

First Nations' Belief in "Mountain Monkeys"

The Nishga (Tsimshian) mask seen here most certainly depicts some kind of an ape. It has been featured in various publications in reference to the sasquatch. The actual mask is in a museum in Toronto, Canada, and I tried to borrow it for my museum exhibit in Vancouver. To do this, it was required that I get permission from the Nishga people.

The Nishga wrote and explained that as the mask was sacred to them, they did not wish it to be displayed in my exhibit. They went on to state: "Our people have a belief in mountain monkeys." I found this statement rather intriguing. Certainly, the sasquatch might fall into the category of "mountain monkeys."

We don't know how old the mask is, only that it was found around 1914. I suspect the artifact was created much earlier than that, probably before native people had any exposure to apes and monkeys. We have to wonder, therefore, as to the source of their inspiration. The only logical conclusion is the sasquatch.

