

## Introduction

What if...

Ben, let's say that you and I decided to make up a creature one day. Say that you and I sat here and fully lived out our random urge to create a creature. Not the SCP creature that we joked about for my section, SCP-3008. Something like your Rake episode.

Say we created this and randomly made up a whole bunch of lore about it and it was just between you and I and our executive producer, maybe *not* even our EP. What if we created this creature and we were hamming it up and laughing it up like the jerks we are, but one day we get an email... then another email... then a comment on instagram, then a repost comment on tiktok, and so forth. What if that shit went viral and completely out of our hands?

What happens to us if someone tells us that they grew up in a town that had this creature randomly stalking college students? What happens if someone offers up evidence that it's been around long before you even had this thought?

Well, *anyway* – not like we're doing that at all! None of that matters!

## The Legend of the Michigan Dogman

The Story... in general

According to Rachel Clark of the Michigan History Center the story goes like this – it's 1887 in Michigan and everywhere else. You and I are burly lumberjacks. We're minding our own business and being really hot when suddenly, this *thing* comes at us. In my long running style, here he is in Love Island form, live for you this afternoon<sup>1</sup>:

*[This week, a hot new bombshell enters the villa](#)*: Who let the dogs out? It's the Michigan Dogman. ASL? Unknowable, Male, and American as hell (rhyme with 'male'). He'll get you drowning in his blue, or yellow, eyes and howling for his terrifying canine body. Sometimes he stands on all fours, but for you? (wink) He'll be standing every time.

Yes, yes – the email is [iscreamyoutube@gmail.com](mailto:iscreamyoutube@gmail.com) for any voice acting opportunities, thank you.

But with that being said... let's first go back to 1987 with Steve Cook, Jack O'Malley, and WTCM-FM. The station had a history of April Fools' day jokes and Jack O'Malley needed one right away as they approached the deadline.

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<sup>1</sup> [Who's a good boy? Not the Michigan Dogman.](#)

## The Man Who Cried Wolf - Michigan Dogman

### We need to talk about Steve Cook

According to *The Legend of Michigan's Dogman 25th Anniversary Collector's Edition*, available on all music streaming services – the song was written in 20 minutes and recorded on a cheap little casio. This song was intended to be a joke/prank of sorts and was never thought of as something that would go far.

According to a 2008 article, Cook came up with this creature based on something he just created based on existing ideas of many cryptids that were around and known at that time (the 80s). In this interview, he explicitly states that he “I decided it was time to create a creature that was unique to Northern Michigan”<sup>2</sup>.

In another article that was probably around 2007-2008<sup>3</sup> Cook calls himself a cog in the historical wheel of the Dogman. Cook provides further support that the Dogman is “an amalgam” of many existing cryptids but that he “wanted [Dogman] to be unique”. At this point, he is still saying that this is something *new-ish*, just based off of existing cryptid ideas of the time.

Then, in another article, it says he was *inspired* by the 1887 Dogman Legend with the lumberjack<sup>4</sup>. This one though, is not a direct interview with Steve and is from 2019. If you're getting a vibe here, you're probably correct to get a little vibe about the Dogman mythos/lore, Steve Cook, and the long existing evidence of a... dog man.

It's turning into one of those Olivia Rodrigo/Paramore/Taylor Swift situations that Steve Cook may have not necessarily been prepared for.

In several articles, commenters note that Steve Cook didn't invent the Dogman. Anonymous commenter on this article<sup>5</sup> said the following:

‘Creating’ a folk character is an incorrect assertion here. I heard about the Dogman several years before 1987, in about 1983, from a fellow college student who was from a town not far South of the Mackinac Bridge. We had never heard of it and thought he was inventing the whole thing on the spot. So regardless of the veracity of the sighting reports, your interviewee did not make up the folklore, nor did he name the character.

Sightings of Dogman existed, apparently, long before this 1987 mockup from Cook. 1887 and those lumberjacks. 1938 with a man being attacked by a pack of dogs and an... stranger dog. 1950s many sightings in Allegan County, then 1960s into Cross Village, Big Rapids, Manistee County and others<sup>6</sup>. Cook's statement that he created this creature in 20 minutes in a locked room is now called into question.

