



## *Essay*

# **THE PATTERSON-GIMLIN FILM: WHAT MAKES A “HOAX” ABSOLUTELY GENUINE?**

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*ABSTRACT.* The Patterson-Gimlin film is one of the most intriguing and contested evidences for the existence of sasquatch. It is either one of the most significant pieces of natural history film or one of the most persistent and elaborate hoaxes of our time. In spite of all of the claims by skeptics and detractors, Hollywood has yet to duplicate the so-called “obvious man in a fur suit.” Such a feat in costume fabrication would require overcoming several major obstacles: the hair, limb proportions, and torso width. Three case studies from the Hollywood production lines examine how the best efforts of the industry measure up by comparison to the Patterson-Gimlin film subject. They obviously do not. From the perspective of a make-up and costume artist, the Patterson-Gimlin film lacks all the telltale signs of fakery, leading to the conclusion that the film, or more specifically the subject depicted therein, is genuine.

*KEYWORDS:* sasquatch, Bigfoot, Hollywood, costume

## **INTRODUCTION**

At the Vanguard of sasquatch research, Dr. Grover Krantz once observed that there are a great many topics of conversation that the average man will quickly and without regret stuff into the apathetic category. When a man does not know, he typically does not care either. This observation holds true for virtually any after-dinner debate that might arise with only a few glaring exceptions. And this being Dr. Krantz, sasquatch was on top of his list of firebrand topics. Ask people about politics: They do not care. Ask them about religion: They do not care. But ask them about Bigfoot, and instantly every pseudo expert and faux intellectual crawls out of the woodwork. On this subject, out of so many, everyone stands up as an expert with little to no justification.

Well, everyone is obviously not an expert,

but that doesn't stop some of the more vocal from standing on their soapbox. In particular, the Hollywood costume industry made it a point to take direct aim at the Patterson-Gimlin (P-G) film footage on its 30th birthday with alleged proof of its fakery. Or barring proof (they didn't have any), at least bravado claims of how easy such an event would be to fake.

The calls of fake were very vocal, but in the end, only a scant few dissenters have actually put fur to glove and put together an appreciable effort to finally put their money where their mouth is. The following review is offered by an experienced make-up and costume artist.

Hollywood has never succeeded in duplicating the P-G film. They have made their hairy ape-men, they have deluged our TV screens with furry snarling antagonists,

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and suffocated a legion of brave actors under a veritable sea of prepackaged yak hair, but they have never duplicated the P-G film. Every costume can only be the sum of the men who created it, and these men cannot help but leave their fingerprints on their work -- fingerprints stemming from a laundry bag of Hollywood monster-making cheats and shortcuts. These cheats can be spotted in everything that they have ever produced, and risk ruining the illusion before it even begins.

But the P-G film escapes scrutiny unscathed. No hints of shortcuts, no fingerprints of clever trickery. Hollywood cannot touch it, and we need to ask why. In terms of transforming a man into an ape, there are three obstacles that need to be overcome: hair, limb proportions, and torso width.

#### **APE ATTRIBUTE #1 -- HAIR**

Bigfoot is hairy. In fact, thick tufts of hair are Hollywood's favorite hat-trick for a host of monsters, being the first line of defense against telltale seams and zippers on any part of the costume.

There are two strategies for giving a hairless man his own fur coat. The most often used involves a pre-produced fur suit that acts like a set of zippered pajamas. The infamous sasquatch episodes of *The Six Million Dollar Man* in the late 1970's used this method to a fault. The producers scored a coup by casting seven-foot-tall wrestling legend Andre the Giant in the role of the ape-man (Fig. 1). Andre was given a fur suit to cover every inch of his body. Now whereas this method is probably the most popular, it is also the most transparent, as a set of furry PJs acts as any other article of clothing would during action scenes: bunching up and wrinkling in all the most inconvenient and visible locations. There are several instances in *The Six Million Dollar Man* battle, where wrinkles in Andre's suit are glaringly apparent whenever he jumps (made all the more noticeable by the excessive slow

motion used throughout the scene to emphasize superhuman strength), and embarrassingly "jiggles" as the suit transfers its momentum from one side to another. With no connection in the suit to the man underneath, there is no support system to avoid these problems. Hence, the second method for bestowing fur.

