

# Robert Lindsay

JUNE 16, 2011 · 11:20 AM

## Interview with Richard Stubstad: Is Bigfoot Human?

I recently conducted an interview with Richard Stubstad on the subject of Bigfoot. Stubstad was an early player in Melba Ketchum's genetic studies of Bigfoot which later branched into the Erickson Project, among others. Stubstad himself has no relationship with the Erickson Project at all.

Lately, he has been publishing his own analysis of the samples that he worked with. His job was to analyze the initial samples as a statistician to determine their MtDNA and the probability that they were finding something real and not a hoax or misidentification. Stubstad's website is [here](#). You need to hit the **click here** button to read the pdf on his analysis.

Stubstad's paper deals with two samples. Sample 1 is apparently a bone from the southwestern US. The location is not known. Sample 2 is blood and tissue gathered from the northeastern US, possibly Vermont, but I am not sure.

The two samples lined up almost totally, a very surprising result. A hoax was ruled out because the two locations were very distant from each other, and the two groups did not cooperate with each other. Thus these two samples have a 97% chance of being genuine and not random samples or hoaxes.

The kicker is that both samples came back 100% *Homo sapiens sapiens* on MtDNA, which honestly doesn't make sense. In particular, both samples matched those from ancient Europeans of the Franco-Cantabrian glacial refuge in Europe. This was an area encompassing southern France, Spain, Portugal and Italy, etc. Humans were holed up here as glaciers covered almost all of Europe. This was one of the only parts of Europe that was not covered in ice, so the remaining Europeans sought shelter here from the cold.

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**Robert Lindsay (RL):** You say that these samples come from the Franco-Cantabrian glacial refuge in Europe 10-20,000 YBP. Does that mean that no modern humans have MtDNA like this? Were there any samples in GenBank of modern Europeans showing similar MtDNA to these ancient Europeans? What I am asking is if it is possible for the samples to be from modern humans existing today, or is that impossible?

**Richard Stubstad (RS):** Well, this is one of the caveats. There are some modern populations who have MtDNA which resembles the ancient European samples. They tend to be Spaniards, Portuguese, Catalans, Basques, southern French, etc. So a human today with predominant ancestry from these regions could have DNA that looked like that from the Franco-Cantabrian glacial refuge. However, there is a 97% chance that this is not true, as we are talking about two experimentally unrelated samples.

**RL:** Do you think that the samples were of Bigfoots?

**RS:** I really do. I don't think it was a hoax because the two groups who submitted these samples do not work together at all. In fact, they don't even like each other. I can't imagine them working together for any reason. Also, I went to the southwestern site, and I believe this fellow really does have some Bigfoot activity at his site. I'm no expert, but that's my impression. I also felt this guy was simply incapable of such an elaborate hoax. I won't go into the reasons for that, but let's just leave it at that.

**RL:** So Bigfoot is human then? What kind of sense does that make? It makes no sense at all.

**RS:** Well, in my opinion, Bigfoot is probably a hybrid species, part human, part something else (a related hominid of some kind), that has the ability to have viable offspring. The MtDNA only means that there was a human female from the Franco-Cantabrian refuge in the Bigfoot line during that time frame. That's all it means. It doesn't speak to the females of the Bigfoot line before that, nor does it speak to the male lineage.

**RL:** One of the leaks from the Erickson Project said that Bigfoot was partway between a Neandertal and a human. Jeff Meldrum was said to be surprised that they were that close to us. He thought they would be more distant. Is there any evidence of Neandertal MtDNA in the sequence?

**RS:** There is none whatsoever. Neandertal differs by ~200 polymorphisms on the mitochondrial side, and that was not indicated in this finding at all. Even Neandertal MtDNA is quite a bit different, so this should have shown up. Dr. Ketchum is a likely supporter of the hybrid theory. This is something that she knows a lot about due to her work with animals – hybridized species.

