, ‘method’, and ‘*Antioch Ledger*’. The humanizing category includes words and phrases that anthropomorphize the Sasquatch, such as ‘pried’, ‘old man boobs’, and ‘communicated’. The strong claims category refers to words and phrases that make claims that sound definite, but are

difficult to actually claim. These would include 'impossible' and 'can't come to any other conclusion'. Finally, the questioning category includes any word or phrase that may cause the reader or listener to question the account or information in front of them. These are words that have connotations of possible disbelief or that the informant may not be fully trusted, such as 'claimed', 'believed to have been', and 'shaky'.

Codes were identified by marking them with comments. Each text was recorded onto a form, see Appendix D, listing each of the coded words in columns under their category. These forms were then compared to each other to see what words and categories appeared most often. I found this important because I wanted to know how the text and tone of the museum could be influencing the visitors. There has not been a study using it that directly relates to micromuseums, but they have been conducted for small, unique exhibits, which I can apply here (i.e. Borun and Korn 1999; Hunsecker, et al. 2007).

A simple version of discourse analysis was conducted on the sharing of sighting stories. Specifically, on the context in which stories were shared, by whom they were shared, and common elements that appeared within the text of the story. I did this unobtrusively and allowed stories to flow naturally and unsolicited. I did not want to solicit stories because it would mean they would be staged and unnatural. In order to record stories, I used the same WS-853 Olympus recorder from my interviews. I did write field notes on stories shared within the Outpost itself, but these were not recorded. This was done as these stories were usually more private than those shared at public gatherings. Instead, I took note of why the participant began sharing the story, how the story progressed, what the listener did during the storytelling, and elements of the story that were unique or matched with common elements of others I heard.

Scope and Limitations

There were not many obstacles in regards to access to interviewees, the museum, or information. Before beginning my research, I had already been invited to go Squatching and Gifting by the museum's owners and they expressed a deep interest in the project. I reciprocated by gathering articles, books, and examples on how to run and maintain a museum. I also assisted with museum tasks, such as cleaning and working on the expansion. This granted me access to their photo albums and history. My willingness to assist them and my openness to their beliefs also allowed me to gain great rapport with the owners and the community.

There were few small obstacles in regards to the interview process. Many guests did not plan to visit the museum, they stopped while on their way to or from another location and had a limited amount of time in which to visit. These groups were typically not interested in participating interviews. I accommodated for these limitations in the use of a short questionnaire, which multiple people can do at once and does not take a lot of time. It did not give as much information as an interview, but answered some of the same questions, and with open-ended areas which could still provide important information.

The interviews of local business owners also presented a challenge. While they were more than happy to provide an interview, many of them also worked in their place of business. This meant that they had limited time to speak. Interviews with business owners were often interrupted by customers and phone calls. Other business owner interviews are non-existent, as the owner worked six days a week and did not give themselves time for a break during the work day, which usually finished around 7pm. Owners then wanted to go home. Thus, I was not able to conduct as many interviews with local business owners as I originally planned.

Discourse analysis proved to be another limiting factor. This was limited by the nature of how stories are shared. Many times, a sighting story or encounter must be prompted or asked for. Since I was not prompting visitors to share I had to wait until they offered one on their own. While I was able to gather some at organized events and many visitors to the Outpost willingly offered their stories without a prompt, I was not able to gather many orally. This did not heavily influence my study.

Ethical Considerations

My main concern is the privacy of the Outpost owners. They are public figures and easily recognizable. They are professionals in their field and have appeared in local news reports. They are comfortable with publicity and the perceptions people often have of them. I worked with them to protect as much of their privacy as possible, but I do not believe I collected any information they would not readily share with an Outpost guest. They were asked to read and approve of each section that refers to them, to ensure they are represented correctly. Any concerning or misinterpreted statements were reworked or worked around.

My other concern involves the write up of my thesis. Most critiques come against works regarding the physical existence of the creature, typically arguing against a certain data collection or analysis, as would occur with any scientific or academic work. However, my concern comes from those critics who appear to go out their way to ridicule and impugn on the intelligence and character of Sasquatch advocates. Because of this I need to make sure I write in a way that is professional and respectful. I do not want my thesis to be used as evidence that this group of people is delusional or insane. I believe that by explaining in detail each of my critiques and interpretations I will be able to prevent a good deal of misinterpretation. I should

also be able to avoid this, as I am not including a discussion of the Sasquatch's physical existence or the physical evidence, outside of background information.

Positionality

My demographic background

I come from an upper middle-class family, in which I was able to obtain books and merchandise relating to my passions, but also had access to private education, which I attended from preschool through graduate school. I have never attended a public school. I am a white female in my mid-20s, at the time my field research was conducted. This is not far off from the standard of living or the demographic of Bailey, see research setting section. I have been living in Colorado since I was in second grade and have always participated in outdoor activities, such as camping and fishing. This background made it easy to converse with residents of Bailey, especially the Sasquatch community, as many are involved in outdoor activities and enjoy conversing about them. It also assisted me in gaining rapport as I was able to show that I had knowledge in categories that interested them. Overall, my knowledge and background actually made me seem less of an outsider than it would in other circumstances, such as if I had done my research in the Pacific Northwest, Georgia, or Florida.

My Position at the Outpost

While at the Outpost I introduced myself as a graduate student conducting research on the Outpost and how people related to the Sasquatch phenomenon. Whenever I asked someone to complete a questionnaire, I made it explicit that I was a student working on my thesis and that the questionnaire was part of the current study, but also a way to conduct an evaluation of the museum to help better it in the future. Off and on I would wear a name tag, I

created, with the Outpost logo, my name, and the title “Museum Research and Evaluation” on it. To the local community I would introduce myself as Jim and Daphne’s grad student or the one who is helping out Jim and Daphne at the Outpost.

I would assist with restocking shelves, cleaning the museum, running the register, and construction of the expansion. I also created and ran a Twitter page for the Outpost. While I did have the confidence and knowledge of a staff member, I was never introduced as such.

Therefore, my position while at the Outpost was one of an assistant or researcher, someone who is connected to the Outpost professionally, but does not necessarily work there. The only time this was not the case over the course of my research was the Mile-High Mystery Conference, where I was presented as a staff member, as the crowd was large and contained many people we had never met before. This was also the case because I required an all access badge in order to assist Jim and Daphne with duties relating to the conference, as they were co-organizers.

Reflexivity

My openness to believe in these creatures was definitely a boon to me. It allowed me entrance to the community with very little push back and no suspicion. However, I also recognize that working so closely with people and talking about intimate pieces of knowledge, such as belief systems, creates friendships. While this is not a bad thing in and of itself, it does mean that I needed to be careful in my field notes and analysis. All field notes consisted of a double-sided page. Descriptive field notes, meaning the details of any observations as they happened (Bernard 2011, 299), were on one side and a combination of Analytic and Methodological field notes were on the other. Analytic notes consist of ideas about how the anthropologist thinks the culture works based on his/her observations (Bernard 2011, 299). In

my case, a good example of this would be “The Outpost is also a community center that provides services and community assistance”. This observation was not directly stated to me, but through observations of community flyers being posted, events centered in Bailey, and interactions between the owners and residents I was able to infer this information.

Methodological notes are about the anthropologist’s growth as “an instrument of data collection”, where you are critical of your role and intellectualize what you’re learning about doing field work (Bernard 2011, 297-298). For example, in my notes I have “At first I wasn’t sure about how I felt with cloaking and mind reading and such...but I believe in fairies and wendigos and other creatures who do a lot more supernatural things”. Why shouldn’t the Sasquatch be able to do these things? Am I skeptical of these accounts because it is so wide spread? Is this just because the Sasquatch is supposed to just be a creature in the forest just hanging out? “I mean to be fair there is no reason why they couldn’t”. I include this not only as a good example, but because it shows a critical moment of self-reflection in my notes that greatly impacted my interactions with the Bailey community. When I typed my notes, I made sure that what I had written down as observation was just observation and did not hinge on my perception of the event. This led to me pushing some notes from the observation side to the opinion side. This is helpful in that I became a part of the Outpost and developed friendships with multiple people in Bailey. I recognize that this could influence my interpretation of data in multiple ways, such as not being critical enough of certain actions or beliefs and being too critical of those who do not believe or who attack those who believe in the phenomenon.

I do admit that I was biased in some of the use of my sources. What I mean by this is, that I did read multiple sources that spoke out against the phenomenon and why in my research. However, many of these sources presented their information in a mocking or

patronizing manner. This not only made me angry while reading, as I believe there is a way to debate and express your opinion without demeaning others, but also because the community has expressed that they are often ridiculed and written off because of these types of publications. I do recognize that both sides are important, especially for research. The points they make in their arguments are important when looking at how people relate to the phenomenon and why they may do so. They give different perspectives and allow for a solid debate. However, when it comes to some sources, such as Shermer and Sagan, I carefully chose parts of their arguments that did not include any mocking language or I contextualize the phrases within the text. While I do not believe that anything I cut changes the flow or meaning of their argument, I do recognize my bias against these authors. The sources I used will be documented just as any other, meaning if there are any concerns on the behalf of the reader(s), they will be able to find and read the literature for themselves.

Chapter 5: Findings and Observations

In a strictly numerical sense, people who do not believe in anything paranormal are now the “odd men out” in American society (Bader et al. 2010, 124)

Questionnaire Findings

There was a total of 187 questionnaires collected. Some of the questions received multiple answers from the same respondent meaning the question responses were not compared to an overall 187, but to a total of 188 or 189. If a question had more than 187 responses it has been recorded. All percentages were rounded to the nearest tenth. Any percentages that had a 0 after the decimal were recorded to an extra place, so the percent did not appear to be a whole number. This was done to ensure accuracy in the results. It would not be representative to state that a result was 7% when in actuality it was 7.09%. This would mean that the result was closer to 7.1% instead of 7%. 1% may not appear to be important in the overall analysis of the site, however it displays a difference in opinion among participants that may or may not show a significant impact on visitors.

Question one: “How did you hear about the museum?”, with the museum referring to the Sasquatch Encounter Discovery Museum (SEDM). The choices given were “Passing by”, “Blue road sign”, “Internet”, “Friend”, and “Other”. This question had 192 responses, as 5 responders gave two answers. “Passing by” was overwhelmingly the top category, followed by seeing the blue road sign on the highway, finding the museum’s website, friends and family recommendations, and, finally, other. Below I have listed each category with the number of individual respondents and what percent of the total (192) that category represents.

Category	Number of Respondents	Percent of Total
Passing by	81	42.2%
Friend	37	19.3%
Other	29	15.1%
Internet	26	13.5%
Blue road sign	19	9.9%

Table 5.1 Question One Findings

Question two: “Are you a resident of Bailey or visiting?” This question received 188 responses. Two people responded with both answers as they were themselves residents but had brought visitors, and one did not provide an answer. This question showed that it was overwhelmingly non-residents that came to the Outpost. Based on the answers given it is 10 times more likely that a visitor to the Outpost will be a non-resident than a resident.

Category	Number of Respondents	Percent of Total
Visitor (Non-resident)	172	91.5%
Resident	16	8.5%

Table 5.2 Question Two Findings

Question three: “What was your attitude toward the Sasquatch before going through the exhibit?” Possible answers were “Skeptic”, “Believer”, “Neutral”, “Want to believe”, and “Other”. If the respondent selected “Other” there was a space left open, prompting them to explain what they meant. This question had 189 responses. This is because two surveys had been done as a group and they selected multiple answers. The responses showed that primarily believers came to the Outpost, but not by a large margin. Out of all 5 possible answers, believer received 38.6%, followed closely by skeptics with 22.8%. “Neutral” and “Want to believe” follow fairly closely and “Other” accounts for the smallest amount of responses. The “Other” category had only four responses: “I believe in the possibility and there are a lot of undiscovered species”, “Definitely don’t believe :)", “I’m open”, and “It’s possible”.

Category	Number of Respondents	Percent of Total
Believer	73	38.6%
Skeptic	43	22.8%
Neutral	36	19.04%
Want to believe	33	17.5%
Other	4	2.11%

Table 5.3 Question Three Findings

Question four: “What is your attitude toward the Sasquatch after going through the exhibit?” This question acts as a companion to question three and provides the same possible answers. This question had 189 responses, as two of the surveys were filled out by groups and they circled multiple answers. The answers show a significant difference between responses. The number of respondents who circled “Believer”, “Want to believe”, and “Other” increased, while the other two categories decreased. The two categories with the greatest amount of change were “Skeptic” and “Want to believe”, with “Skeptic” having the greatest difference between questions.

Category	Number of Respondents	Percent of Total	Percent of Change
Believer	78	41.3%	Increase of 6.9%
Want to believe	47	24.9%	Increase of 42.42%
Neutral	35	18.5%	Decrease of 2.78%
Skeptic	24	12.7%	Decrease of 44.19%
Other	5	2.7%	Increase of 25%

Table 5.4 Question Four Findings

Question five related to both questions three and four: “If your attitude toward the Sasquatch has changed, what caused it to change?” This is the first open-ended question of the questionnaire. It asked respondents what caused a change in their attitude, if it did change. To best analyze and understand the answers, I created several categories to place the responses in. These included “No response given”, “No change”, “Not changed, but gave additional comments”, “Sightings map”, “General information or non-specific pieces of exhibits”,

“Comments that refer to belief or excitement in belief”, “Footprints”, “Encounters and stories”, “Twisted trees and nests”, “Photos and film”, and “Random comments”. I created these categories as I was reading through the answers and began to pull out groupings. This question had 187 responses. The majority of respondents did not answer the question at all, accounting for a little over half of the questionnaires. “No change” and “General information” were the next two largest categories, followed by “Random comments”, “Comments that refer to belief”, “Sightings map” and “Encounters and stories”, “Not changed but has additional comments”, “Footprints” and “Photos and film”, and “Twisted trees and nests”. Between “General information” and “Random comments” there is a fairly large drop off in responses, going from 22 responses to 12. For a full list of what answers were considered for each category please refer to Appendix E.

Category	Number of Respondents	Percent of Total
No response given	100	53.5%
No change	23	12.3%
General information or non-specific pieces of exhibit	22	11.8%
Random Comments	12	6.4%
Comments that refer to belief or excitement in belief	8	4.3%
Sightings Map	5	2.7%
Encounters and Stories	5	2.7%
No change but has additional comments	4	2.1%
Footprints	3	1.6%
Photos and Film	3	1.6%
Twisted trees and nests	2	1.1%

Table 5.5 Question Five Findings

Question six: “Was this museum what you expected it to be?”, either when the visitor first walked in or when they first heard of it, depending on how they came to know about the Outpost. Possible answers were “Yes”, “No”, “In Some ways”, and “No preconceptions”. This question had 188 responses as one person did not answer the question and three people answered twice. The majority answered “Yes”, followed by “No preconceptions”, “In some ways”, and “No”.

Category	Number of Respondents	Percent of Total
Yes	98	52.1%
No preconceptions	42	22.3%
In some ways	33	17.6%
No	15	8%

Table 5.6 Question Six Findings

Question seven: “What were you expecting?” This pairs with question six and is the second open-ended question in the questionnaire. It asks what the respondent was expecting from the museum. This question was broken into 15 categories. These include “No answer given”, “No expectations”, “No expectations, but with additional comments”, “Didn’t know what to expect”, “Store or shop”, “General praise”, “Expecting more”, “Wanting the real thing”, “Scary or Sensational”, “Expectation met”, “Information or exhibit components”, “Exceeded expectations”, “Convincing or pseudoscience”, “Other”, and “Uncategorizable”. This question had 187 responses. The top category was “No answer given”, followed by “Information or exhibit components”, “Expecting more”, “Exceeded expectations”, “General praise”, “No expectations”, “Didn’t know what to expect”, “Expectation met”, “Scary or sensational”, “Store or shop”, “Other”, “Wanting the real thing”, “No expectations, but with additional comments”, “Convincing or pseudoscience”, and “Uncategorizable”. The uncategorizable category was used because the answer given was “5”. I did not have a category for this to fit into and it does not

apply in any way to the study. The others have comments that relate to the names of the category, for a full list of the comments in each category refer to Appendix F.

Category	Number of Respondents	Percent of Total
No answer given	70	37.4%
Information or exhibit components	19	10.2%
Expecting more	18	9.6%
General praise	16	8.6%
Exceeded expectations	16	8.6%
No expectations	9	4.8%
Didn't know what to expect	9	4.8%
Store or shop	5	2.7%
Scary or sensational	5	2.7%
Expectation met	5	2.7%
Other	5	2.7%
Wanting the real thing	3	1.6%
Convincing or pseudoscience	3	1.6%
No expectations, but with additional comments	3	1.6%
Uncategorizable	1	0.5%

Table 5.7 Question Seven Findings

Question eight: "Is there anything else you'd like to see exhibited in the museum?" This question was open ended and the last one on the page. It had 187 respondents. I broke the responses into 21 categories based on the answers given. These include "This question did not exist at the time", "No answer given", "No", "Requests for a real Sasquatch", "General praise", "Requests for more photos", "Requests for more videos", "General requests for more", "Gift shop related", "Requests for larger space", "Requests for local evidence", "Requests for a moving Sasquatch", "Requests for an expanded area of coverage", "Requests for more interactives", "Cross category requests", "Requests for things not already in the museum", "Requests for more sightings", "Requests for more maps", "Requests for more history", "Requests for more tracking techniques", and "Requests for more casts". These categories were created based on the answers given. The top category was "No answer given", followed by

“No”, “This question did not exist at the time”, “General praise”, “Requests for more videos”, “Requests for a real Sasquatch”, “Requests for more photos”, “Requests for larger space”, “Cross category requests”, “General requests for more”, “Requests for an expanded area of coverage”, “Requests for things not already in the museum”, “Requests for local evidence”, “Requests for more interactives”, “Requests for more sightings”, “Gift shop related”, “Requests for a moving Sasquatch”, “Requests for more history”, “Requests for more maps”, “Requests for more tracking techniques”, and “Requests for more casts”. For a full list of the comments in each category refer to Appendix G.