To avoid the problem of wrinkles, it is sometimes applied in form-fitting pieces, i.e., separate units that wrap around the arms and legs individually with no connection to each other. This was the method used by George Lucas in his *Star Wars* movies for his Chewbacca creation, and is the better (and more expensive) of the two methods (Fig. 2). If the pieces are not connected to each other, energy cannot be transferred, and at no point in any of the four movies in which Wookies appear, does Chewbacca ever suffer from an attack of the "jiggles," or wrinkles of any kind. However, while this solution solves one problem, it unfortunately creates another one - - seams.

In the 1951 science fiction movie *The Day the Earth Stood Still*, baby boomers were introduced to the first iconic robotic monster of their generation, the seven-foot-tall indestructible robot Gort, who was the special-effects centerpiece of the movie and featured on the advertisements more so than any of the actors. Gort was created via a seven-foot-tall set of metallic-colored foam latex body suits into which the unfortunate actor would enter for hours of shooting at a time (Fig. 3). However, even though only one actor played Gort, two entirely separate costumes were constructed. These costumes were identical in every way except for one obvious difference -- the placement of the seam.

One suit, which was used when Gort was facing the camera, had its seam on the back. The other, used when Gort's back was to the camera (often in the same scene), had its seam in the front.

Hollywood *hates* seams, and will go to

outrageous lengths to hide them using whatever underhanded shenanigans it can think of. This is understandable, as a visible seam or zipper is the quickest way to completely shatter the illusion for which perhaps millions of dollars had been spent to create.

To create a sasquatch, a six-piece suit means five or more sets of seams. And revealing them is something Hollywood cannot allow -- hence the hair.

In *The Six Million Dollar Man*, Andre the Giant is wearing a suit that for that most part has uniform 2-3 inch fur on all parts of his body -- all parts except for his *neck*, where it instantly jumps to no less than 6-8 inches along the collar line. This is obviously to disguise an all-too-human-looking head and neck, but unfortunately creates a hairstyle not unlike an afro, perhaps appropriate for the 70's, but a dead give-away that there is something underneath that Hollywood would rather us not see. The hands and feet used on Andre were also glaring exceptions to the rest of him, overdone with hair length stretching to 4-5 inches along the wrists and ankles to disguise the seams with hairless hands and feet. Hair is the simplest, cheapest, and preferred way to disguise an ill-fitting suit, as it can inexplicably jump in length to cover any inconvenient area no matter where it might be.

Now the work on Andre was adequate, as after all, the seams were disguised, albeit at the cost of inconsistent hair length (but since he was in slow motion so much of the time, the producers probably hoped that no one would notice). But this is a chief problem for any would-be debunkers of the P-G film, as any observation of the subject itself clearly shows that the hair is in fact consistent in length on all parts of her body, and does not conveniently jump to outrageous lengths in all the most obvious places. On the contrary, compared to Chewbacca the hair is quite short, and compared to Andre the Giant, the fur does not "jiggle" or betray wrinkles upon

moving.

In fact, the film subject reveals a great contrast to both Andre and Chewbacca insofar as the hair on its neck and shoulders is identical to the hair everywhere else, which lies flat against the body. The head/shoulder connection is perfectly visible and there is no excessive hair at all to obscure the smooth shoulders and back. This is *not* standard procedure, thick reams of heavy hair being the tool of choice to conceal pesky wrinkles and bubbles in the neckline. In *Planet of the Apes* for example, every ape involved, females included, have long 3-4-inch beards (Fig. 4). And if that was not enough, high collars for good measure. The result is a neckline 100% obscured. Looking to *Harry and the Hendersons*, and *The Six Million Dollar Man*, this is clearly the accepted and most popular method, as they both have hair along the neck at least twice as long as anywhere else on the body, completely hiding any neck seams (Fig. 5).

If the P-G film was indeed faked, one must ask why the pioneering technique for disguising seams without lengthened hair has not filtered throughout the Hollywood industry in the ensuing 40 years.