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<sup>2</sup> [Q&A: The Man Behind Michigan's Dogman Legend](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Michigan's Dogman: Interview with Steve Cook](#)

<sup>4</sup> [Legend or lore: Michigan's Dogman still haunts people to this day](#)

<sup>5</sup> [Q&A: The Man Behind Michigan's Dogman Legend](#)

<sup>6</sup> [Legend or lore: Michigan's Dogman still haunts people to this day](#)

## The Man Who Cried Wolf - Michigan Dogman

Now, you might be wondering – did Steve Cook do this on purpose? Did he just hijack this existing character and make it his own? Did he genuinely come up with a new character based on existing stories of other cryptid creatures? What’s the real hot truth about all of this?

## Consider Bigfoot...

Let’s take Steve Cook out of this whole equation for a hot second. Basically, let’s take the single person claiming they invented something, and take a look at Bigfoot.

If you’ve spent time in Bigfoot space, you know that there’s multiple creatures all over the world that are just like it. You have the Yowie, Yeren, Skunk Ape, Orang Pendek, and many other names<sup>7</sup>. Are people making shit up all over the world and coincidentally biting off each other?

– hold for discussion –

Ben, a question for you – based on your studies and general thoughts as a person, what do you think could explain similarities in creatures, or in general, across cultures that may not have interacted with each other at the creation of a thing?

– resume –

If we consider the things we just talked about, what can this tell us about the dogman (not in caps, but the general idea of a dogman)?

Generally speaking about the dog man, werewolf, loup garou...

Let’s walk through the existing ideas of a dog man like creature, *not* the proper noun Dogman.

User truthisscarier’s post “The True Origins of the Dogman”<sup>8</sup> on r/cryptozoology discusses it wonderfully and as a link to an idea I’ll be covering here in a bit, I want to mention that I found this post 3 days after I started writing this section of my script. They discuss this thing that even I had an experience with.

OP points out that *this* Dogman is not a creature born from the stories that people have been telling over the years but is born out of the hoax itself. This conclusion is based on a lack of extensive evidence, sighting logs, and information about Steve Cook’s specific dog man prior to the 1987 April Fool’s day hoax. Anything that might have come after is something that is a result of Steve Cook’s song and anything before it is an entirely different thing.

So, what’s the “entirely different thing”?

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<sup>7</sup> [Yeti - Wikipedia](#)

<sup>8</sup> [The True Origins of the Dogman : r/Cryptozoology](#)

## The Man Who Cried Wolf - Michigan Dogman

Consider the werewolf. It has a long history of existence as a creature, figure in literature, and film star. I've seen *Teen Wolf*, people have loved *Twilight*, and so many others just like it.

Its origins go way, way back and is too extensive for this small script - but just know that this lad's got legs all the way back in the early Middle Ages, or even way before that. God it's confusing but just know that it's hundreds of years before the first reported sighting of the earliest Dogman moment.

OP truthisscarier and I both have a similar belief that there is an existing dog man creature prior to Steve Cook's Dogman. While truthisscarier takes this for proof that this is an outright hoax, I tend to go in the softer route of - Steve Cook did a fucking oopsie and named a creature that already existed to some folks or gave name to something that existed and people encountered and now he's facing the brunt of it.

As Dogman/Dog man is specifically in the states, we can touch very briefly on the Loup Garou and give it a little thinkemup. If you're a French Canadian or European listener, you may be familiar with this creature. According to The Canadian Encyclopedia "a Loup-Garou is generally believed to [be] a person who can change into animal form, often as a wolf"<sup>9</sup>. It is linked to your goodness as a Christian and is a morality thing. Said God's name in vain? Just like Nathan, it's lycanthropy for you, baby.

These stories may have served some inspiration for Steve Cook in the creation of Dogman, as he does state that he took inspiration from many other cryptids but at some point he was saying that he made this specific creature up. What's up with that?