One of her theories was that there could have been what she called “seepage” of Neandertal DNA into the Bigfoot mitochondrial genome. However, I don't really see much evidence of this. Perhaps there is more compelling evidence on the nuclear DNA side; I just don't know.

**RL:** Does GenBank even have any Neandertal sequences in it?

**RS:** As a matter of fact, they do, and I believe they have more than one – there are in fact several in there.

**RL:** In the paper, you list two dates – 10-20,000 YBP and 20-30,000 YBP, for the samples. Which one is correct?

**RL:** I have been trying to put this all together, but I just get more and more confused. This still does not make sense to me. However, a human-Neandertal or human-Erectus hybrid is at least conceivable.

One thing I find interesting is that the Franco-Cantabrian refuge is where the Neandertals made their last stand on Earth before they went extinct. The last Neandertals are known from caves at Gibraltar ~27,000 YBP. So possibly, the last remains of the Neandertals mated with one or more human females in this area, and Bigfoot was born. The Neandertals went extinct, but Bigfoot as we know it today here in North America was conceived.

**RS:** I don't have a problem with that. We have a lot of stories of so-called Bigfoot males around the world taking human females to breed with them, especially here in North America.

Possibly what happened is that the remaining archaic hominids bred in with some human females in the same fashion, and the resulting offspring had enough increased fitness (ie, survival of the fittest) to keep the species from going extinct. That is, the archaic hominids may have gone extinct, but the archaic hominid-human crosses had enough increased fitness that they were able to survive.

**RL:** Can you describe your relationship with the Erickson Project?

**RS:** Yes. Initially, I was involved at the very start of the project, not with Adrian Erickson himself, but with Dr. Ketchum along with a few other folks.

**RL:** Is it possible that you refused to sign an NDA and this was the reason you were not allowed to continue?

**RS:** No! I signed an NDA way back in January of 2010, but Dr. Ketchum threw us out anyway. We all signed NDA's, and we all obeyed them. Even before I was thrown out though, my NDA expired, so I am not on the hook for anything. I think she wants to make this a one-woman show.

**RL:** You said you think she will be the sole author of the piece and that such papers often have more than one author. How do you know this? Is it possible that you and others might still be listed as co-authors?

**RS:** No! There is no way we are going to be listed as co-authors. You see, there were several of us, and we were all supposed to be co-authors, but Dr. Ketchum threw either most or all of us all off, so I assume Dr. Ketchum will be the sole author.

**RL:** What do you think Ketchum's motivation was? Glory? Money?

**RS:** I think she wants to get all the credit for this discovery, and maybe there is a financial motive as well. Maybe she wants to be some kind of TV star. I really don't know.

**RL:** We don't know if your samples were used in her paper or not, correct? Is it possible that your samples were not useful for Ketchum? I mean, maybe they were useful and maybe they were not, right?

**RS:** Well, we don't know if she is using the samples I worked with in the project. I think maybe she is not, as we were thrown off. She still has quite a few other samples. She has about 20 good samples in total. Of those, she may have used 10 or more for her paper. Were the first two samples useful? Of course they were! These were the initial samples that yielded what she called "very interesting results;" the ones that got her interested in doing the larger project project that followed.

**RL:** You are not leaking private information about this project, correct? And you only know about the initial phase of the project and nothing about what came afterwards, right?

**RS:** This is correct. I'm not leaking anything; that was a mischaracterization. My NDA expired, and I'm not violating anything. And yes, I know nothing at all about what happened with the project after I left.

**RL:** How do you feel Ketchum's project will go?

**RS:** I am uncertain about it. For one thing, it's apparently a one woman show, and these papers usually have more than one author. How will a woman show go over with peer reviewers? For another, I feel that she may overreach and make too many unwarranted generalizations or speculations in this piece. We may have another [Lloyd Pye](#) case on our hands, like with his so-called [Starchild Skull](#).