#### **APE ATTRIBUTE # 2 -- LONG ARMS**

Apes have longer arms than humans. The subject of the P-G film, of whatever height she may be, shows arms out of proportion to that of human range of variation. Therefore, a human seeking to portray an ape had better schedule reconstructive surgery, or get some arm extensions. But if fake arms were indeed used, there are drawbacks.

In Tim Burton's 2001 adaptation of *Planet of the Apes*, nearly 200 sets of fake gorilla extendo hands were made for a sequence in which an army of killer guerillas charges across the desert (Fig. 6). Burton was going for more accuracy than the general public usually demands however, as neither Andre

the Giant or Chewbacca were forced into such prosthetics, but were free to use their own human appendages, even as it did limit their Bigfoot illusions.

The chief costume creator for Tim Burton's *Planet of the Apes* was one Rick Baker, who remarked during the publicity stages that working on *Apes* was his destiny, as he felt that whatever he did, he had to do a better job of ape-making than he did as the chief costume creator for 1976's *King Kong*.

The actor for the 1976 *King Kong* is uncredited, but that is indeed Rick Baker under the suit (a mere year before he would appear wearing an alien mask as one of the musicians in the infamous Cantina sequence in the original *Star Wars*). Whatever his later feelings on *King Kong*, Baker did give the job every effort using all the 1970's technology at his disposal. His hairy ape was as anatomically correct as possible, with fake ape extendo arms that stretched his human arms to ape-like proportions. Baker did the best he could with these arms, but extendo arms have a very serious drawback -- they do not move. The wrists, the hands, and the fingers are all frozen in place.

This leads to unintentionally hilarious sequences inside *King Kong* where a very enthusiastic Rick Baker has to make his Kong look as primate ferocious as possible by thumping his chest -- with hands that are stiffly open. Apparently under cost constraints to build only one set of fake extendo hands, Baker had to build a pair that was multi-purpose, neither entirely opened or closed, but a compromise between the two.

The state of the hands is readily apparent during the sequence when Kong has to break down the gate to the native village. Although the sound effects were clearly in Kong's favor, granting him huge booms and crashes as he hit the gate with blow after blow. But a careful viewing shows that never once does Kong actually make a fist, instead the wall is battered with half-open hands with half-

clenched fingers. And in the first shots the hands don't even impact the wall at all, the point of impact being mid forearm, the junction under the costume where Baker's real fists were gripping the extendo arms. And after the first few hits, his hands are not seen again in any shot.

In the course of the storyline, there were a few plot points that did make it absolutely essential for a Kong with working hands, such as a fight with a giant snake and the upheaval of a giant log, and for those scenes Baker did wear a standard issue fur suit with furry gloves. Whereas he did regain the use of his hands for those sequences, a careful measurement shows that his carefully constructed ape-man proportions fly right out the window. Kong's arm proportions depend entirely upon which part of the movie one happens to be watching.

The P-G film creates another pair of challenges here. First, not only are the upper limbs disproportionately long by human standards, the length is not achieved by merely elongating the forearm. In other words, the upper arm is elongated as well -- her elbow is in the proper position. Second, her wrist and hands are also seen to be moving. No explanation for this has ever been offered by the debunkers.

### APE ATTRIBUTE # 3 – WIDTH

A philosopher of our time, Steven Wright, once remarked, "*Some people are afraid of heights, but I am afraid of widths.*"

A rather large Hollywood problem in duplicating ape-men is getting an average-sized 200lb human actor to impersonate an 800lb monster. The accepted solution is to bulk up the actor with foam padding to simulate girth and muscle mass. It is used with form fitting foam padding attached to the actor in a separate layer underneath the fur suit. Hollywood thinks quite highly of it, because it does indeed make the subject look bulkier, but

as with everything else in the realm of illusion, there is a tradeoff.

As far as Chewbacca goes, although he has since turned into a bona fide icon of his age, he was not the first franchise of science fiction to duplicate a sasquatch. That dubious honor rests with *Star Wars*'s on-again off-again challenger for Sci-Fi Supremacy -- *Star Trek*.

