



**BOOK AND
MULTIMEDIA
REVIEW**

Capturing Bigfoot – A Documentary Film Review and Analysis Director Marq Evans

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Capturing Bigfoot
Director Marq Evans

A new feature length documentary has been released, titled “Capturing Bigfoot,” and it is causing considerable discussion on the validity, or lack of same, of the famous 1967 Bigfoot film, called the Patterson-Gimlin Film (or PGF for short). This new documentary purports to present evidence that the famous film was hoaxed, and people who advocate for a hoax are in a hysterical sense of euphoria, thinking this finally and conclusively proves the PGF was hoaxed. It does not.

The fundamental flaw of this documentary is that it presents “evidence” in a form that has a compelling impact on the average mind in the court of public opinion, but the “evidence” fails completely to meet the criteria that a legal, scientific, or academic process and determination would require. So in truth, it proves nothing other than that we currently live in a society that relishes theories and conspiracy claims but has precious little appreciation for real truths or rigorously proven facts.

As a fair disclosure, I am associated with this documentary, in the sense that I am an expert on the analysis of the PGF and thus was interviewed on camera at length and was shown and allowed to inspect the new evidence they present, and some of my interview and appraisal is included in the film final edit. But I have not seen the final edit and can’t comment on what elements of my interview were used or the context in which they were presented. What I can do is fairly appraise the new film evidence I was shown, as well as address a second major controversy that the documentary presents.

The impact this new documentary is having on the near 60-year debate as to the validity, or lack of, of the PGF, is profound, and has given a metaphorical heart transplant to people who advocate for the PGF being a hoax. And they are relishing their perceived “victory” of proving the PGF was hoaxed. The only thing standing in the way of their victory is good science and the rules of evidence. As both a researcher and reviewer, I stand beside good science and follow good evidence wherever it leads. In our current society’s receptive posture toward “alternate facts,” that is a lonely place to stand.

The two new elements of this documentary causing the most discussion and hysterical celebration are a new segment of film footage that strongly resembles the PGF, and apparent confessions by two family members of Roger Patterson, the man who filmed the bigfoot creature in 1967. Taking them one at a time, I begin with the new footage, which I have viewed and physically inspected, in April, 2025, while the producers and director questioned me and filmed me doing the inspection.

This new footage shows a remarkably similar sequence of a human in a fur costume walking through the woods, and the overall staging and performance by the person in the costume has similarities to the creature in the PGF that are sufficiently similar as to

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confidently discount mere coincidence. Somehow, the two pieces of footage, the PGF and this new footage, are connected. The question is how?

Two explanations for the similarity are possible. Either (1). The new footage is a recreation or replica event, using the PGF footage as the guide, and trying to reproduce it with a human costumed performer; or (2). It is a rehearsal, a practice run, to examine and look for weaknesses to correct to make a second film more realistic and believable. While I remain absolutely confident the explanation is the former, a replica, the documentary producer and director are presenting the latter option as the answer, a rehearsal for supposedly hoaxing the PGF.

To prove it is a rehearsal, one must prove that this new footage was filmed prior to the PGF filming date of October 20, 1967. That is what the documentary attempts to do. First to clarify, in my physical examination of the film, I made the following determinations, based in part on the latent image data the manufacturer exposes onto film stock, but does not appear visible until the film is used in a camera and developed. Also, I examined other markings attributed to the camera itself.

My determination of data, which the documentary team filmed me making, was the following: That the new footage was filmed on 16 mm Kodachrome film camera stock; That the film stock has a manufacturing date code of 1966; that the film stock was manufactured at the Rochester, NY plant, that the footage was filmed with a Kodak K-100 camera, a single lens model, not the three lens turret model; and that the film I was examining was the camera original, not a copy.

The point of controversy is the date code of 1966. The PGF footage has a date code of 1967. This is where fact and fiction are being blurred or ignored by so many who cry "hoax." A film stock date code, embedded by the film manufacturer, is simply the date the film was manufactured. It has absolutely no bearing on when the film stock was loaded into a camera, exposed, and then developed. So, despite the fact that this film stock was indeed manufactured before the film stock used for filming the PGF, we cannot make any determination that the new footage was shot or developed before the PGF footage.

As an experienced film photographer back in the 1960s, I can personally attest to the fact that a photographer may buy film stock but not use it for months, sometimes even years after the purchase date. And the purchase date also doesn't consider how long the film stock was sitting on the store shelf before being sold. A film stock may have a

recommended "use by" date for best results, but film can be used for many years, even decades after manufacturing, and still yield good results. Virtually the only fact that can be determined by a film stock date code is that it cannot have been filmed and developed in a year before the date code. But after the code, any year is possible.

