

First Nations Pictographs

Pictographs, because they are surface paintings utilizing natural pigments, such as chalk for white, charcoal for black, and ochre for red, are more delicate and temporary than petroglyphs. Nevertheless, many sites that are protected from weathering, such as caves, have long-lasting graphic representations of primitive life, including depictions of sasquatch-like creatures.

ASIDE: In September 2003 I attended a bigfoot symposium in Willow Creek, California. One of the symposium presenters, Kathy Moskowitz (now Kathy Moskowitz Strain), provided an outstanding talk on First Nations pictographs that specifically depict bigfoot. I had not seen evidence of this nature before and believe it to be highly important in the field of bigfoot/sasquatch studies. Kathy's findings are another significant indicator of the creature's reality. The following is a special presentation Kathy has kindly provided specifically for this work. CLM

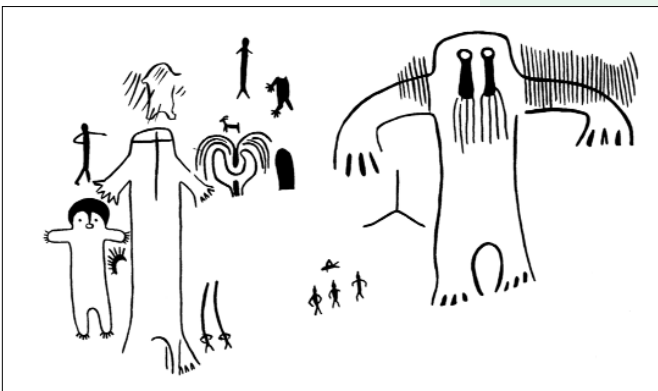
“Most certainly, Kathy’s findings are another significant indicator of the creature’s reality.”

Mayak Datat: An Archaeological Viewpoint of the Hairy Man Pictographs Located at Painted Rock, California

Kathy Moskowitz, U.S. Forest Service

Painted Rock is located on the Tule River Indian Reservation, above Porterville, in the Sierra Nevada foothills of central California. This site, also known as CATUL-19, is a rock shelter associated with a Yokuts Native American village. The site, located immediately adjacent to the Tule River, includes bedrock mortars, pitted boulders, midden, and pictographs. The pictographs are located within the rock shelter and are painted on the ceiling and walls of the shelter. The pictographs include paintings of a male bigfoot, a female bigfoot, and a child bigfoot (known as the family), coyote, beaver, bear, frog, caterpillar, centipede, humans, eagle, condor, lizard, as well as various lines, circles, and other geometric designs. The paintings are in red, black, white, and yellow. All of these paintings are associated with the Yokuts creation story in which Hairy Man determined that people would walk on two legs.

The Yokuts Tribe occupied the San Joaquin Valley and foothills of California. The band of the Yokuts that lived at Painted Rock were called the *Oching'-i-ta*, meaning the “People of Painted Rock.” A village at Painted Rock was called *Uchiyingetau*, which means “markings.” This implies the paintings were already there when the village was established. Painted Rock itself was called *Hocheu*. These names were recorded in 1877. Based on



Painted Rock pictograph of bigfoot family (top); and (below) a modern black and white “interpretation” of the ancient image.

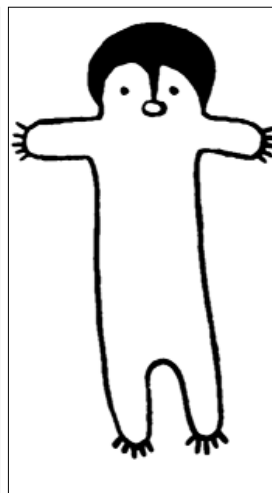
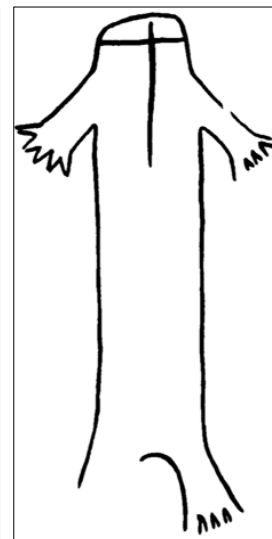
archaeological evidence, about 300 individuals occupied the village at Painted Rock year round, and all aspects of village life, such as ceremonies, were conducted there.

The most dominant pictograph at the archaeological site is that of the Hairy Man, also known as *mayak datat* (mi!yak datr!atr!) or *sunsunut* (shoonshoonootr!). Hairy Man measures 8.5 feet (2.6 m) high, and is red, black, and white. The pictograph represents a two-legged creature, with its arms spread out 6 feet (1.8 m) across. It has what appears to be long hair and large haunting eyes. The Yokuts identify the lines coming from the eyes as tears (because Hairy Man is sad according to their creation story). The pictograph is in very poor condition due to weathering and vandalism. A Hairy Man petroglyph (something pecked into the stone, rather than painted) is present at the site as well. Petroglyphs are very rare in the Sierras (see photograph on page 15).