*Star Trek*'s effort deserves serious attention, for it occurred in the late 1960's, barely a year before the P-G film. It occurred in the original series episode, "Private Little War," where the heroes visit a primitive planet where hunter/gatherer humanoids endure an unforgiving landscape, beset by warring tribes on one side and man-eating white apes on the other. Man-eating white ape? At this point, need we look any further? White fur, about 6 feet tall, with spikes growing out of their backs, vicious enough to attack on sight, and otherwise generally unpleasant (Fig. 7).

*Star Trek* was seen by NBC at the time as their black sheep bastard son, forever being harassed about plotlines and being bumped around time slots whenever the network saw fit. Not to mention a budget per episode that would bring tears to the eyes of any other show. Despite that, the producers wanted a realistic man-eating white ape, and they went about getting one. The result is especially notable for its ingenuity. No extra hair, minimal wrinkles. They accomplished it with the second aforementioned method of hair application -- separate pieces of thick hair-covered foam rubber for each arm and leg of the ape actor.

But, while this process does eliminate the wrinkles and the jiggles, to get enough foam to simulate ape muscle, at least two inches was needed. This buries the average actor in thick constricting foam on every limb of his body, radically ballooning his proportions. The white man-eating ape in question looks like a butterball. A two-month old baby with four months-worth of baby fat.

The padding process as a whole is

problematic at best and the application has to be carefully tempered lest the actor and ape suddenly look like a homage to the 5-year old boy bundled up for school by his mother against the Midwest winter, in the movie *A Christmas Story*. Such problems were faced by the producers of *The Six Million Dollar Man* when, in the sequels to the Bigfoot episodes, Andre the Giant was replaced by Ted Cassidy, a man of striking height (6' 9"), but of precious little width. His proportions were sufficient for making a career out of playing Lurch on the 60's sitcom *The Addams Family*, but nowhere near Bigfoot dimensions. Foam padding was applied to give Mr. Cassidy the required bulk (Fig. 8). A unique observation is available here, for Mr. Cassidy had a brief role as a villain in *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*, where in order to intimidate Paul Newman, Mr. Cassidy takes his shirt off, revealing a finely defined chest and abdominal muscles. As Bigfoot however, Mr. Cassidy is reduced to a flat chest. No chest, no stomach deferential at all -- zero muscle definition. All of Mr. Cassidy's hard won sculpted body, which probably earned him the Bigfoot role in the first place, is buried and entombed under inches of flat and visually bland foam.

But getting back to *Star Trek*, after all that trouble to get their 800lb ape, we have a visual disaster. Whereas the wrinkles were gone, the seams were not. After applying two inches of foam on his shoulders and arms, in order to let the actor keep his range of motion for the very athletic jumping and fighting the script called for, the foam could not have any connections with other body parts. Watching the episode, one can see a thick arm attached to a thick body with no continuity in the skin at all, and a seam at the shoulder as blatant as the San Andreas fault. But the worst is yet to come.

Whereas 800lb man-eating white-apes, do indeed have to have the bulk to create the illusion of 800 lbs, they also occasionally have to pick up helpless actors to either hurl them

across the stage or carry them off to their lair. To that end, the ape actor needs his hands. In *Private Little War*, whereas the ape has biceps to make a Mr. Olympia weep, he is nevertheless stuck with out-of-proportion human-sized hands, i.e., regular-sized hands on the end of steroid induced arms, a blatantly evident visual contradiction, and immediately recognizable.

In stark contrast, the P-G film subject's hands are in fact proportionate to the rest of her. It seems that Hollywood needs to look elsewhere for the perfect duplication.

Particular examples of increasingly obscure 70's television shows give us a hint as to how to attempt a fake, but to convincingly demonstrate that money cannot buy a "sasquatch," it is more productive to look to the big guns of the Hollywood production line, the movies with the biggest bankrolls and which are most frequently pointed to by the detractors. Setting aside the overdone efforts more for satire than realism such as *Harry and the Hendersons*, there are a handful of realistic contenders:

### **Case Study # 1 DAMN DIRTY HOAXERS:**

As the heartfelt children's tale "The Boy Who Cried Wolf" has endeavored to teach us, the biggest problem with lying all the time is that no one believes you when you tell the truth. Enter John Chambers, *the* costume man of the 1960's. He was the man to ask if you needed an outfit and he had recurring credits on 60's TV staples such as *Lost In Space*, *Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea*, and all the best movies of the time, including the work that won him an Oscar, *Planet of the Apes*. Because he was the best, it was assumed yet unconfirmed that the P-G film was his handiwork. It was assumed with such conviction that apparently no one ever bothered to ask him (Eventually thirty years later, someone finally did ask him, and he

denied it. Considering that Patterson himself had been dead up to 25 years, for Chambers to continue any pretense at that point would be meaningless). The story survived for thirty years via friend-of-a-friend-of-a-roommate-of-a-second-cousin secondhand sort of rumor. Everyone in the costume industry believed it. No one ever questioned it. It was just assumed. All because Chambers made a little movie at about the same time called *Planet of the Apes*.

Well, was it any good? Sure, the actors look passably like simians. Not that it was easy -- Chambers saved himself untold work by putting clothes on his apes. Every ape is clothed from wrists to ankles, and often shoes or boots, which completely render moot the issue of any anatomy underneath. We have hairy hands and heads to judge the apes by, and that is it.

But that is enough. The hairy hands are perfect case study of getting gloves first and working your way backward. The fingers are separate and identifiable, contrasting with the wrists where thick hair fully engulfs the forearm seam with the cuff of the shirt, as was the intent. Most of the Apes wear shoes, but on the few that do not, the pattern is repeated at the ankles.

Which brings us to the head. It looks like a chimp (or gorilla or orangutan). It has the proper jaw extension, the protruding brow line, and head crest. As mentioned before, the illusion has to end with the neck, and it ends in a cheat of beards on the males and females that jump 3-4 inches in length to hide the collars and the necks of our simian actors.

The faces however, were more than enough to impress the Academy voters, despite the fact that Chambers didn't even attempt to fabricate plausible weight and bulk for his apes. Every ape, even the largest species, was a mere foot deep and a foot and half across, looking exactly like a human with a gorilla head on top. Chambers probably very well could have placed foam padding in the outfits

to beef up his simians (had foam padding existed at that time), and if he was willing to risk extreme heat stroke for his actors who had to endure multiple shots outdoors in the hot sun, some of whom were even on horseback and others who had to chase wayward humans all through the ape village. Chambers realized the impossibility, and let his heads and hands do all the talking for him. And it worked -- for a movie anyway. But the P-G film it was not.

### **Case Study # 2** **A THIRTY YEARS AGO IN A** **CREEKBED FAR FAR AWAY:**

Almost lost in the debate is perhaps one of the most serious attempts to duplicate the P-G film subject, and Chewbacca deserves special attention. This particular attempt is hand-in-hand with a fantasy story, which has more than likely lead to people absent-mindedly overlook it in favor of feeding their minds on more innocent pursuits. But you can't miss him, seven feet tall, more hair than a teddy bear factory. We could only be talking about Chewbacca. Complete with his emotion sensitive face, he might even be used for a good sasquatch fake had *Star Wars* been a forgotten bomb back in the days of disco.

So let's examine him. Played by seven foot tall actor Peter Mayhew (whose previous job was a gold plated Minotaur in *Sinbad and the Eye of the Tiger*), he certainly fits the bill. Size 20 feet, brown six-inch yak hair over every body part except the soles of his feet, and inhuman/human hybrid face.

Now it is a common misconception that George Lucas has always been rolling up to his eyeballs in cash, but truth be told, in 1976 during *Star Wars* filming, he was counting his nickels and dimes, always short of money, recycling props and sets to stretch his dollar, and even begging 20th Century Fox for more money for one last week of shooting to ensure he did not end up with cheesy aliens (and got current master, Rick Baker, to make him good

aliens, with Baker himself as one of the musicians in the cantina band). He did not have infinite money to throw at his costume troubles, but nevertheless, Chewbacca was top of his list of priorities. Chewbacca had to look like anything except a guy in a monkey suit, and Lucas's costume creators pulled out all the tricks:

*Problem:* Despite being an alien, Chewbacca has five fingers, coincidentally, like every other human in the movie.