## Similarities or Stealing?

### Same Hat!

It's at this point now that we can discuss potential reasons for how and why Steve Cook's dog man came about and whether it was a genuine experience of just... accidentally creating something that already exists or if it's one of those instances where yes I do have a girlfriend but she's from another school and you'll never meet her, no you can't meet her she actually just moved away.

Before we do that though, let's go back to English class for one second and talk about archetypes.

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<sup>9</sup> [Loup-Garou | The Canadian Encyclopedia](#)

## What is an archetype?

According to the homie Merriam-Webster “Archetype comes from the Greek verb *archein* (‘to begin’ or ‘to rule’) and the noun typos (‘type’)”<sup>10</sup>. More specifically, in literature it’s “ setting, character, image, or story pattern that is universally understood”<sup>11</sup>.

Think of a recent movie you watched or a book that you’ve read or a podcast you’ve listened to. In the following exercise, I’m going to take a movie series and I’m going to show you archetype examples in each that connect to each other. Let’s take Star Wars and Shrek:

Archetype	<i>Star Wars</i> <sup>12</sup>	<i>Shrek</i> <sup>13</sup>
Hero	Luke	Shrek
Villain (Evil)	Darth Vader	Lord Farquaad
Anti-Hero	Han Solo	Shrek
Damsel in Distress (ew)	Princess Leia	Fiona
The Hardened/Wise Warrior	Obi-Wan Kenobi	Puss in Boots
The Joker/Jester/Companion	C3PO, R2-DR	Donkey

Archetypes are common figures or patterns across various stories from all over the world<sup>14</sup>.

– hold for discussion –

Ben, is there a movie/story that you can do a similar archetypes exercise on? Do you mind giving it a go?

– resume –

Now, let’s think about how it works for stories across various cultures that are similar to each other? Think of how there are common stories in many cultures. Ben, if you can think of a common story/legend in your culture or any culture that sounds like this, that’d be dope.

*Panday* is a Filipino komiks character who was popularised in the 70s. It follows the story of Panday, or Flavio, a regular human man who finds a meteorite and forges it into a sword that is

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<sup>10</sup> [Archetype Definition & Meaning - Merriam-Webster](#)

<sup>11</sup> [What is an Archetype? Definition, Examples of Archetypes in Literature - Writing Explained](#)

<sup>12</sup> [May the 4th Be with You – Archetypes in Star Wars and Art](#)

<sup>13</sup> [The Archetypal Characters Of Shrek](#)

<sup>14</sup> [What is an Archetype — Definition & Examples in Storytelling](#)

## The Man Who Cried Wolf - Michigan Dogman

the basis of all his powers. He is the archetypal male hero, with a villain, damsel in distress, weapon that holds all his powers, wisecracking friend, and mentor.

Go ahead and send a message over to [iscreamyourmeme@gmail.com](mailto:iscreamyourmeme@gmail.com) for your story that sounds exactly like this, and we'll have a chat about it.

Now that you know what an archetype is and a few examples, let's talk about how it works with lycanthropy/werewolves.

Lycanthropy/werewolves are an archetype and even a motif in stories – they stand for something, whether it be transition periods, acceptance, sin, or whatever. Even if it's not werewolves but instead a story of a Beast who becomes loved by someone who accepts them regardless of what they look like.

This is a common sort of character or experience in many stories across cultures. Like I mentioned, there's the French Canadian, North American, Greek, South American, German, Irish, and so many others<sup>15</sup>. Does it mean they're copying from each other? More just a case of archetypes and some good ole fashion parallel thinking (LOL), tropes or etc.

Now, how does it work with Steve Cook in terms of having this popular archetype in a story he claims he made up?

There's some questions we have to ask about Steve Cook in order to move forward with this: is Steve Cook lying? Did Cook actually just create something that is like a local version of a dogman/werewolf type? Could you come up with something that someone already came up with and not know about it? Is it new because Cook's dogman and every other dog man creature might just be another iteration or species of it? Is there a difference between Dogman and Dog Man?