**RL:** I have such a hard time thinking that Bigfoot is human. It really stretches the definition of what human means.

They have hair all over their bodies, they have a nuchal or occipital crest on their skull, they have very long arms, a somewhat nonhuman hand, a nonhuman way of walking, they are much taller and weigh more than any human race, they have a midtarsal break that went out with Homo Erectus 300,000 YBP, they have hair on their breasts, they have no tools or fire, they do not seem to have a normal human language – they are language poor and do not seem able to pick up human languages very easily as another human race would – and they sometimes give off a strong odor similar to what an ape does.

On and on. They're simply not human. That's all there is to it.

**RS:** I agree with you, and this is why I think they are a hybrid between humans and some other hominid.

**RL:** Are you aware of the feral human theory for Bigfoot?

**RS:** Yes I am, and it must be considered as one of the hypotheses, but there are many problems with this hypothesis, as you note above.

a Mountain Gorilla.

**RL:** Although I think the little Orang Pendek of Sumatra may be something different.

**RS:** Yes, well there, we can possibly connect this creature to some recent bones of the so-called “Hobbit” or Flores Man in Indonesia.

**RL:** Is there anything else you would like to add?

**RS:** Yes, there is one more thing! I looked at another MtDNA sample, and it came out completely different!

**RL:** How do you mean? How did the DNA come back? Was it *Homo sapiens sapiens* again?

**RS:** Yes, it was as a matter of fact, but it was nothing like the two samples that came back as from the ancient Franco-Cantabrian refuge. It was completely different.

**RL:** Now things are really not making any sense. Can you elaborate?

**RS:** Well, not really. I am going to write this up in my next addition to the website you mentioned to begin this interview, hopefully within the next month or so. But it goes along with a theory of mine, that maybe Bigfoot males were taking human females into their genetic line at various points in history. Now – this doesn’t mean that I know this to be a fact; I’m merely speculating...

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That’s it for the interview. We may be interviewing some other biggies in the Bigfoot World as things come to a head with the Erickson Project in the near future.

For the best in Bigfoot discussions, make sure to visit [Bigfoot Forums](#).

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## 13 Responses to *Interview with Richard Stubstad: Is Bigfoot Human?*

### Eli

June 16, 2011 at 10:35 PM



Achilli A, et al. The Molecular Dissection of mtDNA Haplogroup H Confirms That the Franco-Cantabrian Glacial Refuge Was a Major Source for the European Gene Pool. *Am. J. Hum. Genet.* 75:910–918, 2004.

“These findings have major implications for the origin of Europeans, since they attest that the Franco-Cantabrian refuge area was indeed the source of late-glacial expansions of huntergatherers that repopulated much of Central and Northern Europe from ~15,000 years ago.”

In other words, according to what has been presented here, it is most likely that the mtDNA in Stubstad’s samples originated from humans of european ancestry. Thus while there is neither evidence of a new primate nor of a hybrid species there is the suggestion that that those who submitted tissue were either sincerely mistaken as to the actual source or actively participated in a hoax.

[Reply](#)

### Richard Stubstad

June 17, 2011 at 8:34 AM



That's why it is very important to continue this work in an objective scientific manner. This can only be done with further samples to see how they ALL come out. Not only on the mtDNA side of the equation, but on the nuDNA side as well in case my hypothesis is correct that: 1) the first two samples are probably from real sasquai; and 2) they are in fact some kind of hybrid species = a human-something-or-other crossbreed.

I hope we can find a credible institution to do this work properly, as a multi-disciplined scientific team, not a "one woman" or "one man show" as Dr. Ketchum appears to be proceeding unilaterally.

I believe that, while Dr. Ketchum is probably right about being 100% certain herself about the existence of sasquatch, she will be found as considerably less than credible by the scientific community. Then, the rest of us will have to pick up the pieces and proceed in a more credible and objective manner with this research.

Thanks again for the intelligent and insightful response to the interview.