*Solution:* You never see his fingers. Chewbacca's hands are irrevocably obscured by excessively long and tangled tufts of hair. The actor might even be wearing pink and yellow mittens for all the audience can tell. His hands are completely obscured, and it is no accident.

*Problem:* Costume is put on in pieces, leaving seams everywhere.

*Solution:* Chewbacca does not have a single hair under 8 inches in length. It hangs off his forearms, off his wrists, around his ankles, down his back, everywhere. Try to find some open skin, they were very careful to ensure that you would see none. All the seams are carefully obscured and it only took about 10 pounds of extra hair. It is cheap after all.

*Problem:* The head is a solid unit with springs and supports to give the actor control over facial functions, which has to blend with the flimsy "rug" nature of the rest of the outfit.

*Solution:* Did I say hair? I meant a mop. The hair along the rim of the Chewbacca helmet is easily another 3 inches longer than anywhere else. It comes down far enough to easily blend in with the shoulders, leaving our Wookiee with no neck whatsoever. So much the better, as necks only give us wrinkles and make monsters look like humans in masks. Hair is also on top, giving our actor another inch or two in height. Although the costume makers had apparently solved the problem,

when they were presented six years later with the same challenge again on a smaller scale with the Ewoks in *Return of the Jedi*, they elected to skip the problem altogether by putting hoods on every furry creature there was (Fig. 9). Production notes detailing the Ewoks construction even say, right there on the Lucasfilm Letterhead: "Use hoods to hide seams."

Our final presentation? A seamless fur-covered walking carpet that suspended everyone's disbelief. Perhaps prematurely, as there were other problems that were *not* addressed by the Chewbacca builders, problems they probably could not have known along the lines of anatomy. Despite being 7 feet and then some, Chewbacca is a scarecrow, being thin as, well, a human. Now is a good time to bring the P-G film subject into this. She is plenty thick, both in depth and width. Depth can be easily fixed with foam padding under the fur, as costumers are usually all too proud to demonstrate. Width however, is not only a superhuman jump in difficulty, it is almost never even attempted. And Chewbacca did not even try.

### **Case Study #3 HOW THE GRINCH STOLE PATTY:**

It's somewhat unfortunate that people of particular education are cursed to look at such movies as *How The Grinch Stole Christmas* and think *not* how the feelings of goodwill and holiday cheer are prevalent, but how well, with \$120 million at his disposal, did director Ron Howard succeed at creating a fur covered quasi-humanoid.

In *Grinch* we have it all: A human who is to be dressed as nonhuman, a particular character most notable for his excessive hair, and who has a body shaped with proportion altering prosthetics that have to be designed to allow movement with no hint as to the man underneath (Fig. 10). And let us not forget,

infinite money to throw at the problem.

So does *Grinch* succeed? One of the most, if not *the* most, troublesome areas for would-be monster makers is the neck. The combination of twisting and retracting muscles can make wrinkles glaringly apparent in almost any costume. As we have seen, furry monsters in the past have avoided the problem by adding excessive hair, thereby obscuring the neck, or by deliberately altering the character to give them some clothes to cover the area (*a la* George Lucas and his Ewoks). The Grinch, being covered with green skin and hair, has the problem staring him right in the face. And they solved it by not putting any fake skin on the neck at all, just straight green paint. Fake hair is above on the chin, and fake hair is below on the collar, but Jim Carrey's neckline is freed of any troublesome prosthetic at all. They just avoided the problem by ending the costume at Jim Carrey's collar bone and investing in a heavy tub of green body paint.

A simple solution for a problem they really did not need to take on in the first place. After all, the Grinch may be green, and he may be fat, but he definitely *does* have a neck. There is no need to pretend he does not -- which puts him, so to speak, head and shoulders above Patty.

Patterson's achievement just got a whole lot tougher. With 9 digits of Hollywood money to throw at his make-up department to deliver a realistic Grinch, Ron Howard took the easiest way out with the neckline, risking uneven costume effects and complicating the fluidity of the suit. Patty as we recall, not only has no neck, but no way to obscure that she has no neck. The hair is short and the head is in frame. We have an unobstructed view of the entire backside and there are no visible seams, no visible wrinkles, and nothing whatsoever that could hide it. They simply are not there. And now, 33 years later, Hollywood had a shot to best that effort, and took a pass.