So we must realistically ask, how did the documentary team make their determination that this new footage was filmed and developed before the PGF, thus making it a rehearsal, not a replica? To quote the documentary director, Marq Evans, who posted this on a Reddit chat about making the documentary, Mr Evans wrote: *"It is the film stock that is from 1966 but analysis of the film itself by experts determine it was shot and used in 1966 or early 1967."* In the court of public opinion, this quote appears to pass muster and be truthful. But under legal, scientific or academic rigor and rules of evidence, this assurance by the director fails totally as a factual determination.

Why does this statement fail as a factual determination? Let me count the ways:

1. *Generally, when expert analysis and determination is offered as evidence, one must first identify the experts by name and also make some presentation of the credentials of the experts, to demonstrate they have the expertise necessary to make a reliable factual determination.* The film team does not identify their "experts." Anonymous "experts" are useless for factual determinations.
2. *When experts evaluate a matter for determination, they must look at specific evidence, and a full disclosure of exactly what that evidence is must be transparently presented.* You can't simply say "They looked at the film" because that is uselessly vague. I personally looked at the film and made no such determination. Did they examine the latent image data of the manufacturer, did they examine any stamping or coding the developing lab might have printed onto the film stock, did they examine the camera aperture or camera ID marks, did they examine any punch code numerals on either the film stock or head leader, did they examine any handwriting on the head leader, or did they examine actual image data in the film frames, and if so, what specific data in which specific frames? In this documentary, what evidence, specifically, did these "experts" examine. We are never told. So we cannot examine that same evidence and review the determination, to see if it holds true on re-examination by other experts.

3. *Given the conclusion is a determination of when the footage was shot and developed, we then must ask, how was this determination of time established.* Traditionally, establishing a date for filming uses camera reports, production call sheets, other production records, like filming permits, crew pay stubs, etc. None are offered. Also, traditionally a lab processing date is established by a customer receipt, a lab work order, other lab documentation of processing activity, and some reference customer or work order number that connects the date to the customer and the film footage. But again, nothing is offered. Additionally, any such documentation would have a specific calendar date, a day and maybe even a time of day, not a vague "1966 or early 1967." So we can conclude they have no documentation determining the date of filming or developing.
4. *It is possible to use image data in the footage to determine a date.* For example, if in the footage, a newspaper was filmed at a news stand or in a sales dispenser, and we could clearly see the publication date of the newspaper, we might conclude the film was shot on that date. Seeing magazines on a sales rack, and being able to read the issue publication date, we might be able to determine a date within a month range. Or seeing automobiles in frame so their license plates show and we can read the plate registration tags; we might be able to determine a date in a 12-month window. But nothing described, and nothing I saw in viewing the footage suggests any image data can establish a date.
5. *So it would appear that the date window of activity, "1966 or early 1967", is a seasonal determination of winter, and might have been determined by an appraisal of foliage seen in the footage, suggesting a wintery landscape.* But such a determination would not determine a year, just a season of the year. In like fashion, looking at the PGF, we could determine the footage was photographed in the autumn time, because of the vibrant red leaves on many trees, typical autumn color. But any such seasonal determination is not specific to a year. If these "experts" used the foliage to determine a wintery timeframe (1966 or early 1967), they could not determine the year. Instead of early 1967, it could be early 1968, 1969, 1970, etc.

So how was this "1966 or early 1967" determined? We do not know and the documentary team aren't telling. This is not science. This is public relations junk food for the masses addicted to junk food ideas. So, the so-called

"proof" the footage was shot before the PGF has no merit, as presented. Nothing has been proven to make the director's claim anything more than a mere claim, which is not evidence and cannot be used to determine a fact.

Thus, despite the documentary team's claim of being filmed before the PGF, and thus arguably proving it was a rehearsal, the fact is nothing has been proven and both a rehearsal and a replica filming are on the table as equal prospects to explain this footage. So now we must examine the issue and see what can be determined as to rehearsal (before the PGF was shot) or replica (after the PGF was shot).

To review, the similarities of the general staging and specifically the actor's walk are compelling, and more specifically one step where the actor in costume raises his right foot so the sole of the foot is vertical, that posture of the foot is exactly like as seen in PGF Cibachrome #72. We can confidently discount mere coincidence, because this is an uncommon walking posture for the foot. It had to be done with deliberation.

If the new footage is a rehearsal, and the PGF is authentic, there is virtually no way the actor could have anticipated how the spontaneous and uncontrolled PGF would be filmed, or what walking postures the subject creature might take. So, this combination, that the PGF is real and the rehearsal is staged, is simply beyond any logical explanation, unless one wanted to argue the director and actor of the new footage were psychic and could look into the future and see the PGF in their minds before it was actually filmed.