If we look at this *kindly*, we can just take this as an "I wanted to create something for my area, based on things that already exist and give my area a local creature as a prank" – it just is what it is. It is made difficult by the idea that Steve Cook couldn't possibly have created this Dogman creature because it *has* existed previously to people in the area. Then further made difficult by the fact a creature like it exists in other stories about cryptids as well. I think what folks may have a problem with is that he is claiming to have made this thing up, yes based on other things, instead of hey – this is a creature I found that could be like these other creatures like this.

If I look at it pretty harshly, the way someone who is unaware of the long standing practice of sampling and just consuming sample snitching without context and understanding of the history would do – this bitch stole this.

When it comes to the idea of a white dude potentially grafting bits and pieces from what could be a creature that has a long history all over the world and presenting it as a brand new idea that he did in 20 minutes... you already know how folks feel about that type of thing.

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<sup>15</sup> [Werewolf Legends from Around the World - Historic Mysteries](#)

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Now... could this be a manifestation that Steve Cook accidentally did? That would be hilarious and interesting. That you could present a creature and people will believe in it so hard that it becomes real, like a tulpa? This is also presented in the Bigfoot camp, where it might have not existed but the legions and legions of people who believed in it created the creature out of this belief.

Wild right?

This makes me think about the limitations of creativity in this space, when creating something new, and how that could hinder creating new creatures or just... I guess vibes? Like there's still new weird ass creatures everywhere and sure they might look the same but is that bad? Whatever. I mean consider the Slender Man trope/character and then maybe the staff in SCP-3008. The rake? Whatever white bodied lanky character?

What we do know is that Cook at one point had the profits from any merch sales directed to AC Paw<sup>16</sup>, founded by June McGrath, which is a non-profit animal rescue founded in 1995<sup>17</sup>. So something *good* is coming out of this whole scenario.

### As a writer, musician, artist...

I have a lot of thoughts about this as a writer, musician, and someone who draws. When it comes to these things there's so many ways to do certain things that most of the time they won't be the same. However, I mentioned Olivia Rodrigo and if you're kept up on her or music in general, you know that she had to credit a whole bunch of other folks for her music due to similarities. Some people think it's right but some people don't.

One person I recommend to check out when it comes to this is Adam Neely on Olivia Rodrigo's *Sour*. Another is the case of that guy on tiktok that, without context, provides links to samples or sound-a-likes for music. Pablo the Don has some insightful videos on this guy and how sample snitching without any context is actually harmful to the artist b/c it just makes everything sound and look like stealing.

When things like this are done by accident, I have less to say about it because I don't know how the human imagination works and the limits of it. However, if done on purpose it would be another case of just some dude who is capitalising on the creations of other people and profiting off of it despite evidence that he didn't create the creature. Cook does later note that it is borrowing and inspired from many cryptids that exist and that he is simply a cog, but is that enough for the people who stand by their thoughts?

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<sup>16</sup> [AC Paw](#)

<sup>17</sup> [AC PAW](#)

## The Man Who Cried Wolf - Michigan Dogman

### Outro... Hoax me baby!

I do want to say that it's incredibly interesting that this creature started out as this idea of a hoax from Steve Cook, on April 1, and it grew into something absolutely wild. The idea that you could pretend something exists and suddenly get a bunch of folks coming to you to tell you that said *thing* is real and they've seen it?

It's such an interesting look at hoaxing and accidental manifestation of things, where we actually get to see and hear from the hoaxer and how the thing they've created has essentially grown too big for Steve Cook's britches.

What do you think, Ben? Say this happened to us... what would you say? What would be going through your mind if you were a hoaxer and you wanted to tell people it's not true, but it's out of your hands because it turns out people have experienced the thing? What if you were the prankster and you were told that this creature existed and now you're faced with the sort of scary shit that happens in the world?

What happens... when the boy who cried wolf and knows that the wolf doesn't exist suddenly gets reports of a wolf and doesn't know what to do with it?

# The End