



Abominable Science!: Origins of the Yeti, Nessie, and Other Famous Cryptids

By Daniel Loxton, Donald R. Prothero

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Throughout our history, humans have been captivated by mythic beasts and legendary creatures. Tales of Bigfoot, the Yeti, and the Loch Ness monster are part of our collective experience. Now comes a book from two dedicated investigators that explores and elucidates the fascinating world of cryptozoology.

Daniel Loxton and Donald R. Prothero have written an entertaining, educational, and definitive text on cryptids, presenting the arguments both for and against their existence and systematically challenging the pseudoscience that perpetuates their myths. After examining the nature of science and pseudoscience and their relation to cryptozoology, Loxton and Prothero take on Bigfoot; the Yeti, or Abominable Snowman, and its cross-cultural incarnations; the Loch Ness monster and its highly publicized sightings; the evolution of the Great Sea Serpent; and Mokele Mbembe, or the Congo dinosaur. They conclude with an analysis of the psychology behind the persistent belief in paranormal phenomena, identifying the major players in cryptozoology, discussing the character of its subculture, and considering the challenge it poses to clear and critical thinking in our increasingly complex world.

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Editorial Review

Review

Loxton and Prothero have written what may well be the most important work to date on cryptozoology, taking its rightful place in the annals of skeptical literature in particular and scientific literature in general. *Abominable Science!* is the defining work on cryptozoology of our generation.

(from the foreword by Michael Shermer, author of *The Believing Brain: From Ghosts and Gods to Politics and Conspiracies*)

Here, at last, is a scholarly, fully referenced work that presents a thoroughly reasonable, well-argued, skeptical perspective on some of the most iconic 'cryptids,' and it is fun to read and well illustrated to boot. Combining excellent and thorough research, ample references to the cryptozoological literature, and, most important, an appropriately level-headed, critical approach, *Abominable Science!* offers a novel, refreshing exploration of the world of cryptozoology.

(Darren Naish, National Oceanography Centre, University of Southampton)

Nearly everyone?scientist and layman alike?would love the Loch Ness monster and other 'cryptids' to be real. Daniel Loxton and Donald R. Prothero, in their riveting exploration of cryptozoology, readily admit that some species (such as the living coelacanth and even the mountain gorilla) remained hidden to human experience until relatively recently. Yet they insist on hard evidence, thus running counter to the preferences of those who prefer to believe. *Abominable Science!* is a well-told, engaging story of skepticism. Loxton and Prothero present a lucid and compelling case to counter the false claims of cryptozoology.

(Niles Eldredge, American Museum of Natural History, author of *Darwin: Discovering the Tree of Life*)

[*Abominable Science!*] is as valuable for its analysis of the hunted as it is for the light it shines on the still-hopeful hunters.

(*Publishers Weekly*)

Highly recommended for readers looking for scientific but accessible evaluations of the existence of five notable cryptids that have captured our imaginations. Likely to be popular.

(*Library Journal* (starred review))

Groundbreaking.... A must-have. There is nothing else like it.

(Sharon Hill *Doubtful News*)

[Loxton and Prothero] offer us a sharp analysis of the quest for unreal critters?cryptids, as they are called?and the people who pursue them, shining an arc light onto the hoaxes and faked photos, the made-up films, faux corpses, delusions, lies and plain bad science that plague the field.... [An] entertaining and thoroughly documented book.

(Margaret Wertheim *Wall Street Journal*)

The authors, eminent and intrepid sceptics, seek evidence of fabulous big beasts and find nothing but fakes, folklore, pseudo-science and anecdote.

(Iain Finlayson *The Times (London)*)

[*Abominable Science!*] is a never less than rigorous examination of the evidence, and a cultural history of cryptozoology.

(Daniel Cressey *Nature*)

A good hard look at cryptozoology.... Loxton and Prothero lay bare the psychological roots of why such mythical creatures exist in our own minds.

(*The Scientist*)

Skipping cryptozoology's usual sensationalism, [*Abominable Science!*] separates history and folklore from hoaxes and fakelore.

(Elisa Neckar *Discover*)

[*Abominable Science!*] successfully reveals the influence of popular culture on what we think we see.

(Henry Gee *BBC Focus*)

They offer us a sharp analysis of the quest for unreal critters?cryptids, as they are called?and the people who pursue them, shining an arc light onto the hoaxes and faked photos, the made-up films, faux corpses, delusions, lies and plain bad science that plague the field.

(Margaret Wertheim *Barron's*)

[*Abominable Science!*] goes back to the foundations of the Bigfoot legend and picks off the fur piece by piece.