If the PGF itself is a hoax, then arguing that the new footage is a rehearsal makes sense, with the assumption the same person was directing the events, and the same actor was wearing the costume. But this requires one to prove the PGF is a fake, by some other evidentiary process. We cannot say the PGF is a hoax because this new footage only makes sense as a rehearsal if the PGF is a hoax, so it must be. This is a circular logic fallacy. And the "proof" that the new footage was shot before the PGF is a total failure, as evidence and analysis show, so that cannot be argued as the proof. Absent some proof the new footage was absolutely shot before the PGF, the rehearsal concept has no merit. Oddly, in a strict sense, even proving the new footage was shot before the PGF doesn't actually prove the PGF fake. To understand this, we must diverge with a brief explanation of how the PGF is analyzed, properly.

The PGF has been proven to be 100% real, an uncontrolled spontaneous event with a subject figure that is

biologically real as it appears and is not a human in a suit. The evidence for that proof is entirely in the image data taken from the analysis of the various film frames. The proof is lengthy and is presented in detail in my book, *When Roger Met Patty* (Munns, 2014). The proof uses analysis of the camera starts and stops, the analysis of the motion of the camera operator as he walks and films the creature, the ground terrain and the absence of any indicators of hoaxed or staged activity, the shadows on trees indicating the entire six segments were filmed within a matter of minutes, and not as a staged hoax would be filmed, studies of motion blur and what kind of camera movements would be required to achieve those blurs, studies of the body of the creature indicating the shape and size of the head is inconsistent with a human wearing a head mask, the fluidity of the breast mass indicating a fluidity that prosthetic costume technology of the time could not accomplish, elasticity of the skin and fur that a fur costume of the time was incapable of, a study of the contour of the fur on the back of the neck which is inconsistent with any fur suit technology of the era, and could not be replicated until new fur technology was introduced in 1984 (so the PGF creature predates this technology), and folds and contours of the creature body consistent with real human anatomy but features which would never be deliberately designed into a fur costume. The sum of this analysis confirms the PGF is 100% real.

What proofs that the film is a fake have been offered as a challenging counterargument? None.

David Daegling, in his 2004 book *Bigfoot Exposed*, evaluated the PGF at length and concluded, "Since of this writing, thirty six years have passed and definitive proof of a hoax has not surfaced." Donald Prothero and David Loxton, in their book *Abominable Science* (Loxton & Prothero, 2013) analyzed the PGF and the best they can do is try to link the PGF to a famous eyewitness account by a man named William Roe and say "if the Roe account is proven to be a hoax, the PGF likely also is." But Roe's account is simply a man's claim and cannot be proven true or false. So this also is a hollow and failed attempt at implying the PGF is a hoax.

Greg Long authored a book called *The Making of Bigfoot*, (Long, 2004) and he has 466 pages of claims, recollections, personal testimony and stories people told him. But Donald Prothero, in chapter one of *Abominable Science*, admirably described why such recollections and anecdotes are not evidence. In that discussion, he confirms "Anecdotes do not make a science. Ten anecdotes are not better than one. A hundred anecdotes are not better than ten."

And in another passage of that chapter, in response to the idea that if you have multiple anecdotes, they become evidence, another expert is quoted as confirming, "The plural of anecdote is not evidence." So Prothero's comprehensive analysis of why good science does not rely on anecdotes is a total repudiation of Long's book and its collection of anecdotes.

So, realistically we have no proof that meets the rigors of science and proves the PGF is a hoax, and one proof that it is real.

So where is this so-called proof the new footage is a rehearsal? It does not exist. And even if such existed, one would be required to falsify the alternative, to prove the replica idea is false, to achieve a complete proof of the rehearsal hypothesis.

Looking at the question from the standpoint of a replica, there is an abundance of logic to support this hypothesis. One of the most compelling bits of evidence is the unusual foot posture of the PGF creature seen in Cibachrome frame print #72, which shows the right foot raised in a manner that the sole of the foot is literally vertical, a rare posture for the foot in a walk cycle. It can be done but is extraordinary and rare. But the creature in the PGF does this. And the actor in the new footage does this exactly the same way, on the same right foot, identical to a remarkable degree. It is as if when the new footage was being planned, the people involved had a print of that PGF frame and studied it and specifically asked the actor to replicate this foot posture, with the right foot. For a replica, such a scenario is eminently logical. For a rehearsal, with a real uncontrolled follow-up, the idea is utterly irrational. Why would someone directing a first test run, a rehearsal, instruct the actor in costume to walk in an uncommon way, forcing his foot into a posture typical walk cycles do not take? If the goal was to try and achieve something realistic, the goal would be better served by allowing the actor to walk naturally, not in a seemingly contrived fashion.