To clarify the “This question did not exist at the time” category refers to a number of the questionnaires which were given out before the Outpost owners decided to add question eight. It simply means that question eight did not exist when the participant provided his or her answers. Since this is a small percent of the questionnaires, I decided to still use them as they contained all other questions.

Category	Number of Respondents	Percent of Total
No answer given	39	20.9%
No	34	18.2%
This question did not exist at the time	17	9.09%
General praise	16	8.6%
Requests for more videos	16	8.6%
Requests for a real Sasquatch	10	5.3%
Requests for more photos	8	4.3%
Requests for larger space	6	3.2%
Cross category requests	6	3.2%
General requests for more	5	2.7%
Requests for an expanded area of coverage	5	2.7%
Requests for things not already in the museum	5	2.7%
Requests for local evidence	4	2.1%
Requests for more interactives	4	2.1%

Requests for more sightings	3	1.6%
Gift shop related	2	1.1%
Requests for a moving Sasquatch	2	1.1%
Requests for more history	2	1.1%
Requests for more maps	1	0.5%
Requests for more tracking techniques	1	0.5%
Requests for more casts	1	0.5%

Table 5.8 Question Eight Findings

Visitor Attendance and Museum Dwell Time

Visitor attendance has two categories, general attendance and museum attendance.

This is also a rough count as I was not able to be in the store every day. I originally intended to be there four to five days a week, but was only able to be there Monday, Wednesday, and every other Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. This was because the Outpost has two sets of owners and one set is not involved in the museum. While I did begin the summer going up four to five days a week it soon became clear that the other set of owners was not sure what to do with me. After the first month I stopped going on days this set of owners was working.

I was also assisting on the expansion of the museum, both in planning and in construction. While this gave me great insight into the considerations the owners put into the exhibits, it did mean I was not able to track visitor attendance or dwell time during these periods. Another reason I missed some of the visitors was that I observed the meetings and assisted in the set up for special events organized and hosted by the museum. However, I believe that the number of visitors I was able to record provides a large enough sample to accurately portray the normal activity at the Outpost.

For the general attendance I used a standard metal clicker to track each person who entered the door to the Outpost. Museum attendance was tracked between June 7th and September 10th, 2017. Over the course of my research the Outpost saw roughly 2,316 visitors with 755 (33%) of those visiting the museum. Saturday was the busiest day seeing 845 (36.5%) of the general visitors. I say this is a rough number as there was a special event, Bailey Day, in which I was not able to keep an attendance count as I was assisting with the event and the store was overwhelmed with visitors.



*Figure 1 Museum entrance
Photo Credit: Carissa Kepner*

The average museum dwell time was 9 min and 34 sec. This was determined out of 25 total groups. I was not able to track every group that entered the museum as I ran into constraints with timers. I was able to use a stopwatch, my phone, and the phone of one of the owners. If more than three groups went in at once I was not able to time them effectively. To find the average I added together each of the groups and then divided by 25, the total number. Groups were timed from when they first stood outside the museum entrance to when they exited the museum door. I chose to time from when they first reached the entrance because

many groups stopped to take pictures with the opening banner and read the signage. I timed from the front desk, occasionally standing in the entrance to collect unobtrusive observations.

Coding Data

How does the museum text come across to visitors and could it possibly be influencing their beliefs? Does the museum atmosphere and immersive environments combined with the text change how the museum is viewed by visitors? Many visitors came out of the museum either unchanged or slightly more open to the idea. Was this due to the information presented?

There is a large amount of text within the museum. Most visitors did not read all of the panels, averaging about four or five panels per visit. The most popular ones being, the timeline, the sightings map, and the local sighting account.

On average the text panels ranged from 60 to 80 words, with a few exceptions. The table below lists the average word count per room as well as the overall total of all the panels.

Room	Average Word Count
1	61
2	69
3	84
4	235
Compiled	112

Table 5.9 Average Text Panel Word Counts

Interestingly, the longer panels tended to be read more often than the shorter ones. This is most likely due to the nature of the panels. The longest text panel in the museum, “Close Encounters”, containing 291 words, tells the story of a local encounter that was reported directly to the museum owner. Guests tended to read the panel at length, usually aloud to other members of their group, emphasizing words or pieces of the story they found interesting, such as “old man boobs”. Shorter panels, especially those in rooms two and three, were passed by or

only read in part. These decisions were usually based on interest in the topic of the panel.

Guests cited small text, long paragraphs, low visibility, and lack of overall interest in the panel as reasons they skipped over short texts. In the instance of the “Close Encounters” panel, guests reported interest in the story, its unusual nature, and the accompanying sketch as reasons they chose to read the entirety of the panel, even though it was much longer than those they skipped.

Room one

Guests enter the museum through double saloon style doors and are immediately greeted with the face of the Sasquatch, hand carved by the museum’s owner. To the right is the exit door of the museum, to the left are a few text panels and the entrance to the “Little Squatch Mine”. Decorative rocks and peat moss creep along the floor and ceiling of the room, which is paneled with wooden planks. There are two main panels: “A History of Sasquatch Sightings” and “Sasquatch Up Close and Personal”, containing information on the historical background of the Sasquatch, proper Squatching techniques, and frequently asked questions. The most common coding category for these panels is “sensationalism”. The majority of the text includes words such as “famous”, “escaped”, “disappearances”, and “fang marks”. Visitors often walked straight through this room, more interested in the mine ahead than the panels in front of them. If they did stop it was usually to read the time line of events, often attracted by the photographs of Teddy Roosevelt and Bob Gimlin. Visitors did spend a short amount of time in this room after reaching the end of the exhibits. Once brought back to room one, visitors often took another pass of the area before exiting. Once again, their attention drawn to the time line.

Room two

After leaving the first area visitors enter the “Little Squatch Mine”. Dimly lit by a single miner’s lantern and the light that filters in from the other rooms, the mine is one of the most thematic elements of the museum. It features one text panel and an accompanying cave painting recreated from a life-sized version found in the San Joaquin Valley in California. This is the one section of the museum, so far, that connects the Sasquatch to Native American legends and history. Many visitors do not stop in the mine as it is cramped and dark. Younger children often refuse to go through this room out of fear, resulting in museum staff opening the exit door so the group can skip straight to room four.

This panel’s language is primarily “connotative” and “humanizing”, referring back to the coding categories outlined in chapter three. This has been the case with many of the references to Native American legends and beliefs in the literature as well. SEDM’s panel, in particular, refers to the Sasquatch shown as an “adult male” and “familiar” as well as referring to the Native American pictographs being shown as being smaller than the “original” and being a “representation” of events (Untitled Panel, Room 2, SDEM). While this panel is one of the most humanizing in the museum, it is not stated as a reason for changes in belief status among guests. Few guests mention this panel or the adjoining pictograph at all, often having skipped room two or missing the panel due to the dark nature of the area.

Room three

Visitors exit the mine into a forest. Small rocks and moss surround them as they view exhibits on Sasquatch footprints, nests, and twisted trees. The foliage grows denser as guests move through the room eventually leading to a forested section in room four. Room three revolves around the explanation of the phenomenon. It involves physical evidence, including

casts, photographs, and manipulated branches brought from the field. The main text for this room revolves around footprint evidence, differentiating Sasquatch and black bear tracks, and possible nesting habits of the creature.

While this room's purpose is meant to be the presentation of evidence in a factual manner, much of the text comes across as "sensational" or "connotative", again referring to the coding categories used to interpret the data. For example, a number of the panels use words such as "deceptive", "hotly debated", and "award winning" (Black bear vs Sasquatch tracks; Sasquatch Central, text panel, room three, SEDM). At the same time these panels use scientific language to discuss anatomy and analytic details (i.e. Untitled room three, Sasquatch Central).

All room three panels are also presented alongside visual evidence, which appears to balance out the sensational tone of the text. It is this physical evidence, the casts, the photographs, and the branches, that appear to influence visitor opinions, not the text. The text panels in particular were not mentioned in interviews or survey data, however, the physical objects were. Footprint casts impacted 1.6% of visitor's belief in the physical reality of the Sasquatch, the twisted trees accounted for 1.1%, and the photos accounted for 1.6%. Many guests had not known about certain phenomena before entering the exhibits, such as Sasquatch nests, and believed that this new information added to the credibility of the creature and the research of the topic.

Room four

Finally, visitors are welcomed into room four. This is the largest room in the museum and hosts the Colorado sightings map. The back wall is covered with a recreated forest. Low light, real trees, taxidermy forest animals, and decorative moss shroud Boomer, the resident museum Sasquatch. Nearby is a recreated Gifting site complete with photographs of real sites

the owner has worked on. This room also hosts two interactives, the measure-up wall and a binder where guests can leave accounts of their own encounters and read others. Guests are also able to read a prominent local encounter complete with sketch artist drawings of what the witness saw.

Visitors spent the majority of their time in room four, primarily viewing the map or taking pictures with Boomer. The elements of this room are the most cited as having an impact on the beliefs of visitors, especially the map and the “Close Encounters” panel, which includes the local sighting story and an artist rendition of the creature. There were 63 respondents that specifically entered their reasons for a change in belief. Out of these 63, 8% cited the sightings map as their main reason for reevaluating their belief in the physical existence of the Sasquatch and another 8% cited the stories presented in room 4 as their reason. These would leave 18% for the rest of the museum rooms and elements, meaning almost half of visitors who did reevaluate their beliefs after going through the exhibit did so because of this one room.

The “Close Encounters” panel primarily relies on the sensationalism category. I do not find this strange or surprising, however, as it is a story and by nature the majority of stories are sensational. Some examples of this category include “frantically”, “piercing and intense”, “slow motion”, “accusing”, “disappearing”, and “creature of myth and legend”. This tone is most likely what causes visitors to read the entire panel and connect with the story being told, not just on the panel, but throughout the entire museum. This conclusion is based on visitor observations and conversations in the store. Many groups cited their interest in the panel in particular and continued conversing on it while they shopped. Some read the panel individually, others read as a group, and some individuals actively gathered their group around the panel in order to ensure

everyone had read about the encounter. Comments such as “that was crazy” or “what would you do if you came across something like that” were common.



Figure 2 Boomer
Photo Credit: Carissa Kepner

Museum Events

The museum hosts and participates in a number of Sasquatch related events throughout the year. Over the course of this study the museum organized three local events, participated in two events sponsored by other organizations, and sponsored and attended the first annual Mile High Mystery Conference (MHMC). These events play a major role in the Outpost’s identity. A main goal for the museum is to spread awareness of the Sasquatch and to work with others to further Sasquatch research. Events allow the museum to do both of these, becoming more involved in the local Bailey community as well as the national Sasquatch community.

The first event was a town hall meeting hosted at the Shaggy Sheep restaurant farther along Highway 285, outside of Bailey. The townhall was meant to reach out to new community

members, but also to attract those in the area to the Shaggy Sheep and support their business. Those in attendance, about 70 people, were not charged for their attendance, but were invited to eat dinner at the restaurant before the event, thus paying for what they decided to order. The Outpost did offer merchandise for sale at the end of the event to those interested. It also provided five door prizes, free of cost. The town hall itself consisted of Jim Meyers, the Outpost owner, David Paulides, author of the Missing 411 series, members of the Colorado Bigfoot Research Group, and a few select local community members.

The townhall was incredibly popular, being booked to capacity weeks before its official date, with many calling the day of to see if there had been any reported cancellations. Those in attendance were split fairly evenly between those who fully believed in the Sasquatch's existence and those who were skeptical, but curious. I was not able to collect any data from this event so it is not clear whether or not the presentations changed the opinions of any attendees.

"A Night with Sasquatch" was a collaborative effort between the Sasquatch Outpost, the Fun and Funky art gallery, and the Coney Island hotdog stand. There were two main goals for the event; 1) to allow community members to share and discuss their experiences with other interested parties and 2) to bring residents and community members to the Coney Island stand as it had just undergone a change in management and was suffering a loss in local traffic. This event was free, but required a wait list as the area could only fit so many guests. Five speakers shared their encounters with the audience, answering questions once they were done. The floor was then opened to those in the audience who shared their own experiences. Hot chocolate and s'mores were then served by the art gallery, allowing for about an hour of social time before the audience began to disperse. The Outpost brought a selection of sweaters and hoodies for audience members to purchase at a discounted price due to the day's cold and rainy weather.

The Outpost serves as more than a museum and Sasquatch research center during the annual Bailey Day celebration. This is a Wild West event, complete with vendors, reenactments, music, and dancing. The Outpost's main goal for this day is to provide support to the event. It serves as the base of operations for security, the reenactors, emcees, and as a primary restroom. The owners of the Platte River Outfitters, the camping and fishing half of the store, also serve on the transportation board and assist in arranging transportation and marketing for the event. During this event the museum and the Sasquatch come second, although they did employ one of their friends to walk around in a donated Sasquatch suit to entertain the children.

Another annual event the Outpost participates in is a "Paranormal Bigfoot" presentation at the Buena Vista Heritage Museum. The Buena Vista Heritage Museum reached out to the Outpost when the director passed through Bailey on his way back from a trip. After talking with Jim for a while, he decided it would be interesting to have a presentation on the Sasquatch at the museum in Buena Vista. The event went well and Jim has been asked back the last two years. The event serves as a fundraiser for the Heritage museum, with a charge of \$5 per person. This was the third year for the event, in which Jim and Daphne, as well as some of the SORT members, donate their time. The Outpost does bring a small selection of merchandise, from their gift shop, to sell. This year there were about 25 people in attendance, raising \$125 for the Buena Vista Museum.

The last event the Outpost attended, during the course of the study, was organized by the Atlas Obscura Society and held at the Intrepid Sojourner Brewing Company in Denver, CO. The Society's mission is to "build curiosity and wonder" (James 2017). The Denver faction's leader, reached out to both the brewery and Jim, in order to bring business to the local brewery

and support the Society's mission. Jim was the first in a series of speakers that are being brought to the Intrepid Sojourner. This was another free event, marketed by both the Society and the Outpost. Those in attendance, around 25 people, did by alcohol and snacks, but this was not a requirement of the event.

Jim's presentation focused more on the overall nature of the Sasquatch and the myths and stereotypes that revolve around the phenomenon, instead of paranormal aspects. The Denver chapter of the Society has been requesting more paranormal experiences, but the organizer wanted something that blended both science and paranormalism. Therefore, Jim focused his talk more on the science behind Sasquatch research, bringing in the paranormal only as the audience requested.

The MHMC was the museum's largest event and was a result of intense collaboration with other entities, including the CanAm Missing Project and the Colorado Bigfoot Research Group. It took place over the course of three days, Oct 6th – Oct 8th, 2017, at the Crowne Plaza Hotel and Conference Center near the Denver airport. It is the first conference of its kind, bringing together large names in the fields of strange cases of missing persons, aliens, cattle mutilations, and the Sasquatch, including Sybilla Irwin, David Paulides, and Les Stroud. While many conferences related to these topics exist they typically focus solely on one subject or the other. The organizers of MHMC wanted to provide a place where all these topics could be covered simultaneously. Their goal was not to interconnect each topic, but to present similar topics to an interested public without requiring those present to attend multiple conferences.

Conference tickets cost \$99 for early registration and \$150 for normal registration, dinner with the conference speakers was also offered for \$145, which was combined with the entrance ticket. The majority of this was spent on fees for the conference center and paying for

the travel expenses of the speakers. Presenters were able to set up tables and sell their own merchandise for profit in-between scheduled presentation times, their profits hedging on whether or not the crowd decided to buy from them. Once a ticket was purchased it allowed the holder to attend all three days of the conference, one day passes were not sold. In total, not counting the speakers, the conference had 150-170 people in attendance.

Sighting Stories

Over the course of the study three main contexts for the sharing of Sasquatch encounter stories emerged: solicited sharing, story swapping, and emotional sharing. These contexts were formed using patterns found in my field notes. The nature of each share was recorded as well as details of the story and how the story was told. The museum was typically at the center of each share, either in the organization of an event or simply because it exists.

Solicited sharing refers to encounters shared once asked for, such as at town halls or other events, where the storyteller is invited to tell his or her encounter with the group, usually while standing at the front of the venue with a microphone. There are two types of solicited sharing. The first is planned sharing. These are speakers on the program for the event, who have had time to prepare the presentation of their encounter. An example of this would be the speakers list for the 2017 Mile High Mystery Conference, see Appendix H. These speakers were involved in the event's planning process and arrived at the venue expecting to share. Planned sharers are typically intensely involved in the Sasquatch research community and may have followers around the nation. They have field experience with the creature and their stories usually revolve around planned Squatching expeditions or other Sasquatch related activities.

The second type of solicited sharing is unplanned. This occurs typically in the audience portion of events, once the speakers have finished and the moderator asks members of the

crowd to come forward if they have anything to share. Audience members typically take their time volunteering, but each event usually has about 4 to 5 volunteers. The sharer usually does not attend the event with the intention of telling his or her story to the entire crowd, meaning these stories are unrehearsed, often filled with pauses and backtracking. Unplanned sharers do not usually have connections to the Outpost or the wider Sasquatch research community. Typically, the sharer encountered the creature on a routine hike or camping trip and may not have believed in the Sasquatch before this occurrence.