(Christopher Farnsworth *New York Post*)

Fantastically thorough.

(Kyle Hill *But Not Simpler* blog, *Scientific American*)

An exhaustively-researched, color-illustrated volume that details the cultural forces (and often individual people) responsible for shaping these beasts in the public's imagination.

(Justin Hickey *Open Letters Monthly*)

Any science and nature collection should consider this a lively and loving acquisition.

(*The Midwest Book Review*)

Abominable Science! is science writing at its best.

(Glenn Dallas *San Francisco Book Review*)

The best and most useful book yet on the phenomenon of illusory 'cryptids' like Bigfoot and the Loch Ness monster.... Essential.

(*CHOICE*)

Many good laughs... Loxton and Prothero have done a fine job of describing monsters that have an entertainment value for everyone...

(*The Skeptic*)

Abominable Science! takes its place upon the must-have list for cryptid researchers.... A definitive volume.... *Abominable Science!* is a sharp sword that cuts through the bogusness of popular monsterology.

(*The Skeptical Inquirer*)

We still have a lot to learn from Bigfoot, and Loxton and Prothero are excellent teachers.

(Harriet Hall *Skeptic*)

Abominable Science! has to be regarded as one of the most important books ever written on cryptozoology, as well as one of the most meticulously researched.

(Darren Naish *Scientific American's Tetrapod Zoology Blog*)

[*Abominable Science!*] is fun and interesting, as well as thought-provoking and just a little bit strange.

(Axie Barclay *Manhattan Book Review*)

An immaculately produced book rivaling.... *Abominable Science!* is entertaining, informative, and readable.

(Robert Bishop *Books & Culture*)

Exceptionally well written, organized and presented... an inherently fascinating read. Informed and informative, thoughtful and thought-provoking, "Abominable Science!" will prove to be an enduringly popular addition to community and academic library collections.

(*The Midwest Book Review*)

Review

An entertaining, educational, passionate, and valuable book for readers interested in obtaining a scientific perspective on the field of cryptozoology. With marvelous artwork and deeply researched histories of the various creatures, this is an impressive and authoritative book.

(Adrienne Mayor, Stanford University, author of *The First Fossil Hunters: Dinosaurs, Mammoths, and Myths in Greek and Roman Times*)

About the Author

Daniel Loxton is the editor of *Junior Skeptic* and a staff writer for *Skeptic*, for which he specializes in critical scholarship regarding claims of legendary animals. Known for his even-handed approach and for his lifelong personal love of monster mysteries, Loxton is one of the most widely respected skeptical critics of cryptozoology. He is the author and primary illustrator of *Evolution: How We and All Living Things Came to Be* (winner of the 2010 Lane Anderson Award as Canada's best science book for young readers) and of the photorealistic paleofiction storybooks *Pterosaur Trouble* and *Ankylosaur Attack*, the first two books in the series *Tales of Prehistoric Life*.

Donald R. Prothero is one of the leading scientists and authors working in paleontology and evolution. He is a former professor of geology at Occidental College and lecturer in geobiology at Caltech. He is presently a research associate in the Department of Vertebrate Paleontology at the Los Angeles County Natural History Museum and is the author of more than 30 books and 250 scientific papers published in leading scholarly journals. He received his Ph.D. from Columbia University and is a fellow of the Geological Society of America, the Paleontological Society, and the Linnean Society of London. In 1991, he received the award for "Outstanding Paleontologist Under the Age of 40," and was awarded the 2013 James Shea Award by the National Association of Geoscience Teachers for outstanding writing and editing in the geosciences.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Jose Gould:

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they write about the ability about something that you need example of this. How to get the good score toefl, or how to teach your young ones, there are many kinds of book that exist now. The authors these days always try to improve their expertise in writing, they also doing some analysis before they write with their book. One of them is this Abominable Science!: Origins of the Yeti, Nessie, and Other Famous Cryptids.

Laura Clark:

Reading can called head hangout, why? Because while you are reading a book mainly book entitled Abominable Science!: Origins of the Yeti, Nessie, and Other Famous Cryptids your thoughts will drift away trough every dimension, wandering in every aspect that maybe mysterious for but surely might be your mind friends. Imaging just about every word written in a guide then become one type conclusion and explanation that will maybe you never get ahead of. The Abominable Science!: Origins of the Yeti, Nessie, and Other Famous Cryptids giving you one more experience more than blown away your thoughts but also giving you useful data for your better life on this era. So now let us explain to you the relaxing pattern this is your body and mind will be pleased when you are finished looking at it, like winning an activity. Do you want to try this extraordinary shelling out spare time activity?

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