Richard Stubstad

[Reply](#)

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### Earl

June 17, 2011 at 10:19 AM



I had sex with a bigfoot female. It was beautiful. I think I love her.

[Reply](#)

### Robert Lindsay

June 17, 2011 at 10:50 AM



Cool, I can hardly wait for the Bigfoot porn.

[Reply](#)

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### Richard Stubstad

June 17, 2011 at 2:40 PM



LOL !!!

Richard Stubstad

[Reply](#)

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### Mike Nichols

June 18, 2011 at 12:56 PM



So, as in every single case I have investigated including an incredibly detailed 3 month hoax in Central Florida in 2006 involving scat, hair and two (2) sightings, we are left with the most likely explanation of a hoax. Your 3% is subservient to my 1%, after Jeff Meldrum reviewed photo and video evidence of mine showing a 16" track with a clear midtarsal break and was convinced enough to write a letter supporting our efforts.

The much greater probability, in the absence of any substantive evidence indicating the actual existence of a large, bipedal, hair covered, ape-like, non-human-like creature, is that 3% translates into 100%.

Fool me once, shame on you. Fool me twice shame on me. So what are people seeing? Something that has yet to be filmed, captured, killed, or otherwise scientifically documented. With the number of camera traps, night vision and thermal vision recording devices used in nearly every state of the Union in the last 10 years, not one verified photo of an identifiable animal matching the descriptions of witnesses exists.

Isn't it time "believers" step back and honestly ask why?

Michael J. Nichols, CEP

<http://www.floridabigfoot.com>

[Reply](#)

### Robert Lindsay

June 18, 2011 at 3:31 PM



Ok now, you run a site called Florida Bigfoot, and you say that there is no such thing as a Bigfoot, right?

## Mike Nichols

June 18, 2011 at 8:38 PM



It's simple. I am an environmental biologist certified in the area of environmental assessment with a specialty in wetlands science and with over 30 years of experience. Matt Moneymaker claimed these creatures exist and offered an expedition in Florida. That began my earnest quest to discover for myself whether these things existed. After only 3 months of inquiry into it, I was convinced they were real and began to interview eyewitnesses, investigate reports and analyze my own data. After 5 years of intensive investigation, the only evidence that held up as possible evidence was footprints. And after realizing how well they could be faked and were being faked, it is my opinion now that there are more plausible explanations for all of the sightings and so called evidence.

What people are actually seeing is any number of things including the possibility of outcasts with various diseases/mutations, but more commonly misidentified known animals or people in suits. These are by far the more plausible and therefore the more likely explanations, especially in the absence of good photographic documentation. I absolutely have no confidence in the Erickson project as I have heard M.M. describe the best of the videos since 2006 and still no release.

I have spoken to numerous big name "researchers" or read their stories. M.M. has never seen one (except a shadowy figure he assumes was one), Jeff Meldrum has never seen one. Rick Knoll has never seen one (with the exception of a shadowy figure through heavy rain and his windshield wipers at night which he can't say for sure what it was). Every single time the goods are about to be delivered, something goes awry and it falls short. In short, no evidence. Meldrum estimates a population in the U.S. in the thousands, perhaps 2 - 4 thousand. M.M. thinks a lot more. Think about it, - 2 -4 thousand 7-9 ft. tall hairy, ape-like social beings inhabiting the forests of North America. Not a single defensible trail cam photo (the Jacobs photo is a bear). No defensible thermal image, no night vision photo. In short nothing after hundreds of researchers spending thousands of hours in these forests for the past 10 -15 years. Only excuses for how smart they must be to avoid detection.

I personally spoke to 6 witnesses 2 years ago (3 - two person witness accounts) and visited the exact spots where the "creature" was seen. A 7-8 foot tall hairy beast described as massive (a "refrigerator"), 400-700 lbs. with no trace of a print, flattened grass, broken twigs, hair, scat, etc. in the panhandle area of Florida.