Story swapping refers to stories shared from one fellow enthusiast to another in an informal context. This was usually the context that occurred at the Outpost. While the museum owners were there, those interested in the topic would often swap encounters with them. There would be at least two stories fitting this context each day I was present. The majority began their talk with the owners tentatively, asking if they (the owners) had encountered a Sasquatch and if they actually believed in the creature's existence. After both of these questions were answered affirmatively the story sharing began.

Emotional sharing refers to the encounters shared relatively soon after their occurrence in which the sharer is overcome by a strong emotion. These shares often involve hurried speech, pictures, and strong emotions, such as excitement or fear. Over the course of the study this context appeared twice. The most memorable being from a family living close to Bailey who had just bought property and were experiencing strange occurrences on the land. They came in to ask for advice from the owners, but once they began to share it took quite a while to calm them down enough to understand what happened. They all spoke at once, each trying to be heard over the other, with phones pulled out and scrolling through pictures they had taken.

Observations of the Procedures and Thought Processes of SORT on the Research

Camping Trip

The SORT team is a handpicked organization, meaning that members are invited and accepted via the members already in the group. While the group is welcoming and allows almost everyone to join they are selective in terms of making sure that group members truly believe in the physical existence of the Sasquatch and will be a good fit for the team. The majority of the members were invited to join by Jim or another current member, after having interacted with the museum directly or its events and expressing a deep interest in the subject. Those involved with the team are typically middle aged and married. There is a fairly even balance of males and females, with females slightly edging out the number of males.

Their 2017 summer camping trip took place near Kenosha Pass and the Ben Tyler Trail, about an hour from Bailey. Six team members were in attendance, not including myself. The team prefers to go out in smaller numbers, as larger groups do not tend to attract Sasquatch activity. They believed the small number of the group and their previous relationships to Sasquatches in other areas would contribute to the possibility of encountering a Sasquatch on this outing. The trip consisted of three main activities: Gifting, Squatching, and sitting around the fire.

Gifting was the most in-depth and formal activity of the trip. The team collectively hiked a short distance from camp, about a half mile and began to search for a proper site. The qualifications for a Gifting site are that it is secluded from other humans, that it presents a space where gifts will not be easily taken without direct intervention, and that it is in an area where there is potential for Sasquatch activity. The SORT members placed a variety of objects they brought on a set of stumps, including a hair pick, a small ball with bells inside, taffy, nuts, and

chocolate peanut brittle. Typically, food is not offered at Gifting sites to prevent any type of dependency on the part of the Sasquatch, however an exception was made as this site would be



Figure 3 Gifting site Photo Credit: Carissa Kepner

temporary. After the site was arranged the team leader spoke to any possible Sasquatches listening, “thank you for letting us come to your place to learn about you,

which is our only desire”.

The team then stood in a moment of silence, thinking open and welcoming thoughts, ensuring the creatures that the team meant no harm and would not try to expose them or their families to any violence. After the moment of silence, the group turned to the four cardinal directions in unison and uttered a “Namaste” in each. This last step is different for various teams. SORT decided on Namaste, meaning “peace” as it is often connected with feelings of acceptance and serenity. After this the team left and explored the surroundings for any evidence of Sasquatch activity.



Figure 4 Gifting Site far shot Photo Credit: Carissa Kepner



Figure 5 Bone hanging in tree Photo Credit: Carissa Kepner

The team returned to the site the next morning in order to check for any activity. The comb and the ball had not been moved, however all the food products were missing. The team did not think much of this as the area has a large rodent population. They looked closely at leftover taffy wrappers, noticing that that they were shredded into small pieces. The team determined this was evidence of animal activity and not Sasquatch activity, as a Sasquatch would be more likely to unwrap the taffy instead of shredding the wrappers.

The team then spread out to cover the area more thoroughly. A small bead was found at the base of the stump with another bead found about 30 feet from the Gifting sight in a relative line with the first one. The fore leg of a deer was then found hanging on a bottom branch of a tree about 83 feet from the Gifting site. The team believed this was a “gift back” from a Sasquatch to thank us for the gifts. The process of determination was based on a balance of the team’s collective knowledge of how nature typically operates and their belief in Gifting. Multiple team members have extensive knowledge of the forest as they are hunters or wilderness guides. Looking at the surrounding area a large cat would more likely have chosen neighboring trees to eat as they had wider, higher branches with less obstructions. Another suggestion was that this was left over from a hunter who had butchered the animal and left part behind. This theory was rejected as the forearm is a coveted part of the deer due to the large amount of meat it has. If a hunter had decided to leave part behind it would have been a less useful part. Another reason this theory was rejected was the bone was snapped at one end, not cut, and there was still a small amount of skin and ligaments holding two connecting areas together. A hunter butchering an animal would have cut through these pieces. It is possible the bone was placed there by other campers as the site was not that far from other campsites and this section of the area was not thoroughly checked the previous night. However, while the team did keep this in mind, they

believed that its proximity to the Gifting site and the fact that the two beads found closer to the stump lead in a relative line to the bone's location, provided a sufficient amount of evidence to consider the bone part of possible Sasquatch activity. The bone was photographed in its original position as well as with one of the members boots for scale.

Our Squatching session consisted of myself, Jim, and two other SORT members. The other members retired back to camp after the Gifting site was organized. Squatching consisted of team members heading farther into the forest until other campsites were out of view and could not be heard. In order to investigate the area, we walked slowly and observed our surroundings on three levels; the forest floor, at eyelevel, and in the tree tops. A few areas of interest were recorded. First, we came across a teepee structure, a common sign of Sasquatch activity. However, the team did not believe this was created through Sasquatch interaction as



Figure 6 Bone to scale, size 10 men's shoe Photo Credit: Carissa Kepner

the structure was free standing and easily accessed near the trail. Typically, Sasquatch teepees are found off the trail and leaned against a sturdier structure, such as a large tree or boulder. The other

piece of interest was a branch, about 6 feet tall, that was suspended upside down from another tree. It was stuck in the crook of a branch connecting to the trunk. Originally, the team was

interested in this as they have each had encounters after entering areas where strange tree structures, such as twisted or upside-down trees, were found. This branch was not considered Sasquatch activity as the branch was easily lifted and moved by a single SORT member, meaning they could not reasonably rule out human intervention.

Another integral part of Squatching was calling for the creatures. Every few minutes one of the team members would let out a “whoop”, or a loud deep sound, that is usually drawn out and meant to echo. In between whoops there was not much talking, instead each member focused on investigating the area around them as we walked. We did not receive any answering calls.

The last important aspect of the camping trip was the time spent around the camp fire. This counted for the majority of the time in the field, approximately 10 hours of the day and a half trip. Remaining time was spent on the packing, driving, Gifting, Squatching, setting up camp, cooking, sleeping, and cleaning. Team members used all of their leisure time to share stories around the fire. Some shares were Sasquatch related, but topics ranged from senior discounts on annual park passes to potentially haunted fair grounds in Colorado. This time was completely unstructured and members were free to come and go as they pleased. Whenever a new topic was introduced it was discussed until another topic was brought forward, usually a tangent from the previous one. It was during this time I conducted interviews with the members. This downtime appeared to be a central part of SORT outings, especially in relation to spending time away from home and work. Many of the members cited that they enjoyed being able to take time off and enjoy nature and the company of the other members, stating that they were often too busy to expend time for Sasquatch related activities or that their family members supported their involvement in the group, but did not share the same level of interest. Therefore, based on

member interviews and field observations it appears that the SORT campout is just as much about the team members bonds with each other as it is about the Sasquatch.

The museum exhibits, sponsored events, and research team do appear to impact the belief systems of the visitors as well as the lives of those directly involved with the phenomenon. The extent to which the visitors have continued in their reevaluation of belief is not known. However, it can be stated that the Outpost and SEDM contribute to overall belief and the Sasquatch community in Colorado. The high number of skeptics becoming more open to the idea of the Sasquatch's existence, the attraction of a large number of believers to the site, and the dedication of the SORT team to the contribution of research to the Sasquatch community is proof of this impact. This does beg the question, what does it all mean?

Chapter 6: Analysis

Micromuseums provide a radically particular view on something, somewhere, or someone, and for a few hours at least I am shown the world from the perspective of a bus driver, a witch, an Irish republican, or a specialist plasterer. That's why I'm there. (Candlin 2016, 183)

Micromuseums are predominantly considered in terms of community (Candlin 2015, 2). Many are run by active community members and serve as centers where the public can gather in small, intimate spaces to participate in community building activities. Their connection to the community is often considered the micromuseum's greatest strength, allowing them to rely on personal communication between their creators, the public, and the local population for their success (i.e. Candlin 2016, McTavish 2017, Moncunill-Pinas 2017, Taimre 2013).

Unfortunately, it is this association with community and local inhabitants that often inhibits the acceptance of micromuseums as legitimate areas of study. It is assumed, based on their strong integration to local community members that the museum's importance is restricted solely to that geographical location and has no bearing on wider museum studies (Candlin 2016, 5). Micromuseums do tend to directly serve a single community. However, so do community center museums and ecomuseums. This view of community excludes a number of people and is a misunderstanding of the far-reaching capabilities of what a community can be.

This leads to the question of what community means. It is a term often used indiscriminately, going undefined, relying on the reader's understanding of the word. At times community refers to governmental assigned affiliations, such as neighborhoods, at other times

it refers to ethnic backgrounds, specialist groups, and service organizations (Crooke 2011, 171-172). This lack of definition often leads to vague analyses and misunderstandings within the interpretation of the data.

No community is homogenous. They are made of a “multitude of characteristics”, not necessarily tied to a single place or based on a deep-rooted history. They may be organized around a few shared characteristics, with the idea that members are able to develop new power relationships and empower themselves and others similar to them (Crooke 2011, 172-173). What this means is that there is no standard definition of community. Every museum must define their own public and who they are looking to reach with their exhibits and events.

When I refer to community, in this study, I am referring to three types of entities; the local Bailey community, the visitor community, and the wider Sasquatch community. The local Bailey community refers to those that live directly in the town, especially those that own businesses in the area. Many residents do not visit the Outpost, unless they directly know one of the owners or are still under the impression that the building is a grocery store. Therefore, the local Bailey community in this sense tends to refer to those who rely on the popularity of the Outpost to assist in popularizing their own businesses. This is not done in a “selfish” sense. The Outpost recognizes its popularity and uses its position to bring new customers to those in the area. This is done under the impression that, if one thrives everyone thrives.

The visitor community refers to guests of the Outpost and museum. While the official title of the building is the Sasquatch Outpost and Platte River Outfitter’s, both sets of owners recognize that they do not exist independently of each other. When decisions are considered for either side of the store the entire visitor community is considered. This means thinking of those

that are camping and fishing in the area and those that come for the Sasquatch. Therefore, the Outpost does not focus on a particular age or ethnic group, but on particular interest groups and how they can better serve them.

One of the SEDM's goals is to contribute to the wider knowledge of the Sasquatch and to be active members in national research. The Sasquatch community can be likened to an "imagined community", or a community that is an expression of an overall idea, where all the members included in the group may not meet each other, but understand that there are others in existence and have created a collective group in which to belong (Crooke 2011, 174). At the Outpost, specifically, the Sasquatch community includes the SORT team, visitors that come to the museum to meet Jim or involve themselves with the exhibit, and those that belong to the museum's event list and attend organized museum events regularly.

Many micromuseums are created because there is a lack of information on a topic or the creator wanted to provide a space for his or her community, which may not be present in mainstream professional museums. By discounting the concept and establishment of micromuseums, museum professionals are discounting the voices of communities that are not typically heard (Candlin 2012, 37). They miss the point of the museum, to provide a space for the public to learn and enjoy a new, often unusual, topic. These communities may represent prisoners, the dead, enthusiasts of unusual topics, such as plastics or antique washing machines, or a small town whose residents do not see themselves portrayed in the history of their state or country. Museum inclusivity is an important and continuously debated topic. Who is the museum for? Whose viewpoint should be heard and how? Who has the right to decide? Museums are for everyone, they are committed to ensuring that people of all backgrounds have access to "high quality museum experiences" (American Alliance of Museums n.d., Museum

Facts). Why then should micromuseums be excluded from the discourse because they were not created by trained professionals? In many ways those involved in micromuseums are similar to those within professional museums. They have intimate knowledge of their topics and the communities they serve. They are dedicated to accurate interpretation and display as well as reaching out and connecting with those who visit, actively researching and informing themselves on new developments within their topic. All responsibilities which are found within the professional museum; the only main differences being that micromuseum topics are often seen as non-academic and those performing the activities are doing so voluntarily with no formalized training.

These museums must be treated more as events, rather than visits. They're main purpose is not to push visitors through exhibits, but to fully engage each person through personal interactions with museum staff, objects, displays, and even the building itself (Candlin 2016, 17). When visitors enter these micromuseums they are shown personal property, they meet the actual designers, researchers, and installers, they are able to touch and talk and visit. The micromuseum, in this sense, is therefore more a social occasion than a typical museum visit; it is rare one enters and leaves without talking directly to the owner or curator.

The Sasquatch Encounter Discovery Museum (SEDM) is no different. It provides generous interpretation within its exhibits, but also generates direct communication between the owners and the visitors to better interpret the phenomenon. It cannot be properly understood without first understanding how its interactions with visitors and service as a center for community engagement impact its workings and decisions.

The SEDM's mission does not include anything about community engagement and I would argue that serving as a pillar of community engagement is a factor Jim and Daphne

brought to the museum from their own lives and personalities, not something that grew out of the museum's workings. First and foremost, the owners do their best to assist anyone who comes into the Outpost, whether those reasons be Sasquatch related or not.

Sasquatch related assistance came in the form of advice and a space safe from judgement. For instance, when visitors come in and recount about their experiences and encounters to Jim or Daphne, they tend to end the story with an exasperated or anxious "I didn't know what to do". At this point either, Jim or Daphne, would offer advice to the visitor in question. In one instance, a family entered the store rather distraught. They had recently moved onto a new property and were experiencing strange occurrences, such as loud noises, footprints, and minor destruction. They asked Jim and Daphne for advice in regards to their problem, as they believed it was Sasquatch activity based on research they had conducted and encounters reported by their neighbors. Jim advised them to set up a Gifting site near the edge of their property to make peace with the creature coming on their land, making sure not to leave out food as it could make the Sasquatch dependent and anger it if the family forgot to leave food out in the future. Jim also offered to drive out to the family's home and investigate further if they were still experiencing any issues. (Myers 2017). The family later attended multiple events held by the Outpost reporting activity at their Gifting site, but no more issues in regards to strange occurrences on the rest of the property. Instances like this were not common, the majority of reported encounters had already occurred with the sharer having no plans of trying to communicate further with the creatures. However, it is an interesting service the Outpost is able to provide.

The Outpost's assistance with non-Sasquatch related activities was more common in day to day interactions. Non-Sasquatch related activities include acting as a headquarters for

community events, such as Bailey Day, offering assistance to campers and hikers in need, and acting as a resupplying station for those hiking the Colorado Trail. Many visitors came into the Outpost looking for camping gear they forgot to pack. The Outpost is one of the only stores that sells camping gear within an hour, with the next closest camping goods store being in Denver. In some instances, these were minor, such as bug spray or cups. Other times these items included tents, a full set of tent poles, and sleeping bags. In one specific instance a family of four had forgotten all of their sleeping bags. After pricing the bags sold in the store the total would have been around \$150 for the four bags. Instead of charging the family, the owners offered them their personal sleeping bags for the weekend. Occurrences such as this are common at the Outpost and took place multiple times throughout the summer.

The Outpost acts as a place of safety and assistance, not only for those interested in visiting the museum, but for those involved in the wider Sasquatch community as well. The connotation of Sasquatch research is often one of a mocking or patronizing nature. Those involved often stay within their own groups and share solely with those who express a similar level of interest in the phenomenon. The Outpost and museum has provided a space for these groups to meet and discuss their views, without fear of judgment. In many cases, the Outpost has inspired believers to become more involved in the phenomenon. One such case was a man from Kansas, who traveled about 10 hours specifically to see the museum. His main reason for doing so was that no similar institutions or research groups exist in his area. In fact, his visit to the museum was one of the first physically involved Sasquatch activities he took part in, stating that: "I just pretty much do research... but we're talking about coming out here in umm in

August ummm we're gonna rent a car and just drive around the mountains and see if we see one" (Participant J 2017). Participant J's interaction with the museum and its staff inspired him to intensify his involvement, spurring him out of his armchair research and into the field.

The SEDM also hosts the Sasquatch Outpost Research Team (SORT). The goal of the team is to investigate reports and sightings within the Bailey area and to work with other research organizations across the country to further Sasquatch studies (Meyers 2017). However, another subtler goal, is the creation of a community for those who often feel isolated from others. During my time in Bailey members on this team expressed to me their pleasure in being involved with the team in terms of having others to talk to and participate in activities with: "Jim invited us to a meeting and then he invited us to be on the SORT team, which we were really glad for because it's nice to have other people to talk to about this" (SORT Member 4 2017). This team member also expressed that he is thankful for the group's acceptance as he is often judged on his appearance; he is large, covered in tattoos, and rides a motorcycle. He expressed that many people avoid him, but the research team has given him a group that not only accepts his appearance but encourages his ideas (SORT Member 4 2017).

This member, and others like him, often embrace the Sasquatch as part of their identity. Its mass popularity has given a multitude of people a chance to form groups and make connections they may not have otherwise. It is not difficult to find chat groups, organizations, or others in your area that are interested in the creature. While it is a monster or a fun story to some, to others it becomes the foundation of their relationships with others.

