DOG MAN

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CIS 1020 Dr. Thomas Rienzo

MW 10-10:50; T 11-11:45
MICHIGAN’S LEGEND

- WTCM Radio in Traverse City, Michigan aired the song called “The Legend”
- It was first broadcasted in 1987 as an April Fools day joke
- Since then over 500 reports of seeing the Dog Man have been called into the radio station
- Dog Man is said to be a creature with the head of a canine and the body of a man
SIGHTINGS...

- The first recorded sighting was in 1887
- It is said that two lumberjacks in Wexford County, MI encountered a beast like dog that walked on two legs
- In 1993 and 1994 the same man reported seeing a similar creature three separate times
- Sightings and stories have been reported for more than 50 years
1st Sighting was in Westford County.

“The Legend” Song was originally an April Fools Prank from a Lansing Radio station.

The “Gable Film” was the first recorded evidence, soon debunked by a popular TV show called *Unsolved Mysteries*.
COULD DOGMAN BE A WEREWOLF?
ORIGIN OF THE WEREWOLF

• “The Epic of Gilgamesh” (2000 BC)
  • Gilgamesh refuses to become the lover of the goddess Ishtar because of her cruel treatment of her previous suitors. Ishtar had turned one man, a shepherd, into a wolf, making him the enemy of his friends, his sheep and even his own dogs.

• “The Metamorphoses” (AD 8)
  • A traveler visits the home of King Lycaon of Acadia. Lycaon suspects that the visitor is immortal, so he devises a test. He serves human meat to his guest, who unfortunately turns out to be the god Jupiter. Jupiter immediately recognizes the meat's origin, and he transforms Lycaon into a wolf.
BECOMING A WEREWOLF

• Punishment from the gods or simply for having bad behavior. These transformations can be permanent in some folklore.
• Being bitten by another werewolf is the most common belief in today's modern versions of the werewolf myth.
• Drinking water a wolf has touched can also bring on the transformation in some tales.
• Owning a magic wolf pelt that can be worn to transform into the wolf is another common idea.
WEREWOLF METAPHORS

• The typical werewolf is hyper-masculine and exceptionally violent, the term could have been used to describe males who displayed traits similar to those.

• In many folktales, the werewolf is cursed because as a man it displayed some kind of behavioral excess, such as a man who was too rough or viewed in the community as sexually promiscuous, these could also be reasons men were referred to as werewolves.

• Puberty can also be connected to werewolves. During puberty, the human body changes dramatically like that of a werewolf. Similarly, in some depictions, lycanthropy is a metaphor for menstruation. A woman's body changes according to a regular monthly cycle like the transformations of a werewolf.

• Because of its typical transmission through biting and frequently fatal outcome, lycanthropy can also be a metaphor for any contagious disease, particularly those that are transmitted sexually.
LYCANTHROPY DISEASE

**Hypertrichosis:** A genetic disorder linked to the X-chromosome can cause people to grow very thick hair over their faces and bodies. People with this condition can physically resemble werewolves, but it's extremely rare.

**Ergot poisoning:** Ergot is a fungus that can infest grains like barley and wheat, and eating it can cause hallucinations. Ergot poisoning has also been suggested as a cause of the witch trials in Salem, Mass.

**Rabies:** Many mammals can carry and transmit rabies, typically through biting. Rabies is fatal without immediate treatment. In its advanced stages, it can cause agitation and hallucinations. A rabies epidemic may have caused wolves and dogs to bite humans, who then could have exhibited werewolf-like tendencies.

**Wolf hybrids:** Healthy wolves don't generally attack people without provocation, but aggressive hybrids of wolves and dogs may have attacked villages, leading to the idea of violent werewolves.

**Collective hysteria:** As unlikely as it sounds, the sudden, simultaneous onset of psychological symptoms in a large group of people is a recorded phenomenon.
WEREWOLF HUNTING

• In the 16th century, at the same time as the famous witch trials, there were also werewolf trials and hunts.

• In 1573, an alleged werewolf, Gilles Garnier, was burned at the stake.

• In 1589, a man known as Peter Stubbe, was executed near Cologne, Germany for cannibalism and multiple murders. He claimed he had a belt that allowed him to become a werewolf.

• In 1603, a young man named Jean Grenier claimed responsibility for a series of murders and disappearances, saying he had a skin that let him become a wolf. A court determined that Grenier was insane and confined him to a monastery.
SOME PARTING ADVICE...

- While in Michigan, stay inside at night.
- BEWARE OF DOGMAN!
REFERENCES

- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michigan_Dogman
- http://www.michigan-dogman.com/Pages/enc_reedcity.html
- http://www.grandhaventribune.com/article/strange-grand-haven/622261