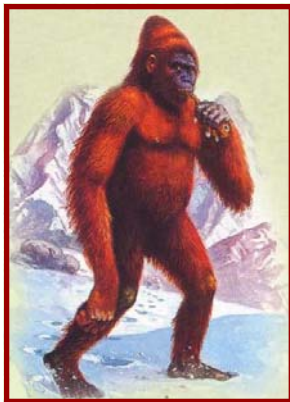

The YETI

Cryptozoology, the study of unknown animals, deals with animals as of yet unaccounted for by science (such as the yeti and the Loch Ness Monster), as well as animals reported in areas outside of their normal habitat, and surviving members of species believed to be extinct.

Although the Yeti was well known for thousands of years to natives in the regions near the Himalaya, probably the first Yeti sightings recorded by a Westerner occurred in 1832, when B. H. Hodgson saw a large ape-like creature; the natives with him thought it was a demon and ran away. In 1889, Major L. A. Waddell reported seeing large footprints similar to a human's; the prints were at an elevation of 17,000 feet. While doing reconnaissance on Mt. Everest in 1921, Colonel C. K. Howard-Bury saw what seems to have been a Yeti. In a report, he referred to it as a metoh-kangmi (a misinterpretation of the Sherpa's term meh-teh), which was translated as Abominable Snowman. Afterwards, other strange ape-like creatures were reported on and around Mt. Everest.



According to the Sherpas, there are actually two kinds of Yeti: the meh-teh and the dzu-teh, the meh-teh being seen more often. The meh-teh is 7-8 feet tall and the dzu-teh is 5-6 feet tall. The meh-teh is described as having hair that is reddish or black, large teeth, a wide mouth, a conical head, and long arms. The Sherpas and other natives also say that the Yeti normally preys on yaks, though at times eat people or even its own mate. Some also believe that the Yeti are the spirits of women who died violently, and are only dangerous if provoked.

Sceptics have tried to explain away the Yeti footprints by saying that human footprints could appear larger as the prints melt and refreeze in the snow. However, this would require people to be walking around in bare feet, in the Himalayas, and not mind freezing their feet. Additionally, if the prints had repeatedly melted and refrozen, the prints would have been distorted and the toes would have merged together, which is not the case in many of the Yeti footprints. Others have tried to explain them away as bear or leopard prints, though it would be hard to mistake those for a human-like print.

The Yeti

Some Tibetan lamaseries also have scalps or hands supposedly from Yetis. One scalp said to be 350 years old appeared to be from a goat (now scientists say that the analysis may have been inaccurate, though the lamas won't let the scientists examine it again). One of the more important pieces of evidence for the Yeti is the Pangbonche hand. Peter Byrne, while on a 1959 expedition, came into a monastery with the preserved hand of a Yeti. While examining the hand in private, Byrne took a few bones from the hand and replaced them with bones from a human hand. According to W. C. Osman Hill, a British primatologist, the bones were similar to a human's - but not completely human. Unfortunately, when Sir Edmund Hillary examined the hand, he did not know what Byrne had done to the hand, and concluded that it was made of human and animal bones. The location of the bones Byrne took is now unknown. Feces supposedly from the Yeti were also examined, and contained an unknown kind of parasite.

Most of the explanations for the Yeti are similar to those for Bigfoot. One theory says that the Yeti is a kind of ape. Another suggests is a primitive link between humans and apes. It also has been suggested that the Yeti may be a Gigantopithecus, a kind of prehistoric ape known from a few fossil jawbones and a few thousand fossil teeth.

So far there is no firm evidence to support the existence of the Yeti, but there is no way to show that he **doesn't** exist either. If he indeed lives in the barren, frozen, upper reaches of the Himalaya, where few men dare to tread, he may find his refuge safe for a long time to come.

<http://kodos86.tripod.com/cryptozoology/id21.html>