The team itself functions within the Sasquatch community, but also as its own individualized community. What I mean by this is that those involved with SORT came together in response to a lack of support or interest from family or friends in relation to the Sasquatch. It

provides a place where they can express their beliefs and belong to a group of people who share similar interests. In relation to this, SORT also serves a number of unspoken functions for the museum, namely community building , outreach, museum research, and museum promotion.

One of SORT's main functions is to reach out to the Colorado Sasquatch community. The team is welcoming to new members, often inviting those interested in joining to take part in monthly meetings or camping trips. In the few SORT exclusive events I attended, namely two monthly meetings and the camping trip, there was always a non-member present. These individuals were often interested in joining the team or seeing how they functioned in order to get a better grasp on what Sasquatch research entailed. The individuals were typically only semi-involved in the phenomenon, but were interested in understanding what greater involvement would entail.

Another important function of SORT is the research they conduct for the museum. SORT projects have been incorporated into the museum previously and are planned to appear in the expansion. One example of this is the Gifting display present in room four. Previously this area of the museum did not feature a display. However, based on personal experiences and research conducted by SORT, especially by Jim, the museum was able to produce a new exhibit. The Gifting exhibit is unique in that it allows visitors a chance to experience a more social, communicative side of Sasquatch research that is often not commented on in pop-culture, media reports, or literature. Not every team participates in Gifting and it is a controversial subject within the community, as it implies that the Sasquatch is more than a lost primate evolution.

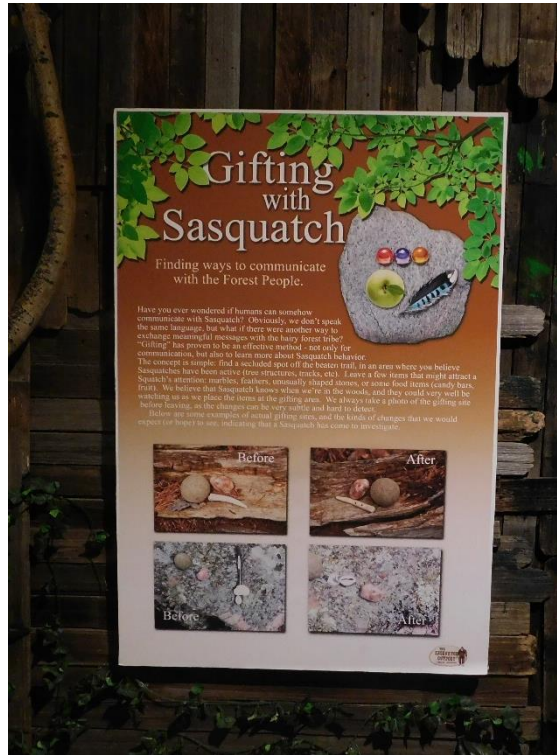


Figure 7 Gifting Panel
 Photo Credit: Carissa Kepner



Figure 8 Gifting Display
 Photo Credit: Carissa Kepner

The last main function of SORT is to assist with the promotion of the museum and Outpost. SORT members are often present at all Outpost and SEDM events and assist with the selling of merchandise, sharing their own experiences, speaking with the public about the team and the museum, and conversing with similar teams from other organizations during the event. The museum is for-profit but does not make enough to support its own marketing, instead depending mostly on word of mouth and the support of others. The SORT team acts as a kind of support system, ensuring that events are well managed, staffed, and attended.

Museum organized events, in particular, are where the SEDM's community involvement becomes clear. Through these events the museum interacts intimately with each of its communities. Events held in the Bailey area, such as those at the Shaggy Sheep, the Fun and Funky Art Gallery, and the Coney Island hot dog stand engaged with both the wider Sasquatch community and the local Bailey community. The overall point of these events was to popularize other businesses in the area, supporting others within the local community who also rely on highway traffic for success.

The Mile-High Mystery Conference held Oct 6th-8th, 2017 is a prime example of serving the wider Sasquatch community, especially through group identity building and community interaction. The conference consisted of 12 speakers relating to the Sasquatch, UFOs, cattle mutilations, and missing people. The majority of the audience and speakers centered around Sasquatch related topics, mostly covering personal interactions, misconceptions, and proper communication techniques. It is one of the only conferences in America to cover all of these subjects during one session. A main goal of the event was to better connect those within these distinct groups to others within their group, but also those interested in related topics. Many times, these topics are divided, segregated into their own factions. The Mystery Conference

wanted to unify the topics, not to suggest that they are all interrelated, but so that the communities could meet, integrate themselves, and provide support to each other. The museum used its contacts and popularity to work with other organizations to further community unity and involvement.

How else does the SEDM serve its communities? The exhibits within the museum were originally created based on overall assumptions of what visitors most likely did not know about the Sasquatch and what information the owners found important for the public to understand. As the museum's development has progressed the owners have become more conscious of what visitors are looking for and how they can better serve those who use their space. The museum expansion is a direct response to visitor comments. Requests for more video and photo evidence were near the top of the list, as was a request for a larger space and more interactives. The owners took all of these comments and suggestions into consideration when planning and organizing the new expansion. The museum will now showcase more footprint casts as well as a video and more interactive elements, such as a piece where guests will be able to set their foot inside a Sasquatch track and "measure up" to the creature.

The museum, SORT, the Outpost, and their events all work together in creating and supporting communities. Just like academic conferences, groups, etc. they bring together top researchers in the field to share work and discuss prominent questions and controversies. This is not unusual in the world of micromuseums. Often times the owner/creator of the museum is highly active within other aspects of community life as well (Taimre 2013, 28). Professional and amateur museums alike recognize the power of engaging with the communities they serve. Community participation in museum programs and decision making has shown a large amount

of success in the sharing of knowledge, the hearing of previously silenced voices, and the understanding of new experiences (Crooke 2011,183).

Considering the Communities

In order to create a museum dedicated to the Sasquatch, that can genuinely serve the communities described above, it is important to look at how those communities each interact with the creature. The Sasquatch takes on a different meaning to each of these communities. To the local Bailey community, the Sasquatch is both an amusing entity and a profit source. Its extreme popularity ensures the success of the Outpost, which in turn supports their own businesses via increased tourist traffic and dwell time within Bailey itself. Some of the local owners also believe in the Sasquatch, but the topic is primarily viewed as Jim's passion. This view of the Sasquatch is predominantly helpful in creating new collaborations and organizing events for the Outpost.

The Sasquatch is a popular figure that appears in books, video games, television shows, and on the majority of social media sites, examples of which can be found in Table 6.1. To the visitors of the Outpost the Sasquatch is both an entertaining pop-culture figure and a scientific topic. Those who come in off the highway as a detour, especially after seeing the blue road sign, are often excited because the museum is so unusual and the topic so popular. Popular culture is a reflection and expression of an aesthetic and desires of the majority of people in a culture (Gans 1999, xi). Popular culture is reflected in almost every form, such as visual and audio media, writing, language, and physical objects; it is something which is easily accessed by a large number of people and is pervasive in everyday life. Popular culture is often considered "low brow" and commercial as a large part of its popularity is the ability for the masses to afford to

participate in it (Gans 1999, xi, 32). This is separate from high culture, meaning cultural products that only reach a small number of people and is associated with “proper” or “serious” forms of culture. High culture is often homogenous, appearing in the same forms across its participants (Gans 1999, 31-32).

Television	Commercials	Video Games	Films
Finding Bigfoot (2011)	Workin’ Out with Sasquatch	The Simpsons (1991)	The Legend of Boggy Creek (1972)
Mountain Monsters (2013)	Messin’ with Sasquatch	Diablo III (2012)	Boggy Creek II (1985)
Bigfoot: The New Evidence (2014)	Purple Mattress Protector	Finding Bigfoot (2017)	Harry and the Hendersons (1987)
Survivor Man: Bigfoot (2015)			Abominable (2006)
Killing Bigfoot (2016)			The Son of Bigfoot (2018)

Table 6.1 Sasquatch in the Media

For many guests stopping at the Outpost and visiting the museum is a way in which to participate in this pop-culture phenomenon. Over the course of my research I saw many individuals come in simply because they had seen the television shows or came across the creature in a game. Others self-identified themselves as the “Bigfoot” of the family, meaning they were “obsessed” with everything Bigfoot. Family members and friends would often embrace this individual finding souvenirs, articles, books, and movies for the enthusiast. The creature’s appearance in a wide range of popular culture areas as well as the overall recognition of the term Sasquatch by the majority of museum visitors, academics, and the general public suggests its popularity (i.e. Krantz 1979, Gordon 2015, Taggart 2017).

Sasquatch as a scientific inquiry doubles within this community and that of the Sasquatch community, as some visitors are members of the larger network of Sasquatch enthusiasts. Therefore, this category will be discussed below.

To the Sasquatch community the creature is a source of unity, via community creation, a source of division, a scientific inquiry, and a paranormal figure. These categories may seem contradictory, but the Sasquatch community is so expansive that the creature often carries multiple meanings, even to the same individual.

Sasquatch often acts as a unifier, particularly among those who feel cast off from mainstream society. This is particularly true among Sasquatch research teams, as discussed above. This idea is also supported by Dr. James Taggart of Franklin and Marshall College. In his article, "Joe's Bigfoot", he describes a man who runs a store that acts as a community center for Sasquatch enthusiasts and Mexican Americans. Dr. Taggart reports that every time he visited Joe "he had found another person who had seen footprints or caught a fleeting glimpse of the creature" (Taggart 2017, 13). Taggart makes a point of saying that it did not matter to Joe if the people were Anglos or Mexicanos, he gathered all the information he could and even assisted in organizing Bigfoot parties in people's homes where the community could gather to share their stories (Taggart 2017, 13). In this case, the Sasquatch acts as the common link between people who are considered outsiders. Having found a group that accepts them, members are able to participate in activities they enjoy and discuss personal problems.

Sasquatch, in a contradictory move, also acts as a community divider. Many of those in the Sasquatch community are territorial and often secretive about the evidence they have uncovered, refusing to share with other members of the community, except for a select few (i.e. Myers, Jim; SORT Member 4 2017). There is also division among groups as to how belief in the

cryptid should be manifested. Some of these conflicts arise from debates on whether or not Sasquatch is an animal or a person and if the Sasquatch is purely terrestrial or has paranormal qualities. These debates have caused complications and often result in the fracturing of research groups and the dismissal of evidence found by opposing organizations (Myers, Jim 2017).

One example is the distrust and dislike of the Bigfoot Field Research Organization (BFRO). While this is the official national organization, many independent groups find fault in its methods and publications. One frequent example is the “theatrics” and “amateur methods” used by the *Finding Bigfoot* team, which many community advocates believe is harming the credibility of Sasquatch research (i.e. Myers, Daphne; Myers, Jim, SORT Member 4 2017). Many distance themselves from this organization or express qualifiers such as “I only belong to the BFRO to access the reports” (Myers, Jim 2017). Without doing so members of independent organizations feel they will be cut off from their group and, therefore, their social lives. In this context, it is no longer the outsider ostracizing the individual, but internal members.

Sasquatch as a scientific inquiry refers to the time, effort, and resources regulated to the research of the creature. For those in the Sasquatch community the creature represents a real, tangible phenomenon which requires scientific attention. When these researchers first came on the scene they were viewed as challenging science. Belief in these cryptids offered a different worldview and allowed those skeptical of “official” sciences to express faith in science while still challenging it (Poole 2011, 134-135). However, many Sasquatch researchers rely on the same scientific methods as other “normal” scientists do, such as hypothesis testing, observation, and experimentation. In fact, the majority of Sasquatch researchers involved in this study have higher education degrees with formalized training. For example, over the course of the study I met several people with master degrees, including one in geology and one in information

technology sciences. While the SEDM may be an amateur museum, those involved in the phenomenon are not necessarily amateur scientists. Instead they view the creature as a unique, albeit unusual, inquiry that is often not given enough time or resources.

Another aspect of the Sasquatch community refers to the creature as a paranormal being. This is especially important to consider when referring to the SEDM as its Sasquatch community members, meaning those that participate in SORT and many of their events, hold strong beliefs in the Sasquatch as a paranormal creature. This means ascribing the ability to teleport, read minds, and impact human emotions to the creature. Multiple members of the SORT team have reported strange encounters, such as encountering a Sasquatch only to have the massive creature disappear in seconds, feeling sudden waves of nausea or fear wash over them, or receiving vague messages through their thoughts as to the whereabouts of Gifts, dangers, or the Sasquatch itself (i.e. SORT Member 1, SORT Member 2, SORT Member 3, SORT Member 4). While this may not be a popularized aspect of the Sasquatch community, it is important to those in Bailey. This means that museum organized events often reflect this belief, either in their overall topic, such as the talk at the Buena Vista museum or through the sharing of paranormal stories, such as at the town hall. However, the owners recognize the connotations of paranormal belief and have chosen to focus on the physical, more scientific side of the phenomenon for their museum in order to reach more audience members and to sound more credible.

The SEDM may not phrase or understand their community members in this way, but they undoubtedly understand that not everyone views the Sasquatch as a real entity, noting that they want their museum to be entertaining and welcoming to all visitors. Each version of the Sasquatch is somehow considered within the realm of the SEDM. While paranormal

elements have yet to be added, they are well represented within museum organized events and within SORT outings.

Comparisons: Micromuseums and Professional Institutions

A museum is a non-profit, permanent institution in the service of society and its development, open to the public, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits the tangible and intangible heritage of humanity and its environment for the purposes of education, study and enjoyment (International Council of Museums 2008).

Museums are wonderfully diverse. They are operated by nonprofits and for-profits, colleges, universities and every level of government. Some are managed by large staffs; others are run solely by volunteers. They include all types:

- Aquarium
- Anthropology
- Arboretum/Botanic Garden
- Art
- Children's
- Culturally Specific
- Hall of Fame
- Historic House
- Historic Site
- History
- Historical Society
- Military/Battlefield
- Nature Center
- Natural History
- Planetarium
- Presidential Library
- Science/Technology
- Specialized
- Transportation
- Visitor Center
- Zoo

(American Alliance of Museums n.d.)

Micromuseum: Small, single-subject, independent museum (Candlin 2015, 1).

Amateur Museum: Independent museums made as leisure projects outside professional frameworks (Moncunill-Pinas 2015, 20).

What is a museum? The definition has been reformed and challenged since the new museology movement in the 1970s. As new theories, ways of knowing, and ideas on display and education are being adopted, new definitions of the museum are being considered. Collections managed, curated, and displayed by amateurs in the museum field are becoming more prominent. These collections are often referred to as museums by their creators, often relying on the word “museum” to provide credibility and definition to their work. This adoption makes sense as museums are considered the “most trustworthy source of information in America”, even more so than newspapers, nonprofit and academic researchers, the government, books, and personal accounts of relatives (American Alliance of Museums n.d., Museum Facts). Micromuseums often use the title for this credibility, but also because their creators truly believe their institution qualifies as a museum, even if the majority of these amateur museums do not fit the non-profit qualification stated in the ICOM definition.

Despite not being officially registered as a museum in a professional sense the micromuseum is, nevertheless, not free from the museum as an institution (Taimre 2013, 32). Museographic language, processes, and techniques are consumed and adapted by micromuseums to best serve their own interests and needs (Moncunill-Pinas 2017, 8). Amateur creators often follow what they understand museum conventions to be and research proper techniques and procedures. Displays, text, and procedures of micromuseums are often based on professional museums in the surrounding area.

Understanding the similarities and differences of micromuseums and professional museums is important for situating these amateur institutions within the wider world of museum studies. Using the SEDM as a case study, I will take a deeper look at these comparisons and how micromuseums can contribute to museums overall. The SEDM defines itself as a museum. It organizes community events, has professionally created text panels, recently completed a loan agreement with the North American Bigfoot Search, and functions in many ways as a professional museum would. Jim and Daphne have taken the time to visit the Morrison History Museum and Dinosaur Ridge Discovery Center to talk with staff about how they manage and display their collections, enacting their suggestions to better the SEDM.

At the heart of many professional museums are the collections. They are the face of the museum, the pieces the public know and connect with. While collections have been an integral part of museums in the past, many museums today no longer have official physical collections. Science museums are one example, community centered museums are another (Gurian 2006, 51-52). It can be difficult to fit micromuseums into one category or the other. Some, such as the Witchcraft Museum in Boscastle, England, have dedicated collections care staff and publish their own research journal. Others, such as the Toy Museum in Medellin, Colombia catalogue their collections because they interact on a regular basis with professional museums, loaning pieces out for exhibitions (Moncunill-Pinas 2017, 3). Still others have large collections, but do not catalogue them, such as the Bread Museum in Tona, Spain (Moncunill-Pinas 2017, 3). Finally, some have little or no collections and do not catalogue or work with the pieces on a daily basis. This is the case at the SEDM.

Through my study I identified a few pieces that could be considered collections for the museum. These consist of two twisted tree branches, a footprint cast, and five photographs, all

of which are displayed within room three. These stand out as permanent pieces of the museum, that are not text panels or props. Instead, these pieces are offered as physical objects sharing the story of Sasquatch researchers in the area and are tied directly to the Outpost, the museum, and those that work there.