Every single behavior attributed to bf is explained by natural phenomena or human action/hoaxing. Tree knocks for example. I have hundreds of hours of nocturnal recordings where multiple tree knock sounds were recorded and analyzed. Some turned out to be horses coughing (sounded identical to wood on wood knocks), some turned out to be other humans, some turned out to be distorted calls of night herons at a distance, and some were unexplained but most likely a jug or container popping as temperature and pressure changed during the night.

Or how about howls - coyotes and red wolves as well as humans can account for all of them.

Tree twists and tree breaks. Micro-climatic conditions during severe storms can produce identical effects as those many "researchers" described as bigfoot generated.

So my quest recently resulted in a turn in my thinking as I discovered the great lengths some people are willing to go to in order to perpetuate a hoax. Most people don't think that a person or group of people would go to such great lengths to deceive others but I witnessed it personally. That is why everyone should be extremely skeptical on this subject even when they have seen one themselves. Like I thought I had. But little by little the evidence when evaluated properly begins to fall like a house of cards.

It looks good at first, but when scrutinized it simple doesn't hold up. So there's your answer. Hope it helps.

[Reply](#)

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## Richard Stubstad

June 18, 2011 at 3:49 PM



Mike:

Thanks for your comments.

Two years ago, I would have agreed with you - well maybe not 100% but (say) 90%. I was also a Bigfoot skeptic then, and I STILL am about most other "mystical" things: UFO's, ghosts, a parallel universe, etc.

Now however, I remain in the 3% (or so) boat - that is I do indeed remain skeptical, but only to the tune of 3%. I'm 97% sure these two sample are from real-life sasquai (for many reasons by the way, not only the mtDNA). What I DON'T know is "what is a sasquatch, assuming for a fleeting moment they exist?"

This is what the DNA data showed - I didn't fudge the data; I didn't expect the outcome we got (and neither did Dr. Ketchum, by the way), and frankly I cannot say for sure that "sasquatch lives" or whatever the buzz word is these days in the off-the-wall Bigfoot community.

Unfortunately, I - like you - have to wait for more evidence before I'll be completely convinced myself. What I have stated in the pieces you have read (plus a bit of knowledge that I didn't state) is FAR from proof of the existence of sasquatch. I, like most scientists, first want 100% proof, not 97% or thereabouts.



out of both of our ears.

For the “rest of the story”, I’d like to see the nuclear DNA results that – reportedly – both Dr. Ketchum and other researchers already have “in the bank”. Once I see those, and see that they have been analyzed by a variety of reputable scientists (not only one or two scientists) and sequenced and re-sequenced until the cows come home, will I be a TRUE bigfoot believer.

Until then, I’m with you ‘ol buddy.

One problem with your counter argument though is this: Even if there are valid films, videos, or pictures of a real-life sasquai, there is always a way to create a hoax that would appear identical to the “real deal”. Even the P-G film, which is supposedly the “gold standard” for movies or videos of sasquatch could be a hoax, as we both know. While Meldrum believes in the P-G film, many others do not – also several of those who believe in sasquatch in general (eg. Java Bob Schmalzbach). This is especially true if – by some chance – the two mito samples I’ve seen are in fact tissue from the “real deal.” That would make sasquatch at least partly human, basically, albeit with an unknown nuclear DNA component.

Thanks for your comments – I’m not in the least bit offended or think you are some kind of idiot with blinders on. I’m just not as sure as you are that the whole ball of wax is one big, huge, and coordinated hoax.

Richard Stubstad

[Reply](#)

### Mike Nichols

June 18, 2011 at 9:08 PM



Richard,

All I have to say is why are we talking about DNA evidence? If there are literally thousands of these creatures roaming the forests of North America, good clear photographic evidence would surely precede the much harder to obtain actual tissue evidence. If you can’t even photograph them, how do you think mainstream science is going to react to bypassing the simple to obtain the near impossible?