Of course, one might ask, why did the creature in the PGF walk that way? One answer is the terrain was irregular, forcing the creature to step with greater care. And second, the creature has an unusual anatomical form, with a longer back and shorter legs than typical humans do, and this uncommon leg proportion changes how the rearward foot is raised to advance to a forward position in a walk cycle.

And if a rehearsal was being done, no one could anticipate the terrain of the Bluff Creek event where the PGF was filmed, because Roger Patterson had never visited that

specific terrain before, and thus would have no knowledge of how irregular it might be.

But secondly, the foot is white. In the PGF, it is presumed the real foot picked up some of the sandy terrain substrate and it stuck to the sole of the foot, lighting it somewhat. But it isn't white. It is light sandy grey. But people looking at the PGF are invariably looking at copies of the original, prints several generations away from the original, and with photographic film copies, each copy cycle tends to increase the contrast, so lighter things move toward white and darker things move toward black. Copy again, and the contrast shift increases further. So if the new footage is a replica, and copied prints of PGF film frames were studied, the foot sole looks white.

The new footage shows white feet on the actor costume, but the footage is camera original, not copied several generations, so we can conclude the new footage had a costume designed specifically with white feet. If the footage were a rehearsal, and the costume designer was striving for a realistic creature costume to accomplish a hoax, it would be utterly illogical to make that costume with white feet. Any costume designer capable of making something moderately realistic would reject white feet and make them a tan or pinkish beige natural color. So these white feet make absolutely no sense if this was the first try, and the goal was to study this and make improvements for a better realistic hoax.

But with a replica, the white feet make perfect sense. The costume designer looked at PGF film frame prints, was asked to replicate what was shown in those frame prints, and the feet looked white (due to the contrast buildup of copies) and so the costume designer replicated the white feet for this replica filming.

Similarly, the pattern of the walk by the suited performer, and the chasing of the performer by the camera operator, the total staging, has such similarity that a replica is really the most logical explanation.

So in dealing with this first issue, the rehearsal vs. replica hypothesis, we have no proof the new footage was filmed prior to the PGF, no logical explanation for the similarity (unless you can prove by other process or evidence that the PGF was hoaxed, which nobody can or has done), the replica hypothesis makes perfect sense for the remarkable similarities, which fail to make sense as a rehearsal explanation, and simply no way to break this impasse. So, any argument the PGF is a hoax must rely on other evidence and process, and none successfully proves it to be a fake.

Which brings us to the second major revelation of the documentary, the testimony of family members about Roger Patterson, who died in 1972, five years after he filmed the PGF. Roger's widow, Patricia, and his son, Clint, are reportedly offering claims that they know or believe Roger hoaxed the film. On the surface, family members, who presumably know the family secrets, claiming to know the film was hoaxed, has a powerful impact in the court of public opinion. But it has virtually no weight in a scientific or academic analysis.

Neither of these people were present on the day Roger filmed the creature. They are not eyewitnesses to the event. Regardless of anything they witnessed before or after that day, they weren't there at the filming. There is a report that the son, Clint, claims to have witnessed his father burning a fur suit. There are other quotes and claims as well, but they all fall back on two classic fails. One is the total lack of empirical reliability of people's testimony, when there is no corroboration of said testimony with any form of empirical evidence. As described in the *Abominable Science* book, chapter one, there is a fine discussion on why testimony, even eyewitness testimony, is unreliable. But the second reason this fails is that the PGF has been proven to be real, to a 100% certainty, based on the image data evidence within the film. To argue some testimony changes that conclusion requires you consider how does the testimony change that empirical evidence in the film which proves the film authentic? If you cannot change that empirical evidence, and cannot change the methodology of analyzing that evidence, you cannot change the conclusion. The claims by Roger's widow and son do not change the evidence that proves the PGF real, so their claims, however colorful and intriguing, cannot change the conclusion that the PGF is real. They are entitled to their opinions that the film might be a hoax, but their opinions carry no weight in a scientific or academic proof.

To make sense of all the claims and anecdotes by Roger's son and others in this documentary, a great deal of other information would need to be disclosed, far beyond the limits of this review. But in essence, looking at the documentary claims and applying good science and a rational analysis of the quality and reliability of evidence, and striving to achieve a rational determination of facts and a truthful conclusion, the documentary simply fails as good science. It is merely a work of populist media titillation, seeking to dazzle in the court of public opinion, but throwing good science under the bus with reckless abandon, to achieve its goal.



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