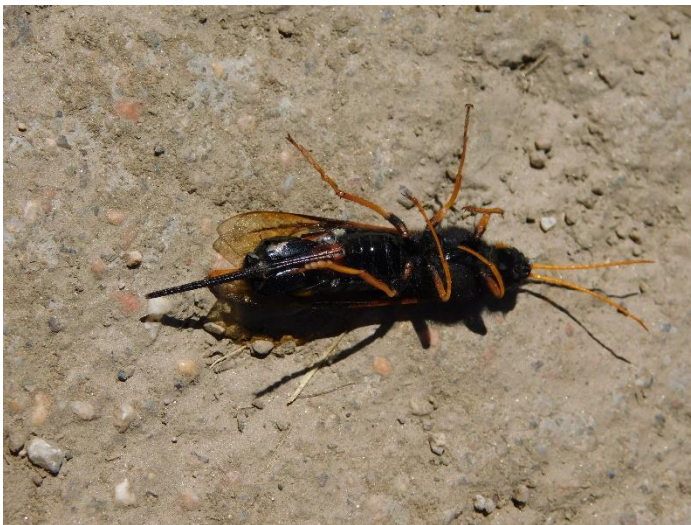
The SEDM does not have a collections policy and does not actively accept new acquisitions or store collection pieces for the museum. None of the items were accessioned or recorded in a condition report upon their arrival and are displayed in a non-temperature or humidity-controlled environment. The museum's focus tends to be on the aesthetics and care of the gallery space itself. The exhibit area is always clean and maintenance is performed as problems arise. As new information surfaces within the Sasquatch community and as research groups share their findings, new exhibits or additional information is added to keep the space up to date.

A situation like this is quite common among micromuseums, where the creator is working with the outsider knowledge they have of the museum and designing their space in a way that makes the most sense to them, with the materials they are able to afford. Some micromuseums may not view the pieces they display as proper collections, seeing them more as display tools to better interpret the information presented. Few would have the space to store or work with collections if they did have them and even fewer would have the funds or experience necessary to care for the pieces as outlined for professional accredited museums.

Another instance where micromuseums differ from professional museums is their integrated pest management (IPM) procedures or lack thereof. IPM refers to a specialized discipline of pest control that involves the protection of property, health and safety, and legal compliance primarily through the use of preventative methods (Buck and Gilmore 2010, 370). It

is recommended that museums not allow food or drink in their galleries and check for pest damage often. When a pest is found within the collections of a professional museum, that item is often isolated and treated through a variety of methods depending on its medium (Buck and Gilmore 2010, 376-378).

IPM is often not a primary consideration for micromuseums. Their creators tend to focus on researching and displaying the museum's topic in visually stimulating and informative ways. This can and does lead to problems, especially within the sphere of IPM. The SEDM experienced an unusual, but luckily non-devastating, infestation over the summer of the study. The museum displays trees taken from the surrounding area, meaning they were cut from a friend's property and installed directly into the museum area with no treatment. There are two in the main shop and three in room four surrounding Boomer. It was one of these room four



*Figure 9 Wasp from SEDM
Photo credit: Carissa Kepner*

trees that presented the problem.

On July 5th, 2017 a large parasitic wood wasp was found in the museum. Upon trying to identify its source, a pile of saw dust was found at the base of a tree surrounding Boomer. Over the course of the month the wasps

continued to infest the museum, finally clearing up around August 1st, 2017. The Outpost was never able to have the pest expertly identified, however through a series of online searches the pest was narrowed to a type of wood or horntail wasp. This species is not harmful to humans, as they cannot sting or bite. The adults will not burrow into processed or non-living wood, meaning

the exhibit area and the building were not under direct threat (Mussen 2010,1). The primary strategy for dealing with the wasps was to locate and eliminate. Adult wasps were found within the museum, destroyed with a fly swatter, and then disposed of outside the building.

It is most likely these wasps were brought into the museum with the tree. Many wood wasps hatch quickly, but can take up to five years to fully develop and emerge from the safety of their tree (Mussen 2010, 1). This is what the owners believe happened in the case of the SEDM. In order to treat the problem more directly, the owners purchased a suffocating dust like product from the local hardware store and applied it to the tree in question, but not to the other surrounding trees or those within the shop area. This was not done out of neglect, but because the dust is expensive and the owners had to consider how much they would be able to purchase vs the probability of the other trees producing wood wasps in the future. Whereas professional museums have the ability to budget and apply for grants or subsidiaries for emergency IPM, micromuseums are often not capable of applying for assistance, usually because they are not considered a museum by the professional world. Thus, micromuseum IPM is often similar to that of household pest management, including fumigation, other chemical methods, and a pest-first-items-second mentality.

While micromuseums often differ from professional museums in terms of policies and procedures, usually due to lack of formalized training or budgetary restrictions, they also share commonalities with these larger institutions. Like professional museums, micromuseums struggle with balancing what should and should not be included within their exhibits. Museums in general share selective histories, not because they desire to tell only part of the story, but because exhibits cannot contain all the information ever learned about a subject. Curators and designers are well aware that selecting one object over another prioritizes its role in the overall

story, while diminishing the others' (Candlin 2016, 138). It may seem undesirable to leave any part of an exhibit's story untold, but there are numerous considerations that must be taken into account when deciding how to balance these stories. Does the object's absence drastically change the story being told or does it just leave out an interesting tidbit of information? Does one side of the story deserve to be privileged over another? Multi-vocal approaches do not always guarantee impartiality, nor do they diminish the responsibility of making ethical decisions (Candlin 2016, 91). What is the correct balance and how does the exclusion or inclusion of an object change the story?

The power of exhibits is often underrated, even more so within micromuseums. There is a certain ideological power that comes from these spaces. Micromuseums focus on uncommon, often non-academic, topics, that are often informed by pop-culture or other forms of mass-media. The presentation of these topics within a museum setting can inspire deeper interest among the public, as well as serving to legitimize them. What I mean here is many collectors collect because they are interested in the pieces. They join collecting groups, follow social media pages, and watch television programming relating to their topic of choice. When one of these group members decides to finally display his or her collection publicly within a formalized setting, it provides the legitimacy of the museum. When the public visits the exhibits they will be more inclined to believe what they are reading and seeing is factual and worthy of informing their opinion on the topic, at least more so than what they have already viewed online or on television.

The majority of micromuseums have little to no interpretation, such as the Gopher Hole Museum in Torrington, Alberta, Canada and the Toy Museum in Medellin, Colombia (i.e. McTavish 2017; Moncunill-Pinas 2017). These exhibits rely on direct communication with staff,

volunteers, or the creators and an understanding of the community itself and how the museum relates to local history. The Gopher Hole Museum features displays of gophers dressed as past city residents, visiting city landmarks, and attending defunct city festivals (McTavish 2017, 7-8). While the cases are interesting and the museum has grown popular for its unusual topic, truly understanding what is presented in the museum requires intimate knowledge of the town's history or an in-depth conversation with one of the museum staff. The exhibit creators do not attempt to control the meaning for those that visit, instead focusing on their own interests, values, experiences, and skills (McTavish 2017, 4). Visitors are welcome to extract their own meanings from the cases, but are encouraged to talk with the locals who made them and learn about the community and the people who live there first hand.

Other micromuseums, such as the Museum of Witchcraft in Boscastle, England, provide a significant amount of interpretation, complete with events, and publications. However, these museums still rely on direct interactions to immerse visitors in the topic and communicate authentic information. For instance, the museum only hires practicing witches, who have the knowledge to care for their unique collections and who can properly interpret the tenants and beliefs of witchcraft to the public (Candlin 2016, 73). These museums tend to use thematic elements, such as immersive environments, lighting, and sound to assist with the feel and mood of the exhibit, whereas other micromuseums use simple lighting and glass cases.

The SEDM is one of the later. Based on the questionnaire and observation data from the previous chapter, the exhibits at SEDM greatly impact the views and beliefs of the visitors. A decrease in skepticism and a rise in overall willingness to believe suggests that the museum makes a compelling case for the existence of the Sasquatch. However, would these impacts change if the information was presented in a new way or if certain pieces of information were

excluded or included? What exactly is it that provides the power behind these exhibits? To answer this, we must first investigate what stories the museum is not telling.

The most obvious exclusion is the discussion of other explanations for the evidence presented. The exhibits present a number of pieces that suggest possible Sasquatch activity, such as footprints or twisted trees, but only one panel that discusses other possible causes for the phenomena. The “Black Bear vs Sasquatch Tracks” panel resides in room three, accompanying a short discussion on tracks found near Bailey:

To the untrained eye, black bear tracks can easily be mistaken for Sasquatch footprints, especially when the claw marks are not visible. The track to the left was made by the front paw of a black bear. The hind foot print can be even more deceptive, as it is longer and more human-like. Add to this the fact that bears will often place their hind feet into their front paw prints leaving a much longer track – and it’s enough to fool even the most veteran Squatcher! (Myers, Jim, Black Bear vs Sasquatch Tracks, SEDM, text panel, 2016.)

This panel is the only one in the museum that suggests possible misidentifications or alternative explanations for physical evidence. It still holds true to the museum’s stance that the Sasquatch physically exists, but shows a more critical side to the research, admitting that even the experts are not infallible and that not every unusual track is created by the Sasquatch.

However, the lack of discussion around other possible explanations could be having direct impacts on how the visitors interact with and experience the exhibits. For instance, without these discussions it is possible to see the Sasquatch as the only possible explanation for the majority of strange occurrences found within the wilderness.

By adding panels that discuss other possibilities the Outpost would still be able to stay true to its mission and their belief that the Sasquatch physically exists, while providing additional interpretation to the visitor. For instance, in the case of the Sasquatch nests or twisted trees, the Outpost could provide information on how they determine if the nest is

authentic or man-made or other explanations for the deformations of trees and why they believe the ones on display are, in fact, Sasquatch-made. Visitor interpretations of the current exhibits, may be relying on information that is unintentionally misleading, purposing that there are no alternative explanations to strange phenomena.

However, like in professional museums, this gap in the story results from a lack of space and the prioritizing of certain pieces of information over others. There is little room left in the museum as it stands, hence why an expansion is being constructed. Perhaps with this new room and the rearranging of the gallery, there will be space to expand the interpretation of other explanations. While some museums must focus on and prioritize one view over another, such as those that focus on marginalized communities whose voices are under-represented in mainstream culture, the SEDM would benefit from being more self-critical and open about their processes. The topic of the Sasquatch is constantly under fire and the owners understand how they are viewed by many within the “normal” scientific community, primarily as a fringe or “lunatic” science to quote Mr. Shermer.

It is possible that these types of additions would raise skepticism or slow the rate of conversions to open-mindedness, as they would provide additional information that may or may not contradict with the visitors’ world view. It is also possible that they would provide additional support for those arguing for the physical existence of the Sasquatch, allowing visitors to understand the process and analysis of Sasquatch research. Regardless of the possible outcomes the power of the overall exhibit cannot be understated. Visitors are leaving the gallery space with new perspectives, influenced primarily by the reports of others, visually presented in both the sightings map and the shared encounter stories.



*Figure 10 Bailey surroundings
Photo Credit: Carissa Kepner*

This does pose the question as to how the exhibits are impacting the visitors currently. The questionnaire data shows a decrease in skepticism and an increase in a willingness to believe. What is it about the museum that causes visitors to reevaluate their belief systems? Are participants

simply being nice, since they had a personal interaction with the owners or is something else taking place? Based on observations, questionnaires, and museum theory, it can be argued that the setting of the museum, the personalization of the exhibit, and the presentation of an old topic in a new way are key factors in visitor experience and belief.

The setting of the museum, both inside the exhibit and the surrounding area, set the stage for visitors (Candlin 2012, 37). How do the visitors interact with the natural environment around the museum? Is it on the ocean, in a field, on a cliff? Are visitors entering a public building or a private home? The Museum of Witchcraft in Boscastle is an excellent example of the natural surroundings impacting the reaction of visitors to the museum. It is situated at the mouth of the harbor, surrounded by high cliffs which visitors can hike complete with strong winds blowing in from the ocean and buzzards often circle overhead (Candlin 2016, 58). In her study, Candlin reported that many non-practitioners (of witchcraft) felt that they should proceed cautiously in both the surrounding environment and the museum, citing both the

actively practicing witches inside and the ominous environment outside; “whether it is viewed positively or negatively the Museum of Witchcraft operates in an environment that is broadly consonant with its interests” (Candlin 2016, 57-58).

The SEDM is similar to the Museum of Witchcraft in this regard. While Bailey is on the highway, it is often not disturbed by large amounts of traffic. The area is peaceful, surrounded by mountains, lakes, pine forests, and a clear rushing river. One cannot see past Bailey far into the surrounding area. To the East is Crow Hill, a steep turning embankment of the highway that does not allow one to see the top while driving, let alone while walking. To the West is a low track of highway that curves off, blocking the view shortly down the road. All of this together makes it so Bailey feels set apart from the rest of the mountains, like a small rural community set off the beaten path, while still being very much on it. Deer, mountain lions, bears, and moose have been known to make their way through town, sometimes passing by the Cutthroat Café, located next to the Outpost. A short hike across the river and up the hill separates hikers from the highway, surrounding them with trees and views of other forested areas.

All of this works together to make Bailey a believable habitat for the Sasquatch. Many visitors commented that if the Sasquatch did exist, this would be the perfect place for him to make his home. Others coming in from the Colorado Trail often reported that they felt the need to be more aware of their surroundings after exiting the exhibit space, noting that they had seen similar tree structures and twisted branches during their trip. It is likely that if the Outpost and SEDM were situated in the heart of Denver, the exhibits would not have as great an impact. In Bailey visitors exit the Outpost into the “home” of the Sasquatch. They have learned about its

habitat, its behaviors, and its mannerisms and are now leaving the protected space of the museum, where experts on the subject reside, and entering into a space that is unknown to them, the stories and encounters still fresh in their minds.

The environment within the exhibit is just as effective as the natural one. Guests are greeted almost immediately with an immersive exhibit, walking from the open store front to an enclosed paneled room which leads into a mine shaft. It is dark, cramped, and cuts the visitor off from the front of the Outpost. As the visitor continues he/she enters into a forest complete with moss, rocks, dirt, trees, and animals. The environment inside mimics the outer, but in a more spectacular way. Sound plays of crows and owls, with the occasional roar of a Sasquatch, darkened lights help intensify the shadows of the rooms, and hanging branches and moss on the



*Figure 11 Room Four
Photo Credit: Carissa Kepner*

ceiling create a feeling of enclosure in what should be an open setting, aka the forest.

These settings play into the visitor's imagination and allow him or her to fully submerge themselves into the museum and its topic.

Similar tours, based on cryptids and other paranormal topics use their surroundings to their advantage. For example, ghost tours rely on the materiality of the buildings mixed with storytelling elements to engage their publics. It is this materiality, the use of doorways, alleyways, and windows that provide the

frame for the stories, allowing for greater believability and “imaginative conjecture”, or the ability to suspend disbelief based on elemental surroundings (Holloway 2010, 623-624). The use of storytelling mixed with a dominating physical surrounding increases the impact of the story.

Professional museums tend to be set apart as independent buildings, sometimes clustered together in a park area with other cultural institutions, but definitely separate from other entities. Micromuseums, however, are “materially and visually embedded” in the area around them (Candlin 2016, 150-151). Many are located within housing developments or connected storefronts. The Outpost itself is embedded within the main street of Bailey. Many visitors can only identify it from the large wooden Sasquatch cutout on the front of the building. The building blends in with the rest of Bailey, connected to the apartments, restaurants, and other stores in the area.

The most influential pieces of the exhibit space were those that provided personal connections to the topic. The sightings map draws a large number of guests to it, many of whom find their own home or camp site. They are interested to know if there have been any sightings, footprints, or sounds near them personally. There was rarely conversation about the map that did not revolve around personal experiences or the experiences of those the visitor knew directly. If the visitor was not from Colorado, was not camping, or did not know anyone in the state he or she was not interested in the map as much as those with these direct connections.

Another influential piece of the exhibit is the visitor encounter book and the “Close Encounters” panel, both of which list real life encounters as told by those who experienced them. These pieces provide visitors with personal connections to other people, even if those people are strangers. The stories enlist common emotions others can relate to, such as fear, surprise, and curiosity. Visitors are able to then discuss these stories with each other and the

Outpost owners. They can ask questions, hear the story straight from one of the Owners, or ask the Owners to share their own experiences. This personalizes the exhibit space even further as visitors know the people who designed, researched, and lived the encounters.

Room four also allowed visitors to have their own “encounter” with the Sasquatch. Coming face to face with Boomer can be shocking for many guests who do not realize he is in the room originally, seeing him suddenly as they inspect the back corner more closely. This often results in shrieks and laughter, which can be heard from the front of the store. This is another form of personalization that connects directly to the stories visitors read in the exhibit. Instead of simply hearing a story, they experience one: “I was really impressed with the museum, especially the back room, where you have all the pictures and the recordings and I didn’t realize how tall 8 foot actually was” (Participant J 2017). The presence of Boomer also allows visitors to really visualize what they are reading; “You know you’re thinking 7,9 foot and you’re looking at yourself going ‘well that’s not so big’, but when you’re in there its really big...the size was really what changed, how you’d be scared” (Participant P 2017).

A few visitors also attributed their change in belief status to empirical evidence and learning new information about a topic they thought was straight forward: “I love seeing empirical evidence one way or another”, “It opened my eyes on some of the things. I didn’t realize that they twist the trees.” (Participant I, Participant L 2017). Being presented with new information on the Sasquatch appears to have opened people up to more possibilities. The topic is often presented in a fun and entertaining or ridiculous nature within pop-culture and the media. However, the museum presents the Sasquatch through a fun, but serious lens. It is this stark contrast between experiences that surprises the visitor and allows them to reevaluate their beliefs.