Probably the most unusual feature of this site is the presence of an entire bigfoot family. Besides the male bigfoot (Hairy Man), there are also a female and child bigfoot. The mother is 5.85 feet (1.78 m) high by 3.9 feet (1.19 m) wide, and is solely red. The painting represents a two-legged female creature with her arms open. She has five fingers, but other details are lacking. Immediately adjacent to her, and directly under her right hand, is her child. The child measures 3.9 feet (1.2 m) high by 3.25 feet (99 cm) wide and is also solely red. The painting represents a two-legged creature with small arms and five fingers. As far as can be determined, there are no other known bigfoot pictographs or petroglyphs in California.

The Yokuts have many stories involving the Hairy Man. Research by ethnographers has noted that Yokuts routinely incorporated direct observations of animal behavior into their traditional stories. The more they observed, the more elaborate their stories and details. Because Hairy Man, or bigfoot, is very prominent in their stories, much can be inferred about the creature's possible behavior.

As noted before, the Yokuts creation story attributes the ability of humans to walk on two legs to the Hairy Man. Although Hairy Man was pleased that he had helped create humans, people were afraid of his size and appearance and ran away from him. A second story, called "When People Took Over", records that because people had spread over all the earth, animals had to find other places to live. Hairy Man says, "I will go live among the big trees [giant sequoias] and hunt only at night when people are asleep." A story called "Food Stealing" noted that Hairy Man was drawn by the sound of women pounding acorns in bedrock mortars (which sounds very much like wood knocking). He would wait for the women to process the bitter acorn meal before stealing it. A story



Pictographs of mother (top) and child.



An 1820 drawing by David Cusick, a Tuscarora native, showing a Native woman parching acorns with a surprised "cannibal monster" watching her. The creature was frightened away because he thought the woman was eating red hot coals. The drawing is among the earliest of this nature that depicts a probable sasquatch.



About Kathy Moskowitz Strain

Kathy Moskowitz Strain is currently the Forest Heritage Resource and Tribal Relations Program Manager for the Stanislaus National Forest, headquartered in Sonora, California. She is the primary person responsible for all archaeological and paleontological resources in her forest, and also directs education and public participation programs.

Kathy received a Bachelor of Arts degree in Anthropology in 1990 and a Master of Arts in Behavioral Science (emphasis in Anthropology) in 1994. Her main research interest involves prehistoric human ecology.

Kathy became interested in bigfoot as a child, and her interest led her into the field of anthropology. In 1991, as an archaeologist for the Sequoia National Forest, she began interviewing elders from the Tule River Indian Tribe about their traditional Hairy Man stories. Since that time, she has gathered hundreds of similar stories from various tribes throughout North America. As presented here, she has also conducted research on the Painted Rock bigfoot pictographs, the only known prehistoric paintings of bigfoot.

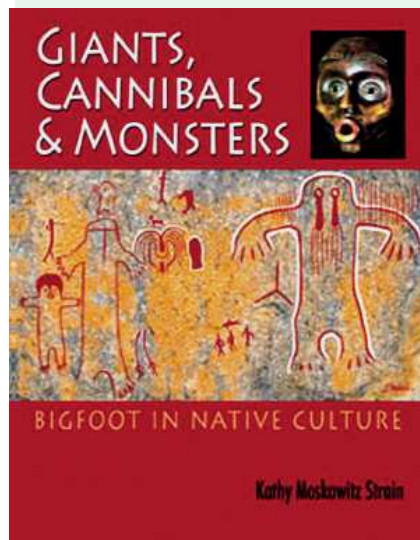
Kathy continues to research the connection between the traditional stories of hundreds of Native American tribes and bigfoot. She also feels that by studying the local environmental adaptations of prehistoric people, we might gain a greater insight into how bigfoot has similarly adapted itself to its environment. Similarities may be found in habitation methods and locations, hunting and gathering techniques, resource availability, caloric input/output, seasonal movements, and so on. Knowing this information may foster a collection of evidence not previously associated with bigfoot behavior. It may also allow us to develop techniques to better obtain direct observation, and therefore documentation and protection, of this currently unrecognized primate.

called “Bigfoot, the Hairy Man,” talks about him eating animals (or people, if necessary), hanging out at the river, and generally having a sinister nature. He is also known to whistle to lure people outside.

The stories point out several behaviors or characteristics of a bigfoot. He is nocturnal, hunts and eats animals, is an omnivore, prefers forest environments, whistles, and may knock on wood to emulate acorn pounding. The pictographs clearly describe the physical characteristics attributed to Hairy Man, 8.5 feet (2.6 m) tall, long shaggy hair, walks on two feet, and large, powerful, humanlike body. Taken together, and with the knowledge that the Yokuts incorporated direct observations of real animals into their stories and paintings, it is reasonable to assume that details on how a bigfoot looked and behaved are only present in Yokuts culture because of direct observation of a flesh and blood creature.



Other pictographs at the Painted Rock site showing a caterpillar, a coyote eating the moon, and three people. The fact that other creatures and what might be considered normal people are depicted, lends credibility to the conclusion that the Hairy Man was a totally different creature.



Kathy’s book, Giants, Cannibals, & Monsters: Bigfoot in Native Culture (Hancock House Publishers) provides remarkable insights into the realm of Native lore and unusual bigfoot-like creatures. It is the first book to provide such extensive coverage under one cover.