The rest of *Grinch* follows standard costume rules: Excessive hair around the seams (in his



case, the shoulders and waistline) and unusually long hair on the extremities to give the illusion they are longer and "malformed." Grinch's finger hair is almost as long again as his fingers. This benefits Jim Carrey with a built-in optical illusion: you do not really know how long or what shape his fingers are at all unless he grabs something. The Grinch's head is topped with a mop of shaggy hair, providing the same "How big is it?" illusion and doubts about skull shape.

He is made fat around the midsection by foam padding. Easy enough to do, but you'll notice that such padding to distort size is never done on body areas fixed for size, such as the distance between shoulders or legs. Padding can make the legs themselves bigger, but not the distance between them.

### CONCLUSION

No discussion about Hollywood versus Patterson could be taken seriously without bringing up the best of the best. The greatest monster-maker of our age, Stan Winston, has kept any thoughts or comments about Sasquatch to himself. His greatest potential opportunity to duplicate the P-G film arose in 1995 with the gorilla adventure *Congo*, where Winston had to churn out dozens of fur suits for grey ape actors (Fig. 11). From a suspension of disbelief standpoint, we have primate looking long armed hairy creatures with complete articulation in the facial muscles, they run on all fours, and look generally apish.

From a P-G film viewpoint however, these apes have human shoulders, no bones about it -- thin and narrow. Their lengthened arms are achieved by stilts attached to their forearms, producing odd-looking proportions. Facial muscle technology was certainly unheard of in the late 60's. The facial hair is, of course, longer than the body hair, especially around the neckline, as we could have anticipated. Between these apes and Baker's apes, the

pattern for Hollywood duplication is predictable, expected, and never varied from. Winston can escape claims of "false" about his apes because *Congo* featured a fictional species. Baker has no such excuse, and it is clear from the budgets involved that this is *the best* that can be done, and even setting aside the P-G film subject's unachievable proportions, their best costume technology just isn't good enough.

That's Hollywood. Look at the real thing now. Patty has no discrepancy between the dimensions of her hands and forearms; the fur being equal in length, color, and thickness across the entire wrist and cuff area. This is atypical. Either the suit was made with the hands pre-attached to the sleeve (a doubling of degree of difficulty, with zero gain) or hair was actually glued directly to the arm itself, and the shoulders, and the back, and so on (application time about 10-12 hours, longer if it was attempted on location at Bluff Creek. By comparison, the 2000 movie *X Men* featured a super-villainess dressed from head to toe in blue body paint and over 200 prosthetic attachments. It took about 12 hours a day to complete, and that was with modern technology in the ideal conditions of a movie studio.

However, this approach begs the question of the actors dimensions. Even if our would-be hoaxers were diehards and did in fact glue hair directly to their actor, there has been no explanation offered for the excessive width of the P-G film subject. Foam padding could easily adjust his depth (provided he was in a costume), but could never change the width of the shoulders. Even seven foot tall Andre the Giant doesn't pass the width test. Nor has any other Hairy Man on our list.

And the hair! The P-G film subject has 2-3 inch hair over the whole surface area, no exceptions. This gives an unobstructed view of all his neck and shoulder muscles, a view that previous Hollywood attempts have spent hundreds of thousands of dollars to *obscure*

(thinking back to the beards on *Planet of the Apes* and the neo-hippy sasquatches preferred by *The Six Million Dollar Man*). Showing a complete unobstructed view of the neck and shoulder muscles is simply unheard of, and indeed an absolute no-no. Hollywood just does *not* do things this way, and yet somehow Patterson pulled it off (with no hint at all of fake skin) with 60's technology? For a hoaxer to even *attempt* it would be unprecedented, for until the P-G film, there was zero reason whatsoever to even bother. No layman, let alone Patterson himself, a rodeo man, could possibly have been schooled in anatomy enough to recognize the value of three foot shoulders, whereas regular human length would have fooled nearly everybody at far less trouble and expense. No one would have bothered with hair on the hands until Patterson showed up either. Whoever faked this should have made a fortune passing the procedure along to the industry, but now forty years after the fact, it is as big a secret as ever. Our would-be Oscar winner remains a complete unknown. All for, allegedly, the perpetuation of a practical joke.