Even with an understanding of how micromuseums can contribute both to their local communities and the wider museum community, the question still remains as to why these amateur creators are so ready to invest their spare time and money into personal museums (Taimre 2013, 28). Why invest such a large portion of personal time and money, voluntarily, into a such a venture? Many amateur creators begin from a place of personal interest. Others desire to contribute to the local life of their community, whether that community refers to a tangible place or a wider network of people. In either case the founding and running of a museum is often a matter of pride for these creators, something that allows them to express their own missions and achieve a sense of self-realization and empowerment (i.e. Taimre 2013, 28-30; Stebbins 1992, 7).

While the store section of the Outpost was created by a church to integrate itself into the local community, the SEDM grew out of and is sustained, primarily, by Jim's passion for the subject and Daphne's dedication to research and the daily operations of the site. It was, in fact, Jim's initial excitement over hearing about a local sighting that reignited an interest he had in the creature from when he was young:

My husband believed it and I just humored him but I thought (pause) there's no way. And he spoke to a local woman back in 2012 who had seen one, her and her friend had seen one very clearly, there was no doubt in their mind, what they'd seen. So, he got all excited, he said "wow, that means there's Bigfoot here in the mountains. So, if they're here other people have seen them they're just not talking about it." So, he wanted to find a way to get people to talk about their sightings and so he just put a map up in the back room and invited people to come in and tell him their sightings just really for his own curiosity. So, people would walk in the store and say do you believe in Bigfoot and I would point to him and say he does, talk to him and umm and I would listen as they were telling him their stories and it didn't take many of those to convince me that these people were actually telling the truth, that they had really seen this creature and based on that I became a believer (Myers, Daphne 2017).

They dedicate a majority of their week, to being at the site, talking with customers, working with SORT, organizing events, and improving the museum. There is a feeling of

satisfaction linked with the effort invested in the creation of a micromuseum (Moncunill-Pinas 2017, 9). Those involved in its creation are serious in their endeavor, marked by their earnestness, sincerity, and “carefulness” in relation to their museum (Stebbins 1992, 8). If the owners were not dedicated or serious they would have a difficult time managing the exhibits and hosting events.

The popularity of the subject, however, provokes skepticism around the owners’ intentions. One common question posed to the SEDM, from critics and supporters alike, refers to the popularity and economic gain the Sasquatch can provide: “How do we know you’re not just doing this for the money?” It is no secret that Sasquatch merchandise, social media, television shows, movies, commercials, video games, books, etc. have flooded into the American public sphere. Some are created primarily for economic gain, such as the commercials and video games, but others are created by the Sasquatch community out of a dedication to the topic or to advance the topic’s research. The SEDM is in an interesting position as a micromuseum. Many are not questioned about potentially scheming to attract the public solely for monetary gain. Perhaps this is because the Outpost does attract so many visitors as opposed to other micromuseums which are operated solely as side projects. Perhaps it is due to the nature of the topic. Is presenting the Sasquatch as real seen as such a far-flung belief that anyone who does must either be crazy or manipulative?

The SEDM does not have the ability to operate as a non-profit. Each set of Outpost owners have second jobs that allow them to operate and work in the store and as a for-profit institution, the museum has brought in around \$16,000 in its two years of operation, as of the last visitor count in September 2017. While this is supplemented by store sales a large portion of the profit goes back into the museum and store for rent, operation costs, ordering merchandise,

and paying for museum organized events and the expansion. This is not to say that the Outpost does not make a decent amount of profit, based on its size and location. The public is attracted by the fact that the museum's topic is unusual and popular. However, based on my conversations with each set of owners and my observations of the daily operations and interactions the Outpost has with the community and visitors, economic gain is not the primary reason the museum is in place. It may be said best by Jim himself:

Me:

"Like how would you respond to somebody being like 'Do you really believe this or is it...'"

Jim:

"Is it just a money-making scheme."

Me:

"Yeah."

Jim:

"Because I spend too much time in the woods for this not to be something I believe is real. Otherwise I'm just wasting my time. I spend hours and nights regularly in the woods and trying to back up what I'm saying with real evidence and so umm yeah, my own field research is what I would tell them. If I just sat in the store all day long and talked about Bigfoot and I'm making money you could say 'well that's all you're doing is making money', but the fact that we go out and do field research for days at a time, sometimes, either I'm insane or there's really something to this, that's given us enough reason to go out and look."

While it is not their main focus, the Outpost and SEDM do serve the local community economically. Bailey is easy to miss driving down Highway 285, many people do not stop and if they do it is at the gas station near the end of main street. Residents of Bailey, who own store

fronts, depend on summer tourist traffic to support them through the winter. The surprising nature of the museum pulls visitors in off the highway and onto main street, often encouraging people not only to visit the museum, but the café next door, the art gallery across the highway, or the brewery down the road.

This is quite a different position from other Sasquatch museums around the country. As mentioned earlier some Sasquatch museums, such as the one located in Willow Creek, take part in Sasquatch festivals and commodification, often becoming another piece of the theme rather than a stand-alone institution. The SEDM, on the other hand, uses the Sasquatch's popularity to attract others to Bailey for the benefit of other residents, not through Sasquatch pancakes, but through individual cultural and community events. The museum is not another piece of a Sasquatch landscape, created to bolster tourism to the area, but a unique, albeit popular, piece of Bailey history and culture.

One significant difference between micromuseums and professional museums is the concern over the sustainability of micromuseums. Museums are meant to hold their collections in perpetuity in public trust. The public view of the museum is often of a "permanent institution where their heritage is kept safe" (Tamire 2013, 33). However, many micromuseums are generational, only lasting as long as the creator is alive. Their stories and collections are often undocumented, only known by the select few who operate the museum.

One such instance was the Tooth Fairy Museum in Deerfield, IL. Originally established by Dr. Rosemary Wells of the Northwestern University Dental School, the Tooth Fairy Museum displayed over 100 pieces of tooth fairy memorabilia collected from around the world, showing the different forms the story took across various cultures. It was extremely popular, especially for being located within the doctor's home, attracting local elementary schools who attended

60-90-minute tours (Jaholst 2014). Her collection was so extensive and thorough that the Library of Congress requested the bibliography she created covering her 125 books related to the fairy (Gurvis 1998, 130). Unfortunately, after Dr. Rosemary Wells' death in 2000 the collection was sold off and the museum closed by her husband (Jaholst 2014). There are no records of the collection or the stories and songs she provided to visitors, other than her bibliography, and few pictures exist, the primary one being of the front of the house the museum was located in. This instance is common among the micromuseum community and raises the question of whether or not these institutions should be trusted in the same way professional institutions are, especially if they could disappear overnight.

What is interesting is that Sasquatch museums do not appear to follow this model as closely as other micromuseums. Many began as small projects and have since evolved into full blown small museums complete with staff and collections, such as the China Flat Museum in Willow Creek, CA or Expedition: Bigfoot! in Cherry Log, GA. At the moment the SEDM's future is in the balance, meaning that Jim and Daphne have every intention of running the museum as long as they can, but there are some concerns as to what will happen to the Outpost after they are no longer able to do so. Their children have their own careers and many members of the SORT team are older or around the same age as the owners. The trajectory of the museum is uncertain, as it is still quite young, having only been open for about two years.

The concept of the museum is not solid. Its borders are fuzzy, both in the minds of the public and the professional world. The SEDM and Sasquatch Outpost serve as an amateur version of a professional museum, bringing a "non-academic" topic and the voices of those who

live it to the public sphere. While the focus of this study was not to understand the perspective of the museum professional and how they relate to amateur museums, such as SEDM, it was interesting to hear visitor opinions on the subject.

The overall reception of the SEDM as a museum was positive. It exceeded many visitor expectations and has seen a number of repeat visitors. A major question for me was to determine what the different communities thought of the SEDM in terms of its relations to other museums. How did visitors view the area? Was it a museum to them? What did they believe a museum was? Did they ascribe any importance to the SEDM, the way they might to a larger professional institution? What I found was that all of my interview participants, which totaled to 18 excluding those in SORT, did consider the SEDM to be a museum. However, there was a difference in ascribed importance between general visitors and those who are directly involved in the Sasquatch community.

Those who were visiting the Outpost as something fun and unique had positive, often surprised reactions to the museum; “It was good. It was done better than I thought it would be. I mean it’s just kinda a short little jaunt, but its good information and I like the fact that you all took the time to put the Sasquatch in, peeking behind the tree, it was well done. Well worth the money” (Participant M 2017). This group often referred to the museum existing as “Cool”, “Awesome”, or “Fun” (i.e. Participant G, K, L 2017). Participants did not seem to see much of a disconnect between what the SEDM offers and that of a more professionalized museum.

One instance that stands out was an interview held with two general visitors, Participant E and Participant F. They had the most in-depth response to my question on whether or not the SEDM should be considered a museum:

Me:

“What do you think about having a museum dedicated to something like the Sasquatch? Do you think it fits into museums?”

Participant F:

“Oooo that’s a hard one. Because I feel like usually museums are based on” (pause)

Participant E:

“More fact.”

Participant F:

“I don’t think fact or factual.”

Me:

“I get what you’re saying.”

Participant F:

“Do you get what I mean like not like maybe not most of its like”

Me:

“Like scientifically seen stuff.”

Participant E:

“Not like Cryptozoology or whatever it’s called.”

Participant F:

“That being said I still think there deserves to be a museum about it. I don’t know if it fits into (pause) another museum.”

Participant E:

“I say there could be a museum for anything. If someone is interested in something why not? It doesn’t matter how factual or real it is, I don’t know.”

While these participants did have some qualifications and considerations when it came to fully accepting the SEDM as a museum, they also expressed a sentiment that personal opinions regarding the subject matter should not exclude intuitions from being considered a museum. Participant J echoed this sentiment in their interview as well; “I don’t see any reason not to have a museum dedicated to everything that people are interested in” (Participant J 2017).

One possible reason for this consideration, but eventual acceptance is that the Outpost and SEDM are presented in a professional manner. All text panels are professionally designed and printed, as Jim also works as a graphic designer. The museum also contains many elements also found within professional museums, such as entrance tickets, immersive environments, well versed and accessible staff, explanatory text, and interactive elements. These elements assist the SEDM in separating itself from other cryptid attractions, such as the World’s Largest Jackalope in Douglas, WY which features a 13-foot-tall jackalope statue and offers visitors a “Jackalope Hunting License” (Roadside America 2007). These attractions often have little to no interpretation and are usually a literal roadside attraction where visitors can stop, take a picture, buy a souvenir, and be on their way. Many cryptid attractions do not provide a community for visitors to interact or connect with and do not host events or provide historical or research related information. In this regard the SEDM is definitely not a roadside tourist trap. Visitors to the Outpost are offered much more and it is likely that this is the reason visitors are willing to accept its presence in the museum world, albeit with some caveats.

Those more directly involved with the phenomenon had stronger opinions on the importance of the SEDM as an institution “We need more of these. I think once people see all the facts and the evidence [it] will take away the joke factor, cause right now if you mention,

you know, Bigfoot people laugh and most of them are just very ignorant. They have no idea and they haven't nearly done any research, you know, but this is what we need" (Participant J 2017). Participant J's comment was a common sentiment among those interviewed who have spent a great deal of time involved with Sasquatch related activities. They view the SEDM as a public work that furthers their own interests and creates a space to educate others in what Sasquatch researchers really do.

Micromuseums, although created by amateurs, have much to offer the world of museum studies. They share new voices and perspectives, are champions of making the most of what you have, and interact directly with multiple communities, both in the local area and the nation. The SEDM directly impacts many of those who go through the exhibit space, attend events, and become involved with the phenomenon in some way. It provides an excellent example of a group taking a topic not considered to be worthy of museum display and turning it into an academic, evidenced pursuit. There are areas where the museum could better itself, especially in regards to the presentation of information and their collections care procedures. However, no museum is perfect and all are constantly working towards a better state of existing. The SEDM and others like it are becoming a popular way to display, talk about, and interact with unusual topics. Often empowering both the creator of the museum and others who desire a space which represents their own passions.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

The most stifling situation that can ensue from this subject is for the treatment of the question of the existence and nature of sasquatch to be reduced to an argument between “believers” and “skeptics” (Meldrum, 2011, 271)

The Sasquatch has become a compelling piece of American culture. It is known world-wide, appears in every form imaginable, and people want more. Americans dedicate their time, money, and lives to the research, search for, and enjoyment of the Sasquatch and its related festivals. This is only made more interesting given the fact that the Sasquatch is a public domain character, that no one corporation owns or promotes (Coleman 2012, 11). The Sasquatch appears to have a certain power over humanity. Inserting itself into the lives of believers and skeptics alike.

It is unfortunate that the majority of Sasquatch literature revolves around proving or disproving the creature’s existence. While proof and evidence may be one of the first things people think of when they hear the word “Sasquatch”, there is a variety of other topics that need to be considered. The social implications and impacts of the creature along with questions on why people believe in strange phenomena are examples of further topics that require research. As the Sasquatch’s presence in the museum world continues to grow, with the Sasquatch Encounter Discovery Museum (SEDM) being one of 5 recognized Sasquatch museums in the country these questions may be more pertinent now than they ever have been before.

The exhibits, stories, thematic elements, and the personal connections made with the

owners and storytellers of the site are what make visitors return and reevaluate their own belief systems. Many visitors expect a small, frightening space with Sasquatches that creep around corners for an easy jump scare. However, they are generally surprised to find a small, interactive, immersive space that informs and entertains without relying on haunted house sensationalism. The SEDM creates a sense of community, allows for discussion, supports local businesses, and attracts a wide range of visitors from all around the nation.

Micromuseums are about education. They share experiences and stories in manners the public are generally unaccustomed to seeing in professional museums, on topics that are not typically deemed “museum worthy”. They provide visitors with a “point of entry” into the concerns of a particular place or group, through their own unique voice (Candlin 2016, 182). They are an outsider form of museum, one created directly by those who live the experiences displayed. Like Outsider Art, micromuseums are created by those who are in some way “on the margins”, amateurs who feel so far removed from normal expectations, they created their own version of a formalized field (Maclagan 2009, 7). While these amateur institutions often use the language and general procedures of museum making they also transform these professional techniques to better fit their unique needs.

With this new understanding of the amateur museum it begs the question, where do we go from here? Micromuseums are continuing to appear throughout the world, creating new debates, offering new techniques, and expanding the museum world into new dimensions never thought possible. Micromuseums and their creators have much to offer the professional museum community. They represent the heterogeneity of museums, the way museums can serve various communities in ways not traditionally conceived of (Candlin 2016, 2). Researching and evaluating these amateur museums can provide professionals with an opportunity to

reconsider dominate and current practices, to become even more self-reflexive, and to restructure museology once again to become more inclusive and diverse.

One of the first steps in this process will be to reorganize the definition of “museum” to include these amateur institutions. There may be many qualifications that go along with what will be officially designated as a micromuseum, but their inclusion should not be seen as lessening the field, but expanding it to include a new cultural phenomenon. Museums grew out of amateur collections and have only recently been professionalized. Considering the origins of the institution it is ironic that today micromuseums and amateurs are not considered legitimate representations of museums. I am not arguing that every roadside attraction be accepted into the field. It will be important to carefully consider what exactly a micromuseum is and what they offer before embarking on further studies.

A second step will be a more thorough analysis of micromuseums and how they compare to and replicate professional museums. Why do creators choose the elements they do from professionals? Have micromuseums instituted new policies and procedures that would benefit mainstream museums? How can professional museums better integrate the voices heard at micromuseums into their own institutions? Researchers such as Candlin, McTavish, Moncunill-Pinas, and Taimre have already dedicated part of their professional life to this study. However, despite all of their work these studies have not been carried out in the United States, a country where you can buy multiple books about strange and unique museums and have few duplicates among them.

Third the research conducted on the SEDM could be broadened. With the SEDM expanding further research could be conducted on how the new exhibits impact the overall view of the Outpost and how the guests interact with the galleries. The new area will include more

information on Native American perspectives, footprint casts, interactives, and a video, the exact topic of which is still to be determined. Could these additions fill in the gaps in the story? Will the number of skeptics decrease further or will the thematic elements, such as a Sasquatch breaking through a window, in the new area cause higher levels of amusement and lower the levels of trust provided to the museum at this point?

It would also be prudent to investigate whether or not the change in belief status many visitors experienced has endured if they have reverted back to their previous skepticism. Is it the atmosphere of the museum that causes these changes, allowing guests to temporarily remove themselves from the wider world, but upon returning home reverting back to their previous stance? This information would better inform museum evaluation as it would indicate if the museum is truly meeting their mission of educating the public or just creating an entertaining pop-culture space.

Anthropologists have often regarded their studies and those who participate in them as separate from themselves. Often disregarding their experiences as abnormal or within the realm of social implications and logical explanations, often discounting their own experiences within these groups as a result of the mind playing tricks after long days of field work (Hunter 2016, 174). However, anthropologists must also now be more open to the experiences they share with their groups and to accepting the non-Western ways of knowing as credible and equal to that of Westernized knowledge (Clifford 1988,200-201, 209). Therefore, I can think of no better way to conclude this study than to report my own paranormal experience from the field, staying true to the call of E. Turner and other paranormal anthropologists.