I’ll tell you how I am going to react. I simply won’t accept the analysis as being valid. It must be the horse before the cart. We should have a progressive increase in image collection over the years as monitoring has increased, yet we do not. And now we leap to DNA to prove it? Is that how the mountain gorilla was discovered? Is that how the chimpanzee was discovered? Is that how any extant species has ever been discovered? Of course not.

That, in itself, makes the Ketchum exercise even more suspect than the subject itself already is.

If this isn’t patently obvious to even a casual observer, you have to wonder what exactly is driving this whole endeavor.

Michael J. Nichols, CEP

[Reply](#)

### pat

June 18, 2011 at 10:13 PM



Is it possible samples were contaminated during analysis by a technician of Franco-Cantabrian ancestry? As someone who used to do a lot of DNA analysis as an occupation, that would be the first question I’d have.

[Reply](#)

### Robert Lindsay

June 19, 2011 at 10:31 AM



Supposedly, the people doing the analysis ran their DNA to check for this problem, but your theory is still possible. Let me check with Richard on that.

[Reply](#)

### Richard Stubstad

June 19, 2011 at 12:08 PM



Just off-the-cuff (I don’t have time for much more computer time this weekend OR all next week) ... this possibility was considered at the time I was involved. To my knowledge, three mito sequences of those involved to some degree or another were run. I saw two of these three (not Melba’s) personally, including my own.

Melba is the only one of the three who had potentially direct contact with both of the two first samples, at least up to the time there were sent elsewhere for sequencing. She told me she had “Native American” mito, which is NOT any form of Haplogroup H\*. While I cannot confirm

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The third one was me; I am definitely from Haplo Group H\*. However, my polymorphisms were not the same as the obvious polymorphisms from either Sample 1 or Sample 2 (polymorphisms according to the literature, not me). Further, the polymorphisms were not even all the same between Samples 1 and 2 — this is how I was able to “pinpoint” the time of existence of the so-called “Mito-Eve” of the two purported sasquai @ some 15,000 years ago (plus or minus a helluva lot). While I’d imagine my own mito Eve would be from the same time frame, I’m pretty sure I’m not a sasquatch myself (especially on account of my lack of body hair, not to speak of a midtarsal break), so my mito Eve was likely a different Cro Magnon woman (if that is what they are called from that period of time?). Last but not least, I only SAW Sample 1 — never did I even see Sample 2. I touched neither, of course.

That means that the last possibility would be the actual DNA lab that these two samples were sent to, which was a lab that tested LOTS of these kinds of sample, somewhere in the U.S. but I don’t know the name of it. While I doubt that contamination took place at this lab (since they do SO many of these, though ONLY for Homo sapiens sapiens), I suppose this is possible. Also, this lab could have messed up on their primers here and there, but I really doubt this is the case for various reasons.

Still, if contamination DID take place on one of the two samples (say) and not the other, then the odds of the extent of the mito match are still only 2% or 3%.

I performed the statistical calculations in three ways. All three ways came out around 2% chance of a random contamination or mistake, so I said 3% just in case I made a genuine mistake on all three methods of calculation. The last remaining possibility is a truly coordinated hoax — which, knowing the players somewhat — is MUCH less than a 2% possibility. Probably zero percent. They are simply not knowledgeable enough about mito DNA to find two modern humans with such a good match a priori.

Don’t forget, too, that the above ONLY addresses the female mito origins of the two (contaminated or not) samples @ some 15,000 years ago. The entire nature of these two creatures, if they are genuine sasquai, is NOT hereby determined, also assuming that sasquatch is a hybrid. I don’t know this for sure either; I’m just speculating with a little, but very little, actual information to back this hypothesis up.

Finally, it may turn out that the sasquai (or at least these two) are feral humans or some kind of ancient Homo sapiens form, but I sincerely doubt it.

More next week, folks ... no more time for this.

Richard Stubstad

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