Had the P-G film been faked with standard methods, no one would have known any better, as that would have been the accepted way. And yet if hoaxed, the P-G film was not done the accepted way. Every telltale costume giveaway is simply not there. Not only has Hollywood never duplicated the P-G film – it has never even tried.

Looking back on our whirlwind tour of 1970's Hollywood, we can now ask what is left of any alleged Hollywood involvement in P-G? There's one show biz nugget of wisdom that's particularly relevant: "You're only as good as your last performance."

With ape suit technology, Hollywood has put on a very poor performance indeed. It's a white-knuckle merciless business, where one can give nothing less than their best performance each and every day, lest risk being replaced without compassion or appeal. When it came to P-G, we've seen Hollywood's best, and it falls very short indeed. With millions of dollars at their command, Hollywood is still bested, and "genuine" still remains in a forested creek bed hundreds of miles away from movie magic (Fig. 12).



Figure 1. A 7'4" Andre the Giant in his Bigfoot costume for the two part episode "Secret of Bigfoot" of the *Six Million Dollar Man* (aired February 1<sup>st</sup> 1976). Notice how the hair on the head bears no relation in texture or length to the rest of the body. And despite his towering height, his width is far too skinny in comparison to Patterson-Gimlin.



Figure 2. Peter Mayhew as Chewbacca. Seams are in obvious place, given away by excessive hair in all the right places, in this case the hips and neck.



Figure 3. *The Day the Earth Stood Still* (1951). Not visible in this shot is a huge seam running up the back. Never seen in the finished film, even when shot from the back due to the additional suit that had a seam up the front, the two suits being swapped from shot to shot.



Figure 4. Actress Kim Hunter in *Planet of the Apes* (1968) as a chimpanzee. Make-up artist John Chambers won an honorary Oscar for his work in this movie, a distinction which immediately made him a candidate for the creator of the Patterson-Gimlin film (which occurred a bare 3 months before this movie was released), which he consistently denied. Since production on *Planet* lasted the entire summer of 1967 involving dozens of ape costumes, it is highly unlikely that Chambers would have had any “spare” time whatsoever to make a Sasquatch suit, especially for free.



Figure 5. Kevin Peter Hall in *Harry and the Hendersons* (1987). By this point Hollywood had established standard rules for sasquatch duplication, with Harry's beard and other facial hair being conspicuously long to conceal seams and wrinkles in the neck. Shoulder pads are obviously visible on either side of the head under the fur. Kevin reprised the role for the TV series of the same name in 1990.



Figure 6. Stunt actor with extendo arms to duplicate both the proportions and movement of large primates. The device was used in the *Planet of Apes* remake in 2001, directed by Tim Burton.





Figure 7. The Mugatu from *Star Trek's* “Private Little War” (originally aired February 2, 1968, barely three months after Patterson-Gimlin, and coincidentally, the same week as *Planet of the Apes*). Huge muscles give way to skinny wrists and ankles, other angles show gaping gaps in the fur between the arm and torso, and wrinkles are visible throughout.



Figure 8. A leaner Ted Cassidy (best known for his role as Lurch) replaced Abdre the Giant as Bigfoot in sequels to *The Six Million Dollar Man*.



Figure 9. Warwick Davis as an Ewok in *Return of the Jedi* (1983). Several dozen costumes were constructed. All of which included the neck hood, which the production sketches clearly label as “To hide seams.”



Figure 10. Jim Carrey in *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*, 2000, suit created by *KING KONG* actor/creator Rick Baker. The application took 3 hours every day of the shoot, after which Carrey described the costume as “It was like being buried alive on a daily basis.” Notice the excessive hair to cover the neck, and comical lengths of hair on his fingers, disguising their true size.



Figure 11. In 1995, Stan Winston created the grey killer apes in the action adventure *Congo*, loosely based on the novel of the same name by Michael Crichton.



Figure 12. Still from the Patterson-Gimlin film, taken at Bluff Creek, CA, October 20, 1967.