My encounter took place on August 12th, 2017 during the Sasquatch Outpost Research Team (SORT) camping trip. After we returned from our trek through the forest, made dinner,

and sat around the camp fire for a few hours, the sun set. The team had just acquired a new night vision scope and decided to test it. After the official team members had looked, I took a turn. I slowly swept the scope across the forest beyond the camp site. As I reached the end of my track, I stopped short at a small clump of trees. There was a strange shape that I had not previously seen while exploring earlier that day. I kept the scope fixed on the shape trying to make out what it was. The figure was large, possibly 8 ft tall, based on the trees that surrounded it, which we measured in the morning to be about 10 ft tall. It appeared white in the night vision, similar to the trees around, but was much thicker and broader. I stay fixed for only a few seconds before it moved. At that point a wave of adrenaline rushed over me. I jumped, dropped the scope from my eye, and called to Jim. When we finally got the scope positioned again the figure was gone. If I am being honest it appeared to look like Frank from the gift shop, broad shoulders, long arms, a hunched back, and a conical head.

The majority of the team believed that I had, indeed, seen a Sasquatch. That he or she had decided to reveal him/her self to me as I had shown interest in their nature and had been respectful of their environment and their home. They also believed it had left so quickly because of my reaction and not wanting to frighten me further. Jim was more analytical about the experience, stating that he is sure I saw something, but since there was little evidence of a Sasquatch being present in the area, aka no strong odor, no broken branches, and no footprints, he could not readily state that I had, in fact, seen a Sasquatch.

I still do not know what I saw that night, but what I can state is that the SEDM, SORT, and the Sasquatch phenomenon all have direct impacts on the lives and belief systems of those involved. Whether participants dedicate large portions of their time or are simply visiting a museum on their way to or from another location, the Sasquatch is a compelling figure that

draws interest and curiosity. This heightened popularity is most likely linked to greater media attention and the ability to rapidly spread information across the country, especially on the internet (Bader et al. 2010, 193). The phenomenon has largely been ignored by the professional and academic worlds as being too farfetched or too incredible. However, it is difficult to deny that the Sasquatch and creatures like it have woven their way into American society, creating impactful social structures and group dynamics. The Sasquatch Outpost and Sasquatch Encounter Discovery Museum exemplify what most micromuseums and cryptid research teams strive to be, namely professional, organized, insightful, informative and, most importantly, impactful.

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Appendix A

Museum questions

Have you ever visited the museum at the Outpost?

Did the Outpost museum have any impact on your beliefs about the Sasquatch?

Did the museum meet your expectations?

(These two questions will only be asked if the answer to question one is positive)

What do you think of the Sasquatch Outpost?

What do you think about having a museum dedicated to something like the Sasquatch?

Activity questions

When did you first hear about the Sasquatch?

Do you participate in any of the following activities?

- Gifting
- Squatchin'
- Sharing Sasquatch sighting stories
- Visiting the Sasquatch Outpost museum
- Visiting the Sasquatch Outpost general store

(If Yes)

How did you get started in this (these) activities?

How often do you participate in this (these) activities?

How do you prepare for this (these) activities?

(If No)

Why do you not participate in any of these activities?

Are there other Sasquatch related activities you participate in that I have not listed?

Appendix B

University of Denver Consent Form for Participation in Research

Title of Research Study: Looking Through the Trees: an anthropologist, a museum, and the Sasquatch

Researcher(s): Carissa Kepner, Masters Candidate, University of Denver

Study Site: Sasquatch Outpost museum and general store, Bailey, CO

Purpose

You are being asked to participate in a research study. The purpose of this research is to investigate the impacts the Sasquatch phenomenon has on the everyday lives of those living in and visiting Bailey, CO. Such as going to the store specifically for Squatchin' equipment or driving 3 or more hours to visit Sasquatch sighting areas. This study is also meant to be an evaluation of a small independent museum, the Sasquatch Outpost. These micromuseums, are often ignored in academic studies and are underrepresented in the museum community. This study will hopefully shed light on the role this museum plays in the local community and the wider museum world.

Procedures

If you participate in this research study, you will be invited to either fill out a short questionnaire or to participate in a voluntary interview after you visit the Sasquatch Outpost museum. Questionnaires can be filled out and dropped off in the provided box. Questionnaires will take about 5 minutes to complete.

If you agree to participate in an interview you will be asked to read through this consent form and sign at the bottom. Interviews will be conducted in a private location, such as the museum owner's office, and will last between 15 and 20 minutes. Before your interview begins you will be asked to read through this consent form; time will be given to answer any questions before beginning. Interviews will be recorded via a voice recorder; please see the Confidentiality section for more information. At the end of the interview you will be asked if you have any more questions pertaining to your interview or the study.

Voluntary Participation

Participating in this research study is completely voluntary. Even if you decide to participate now, you may change your mind and stop at any time. You may choose not to continue with the interview, allow any details from the interview to be used in the final publication, or answer any survey question for any reason without penalty or other benefits to which you are entitled.

Risks or Discomforts

This form is used in a variety of research projects. Its intent is to protect vulnerable populations such as those participating in biomedical projects. No demographic data, such as age, sex, gender, name, etc. will be collected during this interview. Based on the nature of this project and the lack of identifiable information there is no foreseeable risk involved in your participation.

Benefits

Possible benefits of participation include a better understanding on how the Sasquatch phenomenon impacts the everyday life of those living in and visiting Bailey, CO. The majority of Sasquatch research and literature involves the physical reality of the creature and why humans have a need for creatures and stories. Your participation will help shed a new light on the topic. Your participation will also provide information about the operation of small independent museums. Little evaluation and study has been conducted on independent museums. This study will help provide information on how the public views and uses small museums and how they fit into the larger world of museums. Thus, your participation in the study will help fill in two gaps in Sasquatch and museum knowledge.

Confidentiality

The researcher will not record or ask for any identifiable demographic information to keep your information safe throughout this study. Your individual identity will be kept private when information is presented or published about this study. Participants will be identified using letters, such as Participant A, in the researchers notes and under pseudonyms in the final writeup if an identifier is necessary. This pseudonym may or may not reflect the actual sex/gender of the participant in order to further protect your identity. The only type of demographic information that will be collected is if the participant is from Bailey or is visiting. This information will only be used for statistical purposes and not in any individual instances.

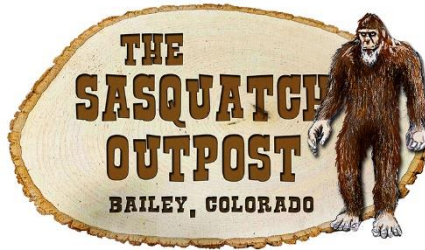
Interviews will be recorded via voice recorder, as long as you, as the participant, agree. This will be done to ensure no information is misquoted or misconstrued and that all information was recorded in its entirety. Interviews will be introduced with the participants' ID and will be stored on an external hard drive, which will be either on the researcher's person or locked in a secure location. No one other than the researcher will have access to the recordings. Transcripts may appear in the final write up but only under the participant ID. Recordings will be deleted after the final write has been completed.

Questions

If you have any questions about this project or your participation, please feel free to ask questions now or contact Carissa Kepner at Carissa.kepner@du.edu at any time. You may also contact Christina Kreps at Christina.kreps@du.edu.

If you have any questions or concerns about your research participation or rights as a participant, you may contact the DU Human Research Protections Program by emailing IRBAdmin@du.edu or calling (303) 871-2121 to speak to someone other than the researchers.

Appendix C



- 1) How did you hear about the museum?
Passing By Blue Road Sign Internet Friend Other: _____

- 2) Are you a resident of Bailey or visiting?
Resident Visiting

- 3) What was your attitude toward the Sasquatch before going through the exhibit?
Skeptic Believer Neutral Want to believe Other
(Please circle one)
If other please explain:

- 4) What is your attitude toward the Sasquatch after going through the exhibit?
Skeptic Believer Neutral Want to believe Other
(Please circle one)
If other please explain:

- 5) If your attitude toward the Sasquatch has changed, what caused it to change?

- 6) Was this museum what you expected it to be?
Yes No In some ways No preconceptions

- 7) What were you expecting?

- 8) Is there anything else you'd like to see exhibited in the museum?

Appendix D

Museum section:

Panel Name:

Text:

Tone:

Images presented with text:

Categories:

Scientific Sensationalism Humanizing Strong Claims

Questioning Connotation

Other comments/observations:

Appendix E

Question 5

Overall total: 187

No response given: 100

Percentage of total: 53.5%

No change: 23

Percentage of total: 12.3%

This category included responses such as

It didn't change

No change

N/A

It's the same

It hasn't

No

Same

Has not changed

It did not change

Sightings Map: 5

Percentage of total: 2.7%

This category included responses such as

Maps with pins

The sighting board

The map

Confirmed sightings near where I had an encounter (map)

Not changed but has additional comments: 4

Percentage of total: 2.1%

This category included Responses such as

I believed when I came in – but didn't realize the amount of sightings in this
area

Not changed just educated me a little

Hasn't changed much just entertaining to see

N/A maybe a little less skeptic seeing more evidence in CO

General information or non-specific pieces of exhibits: 22

Percentage of total: 11.8%

This category included responses such as

- Interesting information and the sighting map
- In understanding through case studies, images, and overall explanation
- Very informational
- I am more informed now
- Evidence and pictures
- Great info within the museum + pictures
- Reports and sightings
- Pictures, map, accounts
- In general, just learning more information
- Reading material
- Good factual information. Owner is convincing
- It was a logical presentation
- Evidence
- More info
- There is so much evidence and how can you explain it away
- Evidence and historical context
- Comprehensive museum exhibits
- Because of all the evidence presented
- All of the evidence
- I was surprised by the length of the timeline and patterns (tree sculptures)
- The images and footprints
- Casts of prints, petroglyphs

Comments that refer to belief or excitement in belief: 8

Percentage of total: 4.3%

This category included responses such as

- All signs point to believe
- Hope it's real
- I believe more now after the evidence in the museum
- More confident now
- Made me more of a believer
- More Bigfoot gumption and excitement!
- Believer
- Definitely possible!

Footprints: 3

Percentage of total: 1.6%

This category included responses such as

- The footprints in the museum

The footprints
Spacing of 7-8ft between footprints in the store

Encounters/stories: 5

Percentage of total: 2.7%

This category included responses such as

Reading the encounters

Stories

Sightings

All the accounts of sightings

More of the eyewitness accounts – I didn't realize there were so many

Random comments: 12

Percentage of total: 6.4%

This category included responses such as

I don't know

Want to go exploring and keep a closer eye out

I'm just curious

I think this is so cute. Definitely worth stopping in, makes us a little closer to
believing

It was perfect

Always interesting

I won't be camping!

Yes

Seeing how vast the wilderness is out there

I became more skeptical

First hand encounter maybe, or indisputable scientific proof such as a body

In reading more about their behaviors I feel like research is valuable and
warranted

Twisted trees/nests: 2

Percentage of total: 1.1%

This category included responses such as

The pictures of the trees and the twisted trees

The nesting or tree "forts"

Photos/film: 3

Percentage of total: 1.6%

This category included responses such as

The photo that was taken before photoshop

Reading about the 1967 footage

The photo that existed before photoshop

Appendix F

Question 7

Total: 187

No answer given: 70

Percent of total: 37.4%

No expectations: 9

Percent of total: 4.8%

This category included responses such as

No expectations

Not really expecting anything in particular

Had no expectations

Zero expectations

No preconception

N/A

Didn't know what to expect: 9

Percent of total: 4.8%

This category included responses such as

Didn't know what to expect

?

We didn't know what to expect

Not sure

Wasn't sure but it was cool

Unsure

Store/shop: 5

Percent of total: 2.7%

This category included responses such as

A gift shop

A store

Definitely a gift shop, but not necessarily a museum or learning experience

A small tourist shop with lots of small items

General praise: 16

Percent of total: 8.6%

This category included responses such as

I wasn't expecting it to be so nice :), surpassed my expectations

My family enjoyed the museum

Fun

Loved it

Cool info
Very cool
Greatness!
Fun – was fun!
A fun, informational, new experience!
It's terrific
100% great
Cool evidence
Its very artistic and put together. Really informative
Fun family stop!
Fun, friendly people

Expecting more: 18

Percent of total: 9.6%

This category included responses such as

A bit larger
Bigger
More info
More pictures – a video to watch would be nice
More castings
More footprints
A little bigger
A little more and longer
Longer but worth \$3
Expected bigger, more information
More prints
More history and evidence
Would like to see more
Bigger space, more interactive
A lot bigger
A longer walkthrough
Longer exhibit

Wanting the real thing: 3

Percent of total: 1.6%

This category included responses such as

The real Sasquatch
Bones of a Squatch
More pictures or videos of the actual creature

Scary/sensational: 5

Percent of total: 2.7%

This category included responses such as

Child thought things would jump out

More scary/sensational (it was better this way)

Scary

Jurassic Park with Bigfoot (kind of unreal)

More evidence, it seems like people are in fear of coming out and telling their story

Expectation met: 5

Percent of total: 2.7%

This category included responses such as

Exactly what I saw

What I saw

Hoping I got what expected

It met any expectations of what I thought it would be

Info/exhibit components: 19

Percent of total: 10.2%

This category included responses such as

Facts, sightings, etc.

Sightings and maps

Info on Bigfoot/Sasquatch

Stories of Bigfoot, anecdotes, and info about him

Pictures

Photos, encounters, facts, and replicas

Just a few posters of Bigfoot

Various evidence

A few exhibits with Sasquatch sightings and facts

Good visuals and info

Exceeded expectations: 16

Percent of total: 8.6%

This category included responses such as

Less evidence

Didn't think it would be so interesting

I was expecting less, the museum taught me a lot

The museum was better than expected

More than I was expecting

Just a small place with some pictures and sighting stories

Expected a few pics and cheesy statues, but this was excellent! Plenty of photo ops!

It's much more informative and scholarly than I had imagined. More

professional

Something that wasn't as cool and put together

Better than expected, very interesting
Older, outdated info, less details
I was expecting some photos, but there was much more
Nothing quite as remarkable?
A room or two of information. Did not expect so many Sasquatch-related items
I wasn't sure – definitely not the dedication to atmosphere
It was so much better! I was excited to see it

No expectations but with extra info: 3

Percent of total: 1.6%

This category included responses such as

No expectations, but super information for its size/thought it very good

No expectations, so they were surpassed

Convince/pseudoscience: 3

Percent of total: 1.6%

This category included responses such as

Information trying to convince people

Pseudo evidence of Sasquatch. Fun!

A lot of facts to prove Bigfoot is real and really cool merchandise

Other: 5

Percent of total: 2.7%

This category included responses such as

Great examples which you have. Local is excellent. Love the map :)

Dark from the first, but nice. Enjoyed the map.

I expected a quick but informative exhibit

Sasquatch museum :)

Learned more about Sasquatch

Uncategorizable: 1

Percent of total: 0.5%

This category included responses such as

5

Appendix G

Question 8

This question did not exist at the time: 17

Percent of total: 9.09%

No answer given: 39

Percent of total: 20.9%

No: 34

Percent of total: 18.2%

This category included responses such as

No

Not that I can think of

No/great

No, the evidence was cool and believable but even more evidence would be cool

No, was great

No, it brought us in and was cool – just a cute little museum

No, it was fun to visit

Can't even imagine what else they need but looking forward to checking it out next time

No, it was fun/cute

No there were a lot of facts and explanations that were really cool

Nope it was awesome

No, great place

N/A

Nope! This was great!

It was fun, none to add

Request for a real one: 10

Percent of total: 5.3%

This category included responses such as

A real Bigfoot

A Sasquatch body

Catch him

The real thing

A real Bigfoot or Sasquatch

Real Bigfoot stopping by

Sasquatch (the real one) :)

General praise: 16

Percent of total: 8.6%

This category included responses such as

Pretty much hit nail on head – thanks
I thought it was great!
I was satisfied with what was there. Thanks!
We had fun :)
It's cool!
Very good and awesome!
It was wonderful
Very well done!
Very nice, better than expected!
I think it was good
I think you all are doing a great job!
I found it informative and entertaining. High level museum!
Loved Boomer
Love the photo opportunity
Reading the personal accounts gave me chills

Request for more photos: 8

Percent of total: 4.3%

This category included responses such as

If anyone gets a clear photograph of Bigfoot/Sasquatch that would be nice to see
More photos etc, but I know there aren't many
Photos
More photos of Bigfoot "Gifting"
More pictures
More photos of sightings of Sasquatch
Maybe more pictures

Request for more videos: 16

Percent of total: 8.6%

This category included responses such as

A video of stories
Video
Maybe another video playing with sightings
Videos showing individuals who have experienced a sighting
Live video footage
Any videos?
Interactive tech, video testimonial
Perhaps a looped video of 5-10 minutes

Bigfoot mating video
If there's any footage from Freeman sighting

General requests for more: 5

Percent of total: 2.7%

This category included responses such as

Just more

More

Yes, more. I don't know what, but more

More evidence

Gift shop related: 2

Percent of total: 1.1%

This category included responses such as

Hoodie sweatshirts for youth. Great gift shop :)

Hot coco!

Request for larger space: 6

Percent of total: 3.2%

This category included responses such as

Bigger

Maybe another room

Larger

Maybe make it bigger

A continued expansion of evidence!

Maybe more displays

Requests for local evidence: 4

Percent of total: 2.1%

This category included responses such as

More encounter stories would be nice. Especially ones that took place in the
area

More local prints, etc.

More local

More local stories of sightings

Request for moving Sasquatch: 2

Percent of total: 1.1%

This category included responses such as

A moving Sasquatch – animated

Live costume Sasquatch

Request for expanded area of coverage: 5

Percent of total: 2.7%

This category included responses such as

More Sasquatch variations, more mythic creatures
Other myths/variations of Sasquatch
More first-person accounts – even outside the region
More info on Sasquatch all through the USA.
More stories w/ experts, more Squatch stories or sightings from around the
US/world

Requests for more interactives: 4

Percent of total: 2.1%

This category included responses such as

If possible more interactive and longer

Some video or other learning tools for those not interested in reading

A bigger, interactive display of items/tools to use when tracking

More interactive stuff

Cross category requests: 6

Percent of total: 3.2%

This category included responses such as

More dark and scary areas, also more pics of Bigfoot

Videos, interactive elements, bigfoot casts or other evidence (replicas are ok)

More photos and castings

More footprints/more pictures

More tracks, video

Requests for things not already in the museum: 5

Percent of total: 2.7%

This category included responses such as

Info of some of the “hoax” sightings, how they were discovered

Bigfoot scat

A more human oriented exhibit

We really enjoyed artifacts or objects, would love to see more, 3D exhibits

Being able to climb inside a replica of a nest would be cool

Requests for more sightings: 3

Percent of total: 1.6%

This category included responses such as

More sighting things

Just more reports, sightings!

Map of sightings

Request for more map: 1

Percent of total: 0.5%

This category included responses such as

More maps :)

Requests for more History: 2
Percent of total: 1.1%
This category included responses such as
More history
Larger timeline

Requests for more tracking techniques: 1
Percent of total: 0.5%
This category included responses such as
Tracking techniques

Requests for more casts: 1
Percent of total: 0.5%
This category included responses such as
Cast of footprints

Appendix H

Speaker Bios

Sybilla Irwin

Professional artist and field researcher, Sybilla Irwin combines her passions to recreate what witnesses across the country are seeing, with a commitment to realism, accuracy and authenticity. Sybilla has a BA degree from Texas A&M University and a teaching certificate from the University of Texas. She works one-on-one with witnesses to bring to life the images that have been burned into the minds of the people she has worked with, along with a commitment to act as an advocate for the individuals that have had the fabric of their reality challenged by their experience. To this end she has co-written and illustrated two children's books, with Ronie Powell, to help them cope with their experience. When Sybilla isn't traveling to work with witnesses, she is conducting full time field research and living on an active habituation site with a 40 plus year history of interaction with humans. Sybilla's goal is to build a record, documenting and cataloging the individual stories and faces of the beings that are being seen in North America, including other cryptozoological creatures as well. You can support Sybilla's travels and research by subscribing to her blog, "Sketching Encounters". There she shares with her readers, the witness sketches as they are being created, as well as all the supporting data that accompanies the witness report. This includes video, photographs, and audio.

Scott Nelson

R. Scott Nelson is a retired U.S. Navy Crypto-Linguist with over 30 years experience in Foreign Language and Linguistics, including the Collection, Transcription, Analysis and Reporting of voice communications. He is a two time graduate of the U.S. Navy Crypto-logic Voice Transcription School (Russian and Spanish) and has logged thousands of hours of voice transcription in his target languages as well as in Persian. He is currently teaching Russian, Spanish, Persian, Philosophy and Comparative Religions at Wentworth College in Missouri. His pertinent Curriculum Vitae follows: In 2010, published the Sasquatch Phonetic Alphabet and Transcription Standard (S.P.A.). In 2013, published Revision I of the S.P.A. which includes the Sasquatch Language Recording Syllogism (a philosophical proof for the existence of Sasquatch). Scott has conducted six expeditions in the company of Ron Morehead to the original Sierra Camp where the Berry/Morehead Tapes (Sierra Tapes) were recorded. Nineteen years on the Faculty of Philosophy and Languages at Wentworth College, Lexington, Missouri; teaching Russian, Persian and Spanish as well as several Philosophy and Religion courses.

Christopher O'Brien

From 1992 to 2002 investigative journalist Christopher O'Brien investigated and/or logged hundreds of unexplained events reported in the San Luis Valley—located in South-central Colorado/North Central New Mexico. Working with law enforcement officials from area counties, ex-military members, ranchers and an extensive network of skywatcher/investigators, he documented what may have been the most intense wave of unexplained activity ever seen in a single region of North America. His ten-plus year investigation resulted in the three books of his "mysterious valley" trilogy, *The Mysterious Valley, Enter the Valley*, (both St Martins Press) and *Secrets of the Mysterious Valley*. His field investigation of UFO reports, unexplained livestock deaths, Native American legends, cryptozoological animals, secret military activity and the folklore, found in the world's largest alpine valley, has produced one of the largest databases of unusual occurrences gathered from a single geographic region. His new book *Stalking the Herd* is the most comprehensive book ever written on the subject of "cattle mutilations." It is destined to become the go-to

Ruben Uriarte

Ruben Jose Uriarte graduated from Cal State University at Hayward/East Bay with a B.A. degree in Psychology and Latin American Studies. Ruben is a member of MUFON (Mutual UFO Network) as a Field Investigator, State MUFON Director for Northern California and Deputy Director of Investigations/International Affairs. Ruben has been involved with a large network of research organizations and served as a California State Coordinator for Crop Circle Phenomena Research International. He was a forResearch director for Beyond Boundaries, a company specializing in taking tour groups to various UFO "hotspots" around the world. Ruben currently serves as a board member for OPUS (Organization for Paranormal and Support Understanding). The mission of OPUS is to educate and support people having unusual /anomalous personal experiences. Ruben has been interviewed on many local and national radio shows and television documentaries on the subject of the UFO Phenomenon. Ruben has authored a number of books, co-written with Texas UFO researcher Noe Torres about major UFO crashes and other historical cases that have occurred along the border Southwestern United States and Mexico.

Thom Powell

Those who regularly attend bigfoot/sasquatch conferences will tell you that Thom Powell is among the most engaging speakers on the circuit. As a career science teacher he is an enormously experienced public speaker who not only entertains his audience with humor and high energy, but he can also he capably articulate the relevance and the limitations of the scientific method as it pertains to resolution of the sasquatch mystery. Thom's first book, *The Locals* (2003), revolutionized bigfoot research, introducing many new and once radical ideas like continent-wide sasquatch presence, habituation, infrasound, communication, and more. His second book, *Shady Neighbors* (2011), is a novel about a rural family that unwittingly habituates a sasquatch clan. His third book, *Edges of Science* (2015), returns to the anthology format of *The Locals* and suggests similarities and connections between the sasquatch phenomenon and other paranormal subjects. At the 2017 Salt Fork Conference, Thom will entertain and amuse you while he explains some of the radical concepts he published in *Edges of Science*, the main one being that real understanding of the sasquatch phenomenon occurs only by understanding its connection and its similarity to other seemingly-unrelated paranormal phenomena.

Les Stroud

Best known as the Canadian Screen Award winning producer, creator and star of the hit TV series *Survivorman* (OLN Canada, The Science Channel US, Discovery Channel International, City TV (Rogers) Canada), Les Stroud is the only producer in the history of television to produce an internationally broadcast series entirely written, videotaped and hosted alone. With Les known as the original genre creator of "Survival TV", *Survivorman* is one of the highest rated shows in the history of OLN Canada, the Science Channel US and Discovery Channel US and remains the highest rated repeat show on the Discovery Channel. *Survivorman* is licensed for broadcast worldwide, with ratings in the US hitting 2 million on individual episodes. A celebrated keynote speaker, musician and author, both his books *Survive! – Essential Skills and Tactics to Get You Out of Anywhere–Alive!* (Harper Collins) and *Will to Live* have made the New York Times bestseller list. Nominated for Best Travel Writer at the Canadian National Magazine awards, Les's third book *Beyond Survivorman* launched into stores Jan 2014. Les took home Best Writer in Non Fiction at the 2013 Canadian Screen Awards as well as the Executive Producers Award for Excellence at the Lewiston Film Festival. Musically, Stroud has shared the stage with the top in the business, including Slash, Journey, Jonny Lang, James Cotton, Steve Stevens, Alice Cooper, Steven Stills, Tommy Shaw, Robbie Krieger, Blues Traveler, Tesla, Jakob Dylan, Randy Bachman, Chicago, Montgomery Gentry, Lynyrd Skynyrd and The Roots. He is currently recording his fifth and sixth albums.

David Paulides

Dave Paulides received his undergraduate and graduate degrees from the University of San Francisco, and, has a professional background that includes twenty years in law enforcement and senior executive positions in the technology sector. In 2004 he formed North America Bigfoot Search-NABS (www.nabigfootsearch.com) where his investigative and analytical experience were invaluable in researching Bigfoot/Sasquatch sightings, encounters and behavior. He spent two years living among the Hoopa tribal members, listening to and recording their Bigfoot stories. The Hoopa Project is his first book, based upon his experiences in the Bluff Cre area of Northern California. David's second book, *Tribal Bigfoot* is a quantum step forward in Bigfoot research and allows for a common sense understanding of this elusive biped. These two books have been called the new standard for crypto research. NABS was also the group that started the Bigfoot DNA project which was instrumental in the identification of bigfoot/sasquatch as its own species. In 2011 a tip from National Park Rangers about missing people started research into the topic and the eventual formation of the Can Am Missing Project. This information eventually led to David authoring the *Missing 411* books. On July 26, 2016 David released his sixth book, "Missing 411-Hunters the story of hunters who have disappeared in the wilds of four different countries. The stories are baffling, disturbing and mind bending. These disappearances bring the total of missing geographical clusters in North America to 59. Mr. Paulides was an invited speaker at the 2012 National Association of Search and Rescue (NASAR) annual conference in South Lake Tahoe. The presentation was on the findings of the Can Am Project that were detailed in "Missing 411." The packed room at the Jarvey's Convention Center heard Mr. Paulides give a detailed overview of the geographical clusters of missing people and the associated elements found within the clusters.

Allyn Atadero

Allyn was born on April 1, 1958 in Brawley, California along with his twin brother Arlyn who resides in Fort Collins, Colorado. Allyn presently teaches Physical Education at Falcon Bluffs Middle School in Littleton, Colorado. Allyn graduated from California State University, Fullerton and has a Master's degree in Educational Technology. He has been teaching for 29 years and was named the 2015 Colorado Middle School Physical Education Teacher of the year. Allyn served on the board of Colorado's Missing Children's Task Force and was the Vice President of Public Relations for Whistle Away Crime. On October 2, 1999, Allyn's son, Jaryd, 3 years and 9 months old at the time, vanished in the Colorado Mountains and was never seen again. From this horrific experience, Allyn developed a passion for helping families with missing children and families who have experienced the dreadful pain of losing a child. He survived this ordeal due to his deep faith and God's amazing grace and love. Jaryd's story received international exposure and condolences continue to be received from around the world. Jaryd's clothing was found on the mountain almost four years after he vanished and his disappearance remains a mystery. Allyn contacted David Paulides after discovering Jaryd's story was part of the first *Missing 411* book. Allyn and David have developed a close relationship and often share information and ideas concerning the disappearance and mystery surrounding Jaryd. Allyn supports the *Missing 411* family and he is grateful David's research has created an interest in the plight of people who have gone missing in the wilderness. Allyn honors his son by speaking to different groups concerning Jaryd's story. He has campaigned for new state legislation and continues to recognize the Arapahoe Rescue Patrol in the state of Colorado. Allyn's book, *Missing, The Jaryd Atadero Story* was released in 2008.

Rich Germeau

Rich Germeau has over fourteen years of law enforcement, local, federal and Tribal experience. Rich was assigned roles in everything from patrol and Detective Division to SWAT and Marine Enforcement. Rich's first experience with Sasquatch was in July 2000 in LaPush Washington while on Duty as a LaPush Tribal Police Officer. In 2008, Rich co-founded the Olympic Project with Derek Randles. Initially his goal in the Olympic Project was to create a successful strategy in the attempt to identify suspected travel routes of Sasquatch throughout the Olympic Peninsula. This was done by utilizing historical sighting data and terrain features. Starting in 2009 Rich also worked with the Sasquatch Genome Project and submitted biological samples to the study. Rich is a life long resident of Washington States Olympic Peninsula, In addition to Law Enforcement Rich served in the United States Marine Corps Reserve. Up until his sighting in 2000 Rich was a non-believer in the Sasquatch phenomenon.

Scott Carpenter

Scott Carpenter has been researching the Bigfoot phenomenon and other cryptids since 2009. Scott is the author of four books and three active blogs on the subject including: "The Bigfoot Field Journal Volumes I & II", "The Dogman, Monsters Are Real", and his latest release "The Nephilim Among Us" A member of North American Bigfoot Search, Scott participated in the ground-breaking Sasquatch Genome Study, contributing multiple hair and saliva samples, eleven of which were used in the study. Scott's research has also been featured on the television show "Finding Bigfoot". More recently, Scott's work was featured on award winning series by Les Stroud, "Survivor Man: Bigfoot." Scott holds a BS in Computer Science and is the operations manager for a software development firm. He currently resides in East Tennessee, is married, has six children and two grandchildren. "Many major scientific breakthroughs are made by amateurs or by those who are only marginally involved in the field in question." - Grover S. Krantz, Ph.D.

Dennis Pfohl

Dennis Pfohl was born in Northern California and spent his childhood camping and fishing with his family. In 1987 he moved to Colorado and met and married his wife Shannon. Together they raised their three children in much the same way, weekends spent camping and fishing and instilling in em love for nature. In 2001, Dennis and his family were four-wheeling in their Jeep up to an alpine lake in the high mountains of Colorado when they discovered a fresh "human like" track about fifteen inches long and six inches wide, a footprint with clear toe impressions. This discovery began Dennis' adventure in sasquatch research that included becoming the lead Colorado investigator with the Bigfoot Field Research Organization, Organizer for countless Colorado expeditions providing instruction to interested newcomers and attendees in sasquatch research, Founder of the Colorado Bigfoot Research Group, and Project Manager for the Erickson Project, a five year long habituation research project in the state of Kentucky. The Erickson Project began in 2005 when a report came in to the BFR0 citing an ongoing interaction with a sasquatch family group. Dennis was asked to become the Project Manager for the research project and he began spending a considerable amount of time in Kentucky collecting evidence and managing the project. With collaboration between Adrian Erickson and himself, Dennis brought in and worked with many professionals in the field including Dr. Leila Hadj-chikh, Dr. Jeff Meldrum, Dr. Kurt Nelson, and Dr. John Bindernagel as well as a few other notable professionals in order to document the activity experienced there. The five year long project resulted in video evidence, audio evidence, and DNA samples in the form of saliva, hair and eventually blood samples that were contributed to the Sasquatch Genome Project and Dr. Melba Ketchum.

Jim Myers

Jim Myers is the founder and owner of the Sasquatch Outpost in Bailey, CO. An avid Bigfooter for many years, Jim has taken his interest and passion for North America's premier "mystery" to a whole new level in building the Sasquatch Outpost store and the Sasquatch Encounter museum. Bailey has become a true destination for believers and curiosity-seekers alike, making the Sasquatch Outpost the #1 place to visit in the area according to Trip Advisor. Jim and his fellow researchers can attest to the fact that Bigfoot's habitat is not limited to the Pacific Northwest, and Colorado is quickly becoming known as a hotspot for Bigfoot encounters. Jim has led a number of expeditions in the mountains surrounding Bailey, and has had significant interaction with a resident Bigfoot family group through two gifting sites on the outskirts of Bailey. You're all invited to visit the Outpost while you're in the area; it's an experience you won't soon forget!

John Greenwald

In 1996, John Greenwald, Jr. began researching the secret inner workings of the U.S. Government at the young age of fifteen. With targets like the CIA, FBI, Pentagon, Air Force, Army, Navy, NSA, DIA, and countless others – Greenwald utilized the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) to gain access to thousands of records. With a pile of documents on the topics of UFOs, the JFK Assassination, chemical/biological/nuclear weapons, top secret aircraft and more, Greenwald began scanning the documents to the internet for the world to access. In time, this online archive, known globally as The Black Vault, has grown into the largest private online collection anywhere in the world, totaling more than 460,000 pages. John Greenwald has been featured on television networks such as The History Channel, Discovery Channel, The Learning Channel, A&E, FOX, NBC, along with international networks such as the BBC (UK) and NTV (Russia). In published media, Greenwald has been featured and quoted in more than one hundred articles, in papers such as the Los Angeles Times, the Los Angeles Daily News, the Baltimore Sun, and featured on the front page of Yahoo! as one of the top stories for the day. In broadcast radio, Greenwald has been featured on stations worldwide, including Coast to Coast AM (Premier Radio Network - syndicated), the Adam Carolla Show (CBS Radio - syndicated), the Bob & Sheri show (Greater Media Radio - syndicated), and many others. At the age of twenty-one, Greenwald published his first book *Beyond UFO Secrecy* in 2002.

Harvey Pratt

Considered one of the leading forensic artists in the United States, Harvey has spent over 50 years in law enforcement, completing thousands of witness description drawings and hundreds of soft tissue reconstructions. His work has assisted in thousands of arrests and hundreds of identification of unidentified human remains throughout America. Retired as the police forensic artist of the Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation (OSBI), Harvey still assists law enforcement when requested. Harvey began his career with the Midwest City Police Department in 1965 where he did his first witness description drawing a year later. This first attempt in forensic arts resulted in an arrest and conviction. He joined the OSBI in 1972 as a narcotics investigator and retired in 1992 as an Assistant Director. His expertise in witness description drawing, skull reconstruction, skull tracing, age progression, soft tissue postmortem drawing and restoration of photographs and videos have aided law enforcement agencies both nationally and internationally. Harvey's skills have assisted law enforcement in many high profile cases. A few of those cases are as follows: Green River Killer (Gary Ridgeway), BTK Killer (Dennis Rader), Oklahoma Girl Scout Murders (Gene Leroy Hart), Henry Lee Lucas and Otis Toole, Bobby Joe Long, I-5 Killer (Randall Woodfield), Tommy Lynn Sells, World Trade Center 1993 bombing.