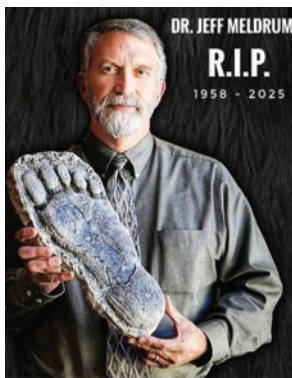


OBITUARY

In Memoriam: Jeffrey Meldrum (1958–2025)

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The sudden passing of Dr. Jeff Meldrum, a university professor who found his research on Bigfoot celebrated by the popular media, at the age of 67, was received with shock.

Don Jeffrey “Jeff” Meldrum was born in Salt Lake City, Utah, on May 24, 1958. He died, from brain cancer, on September 9, 2025, in Pocatello, Idaho. During 2023, Meldrum suffered a health crisis while he was on a Bigfoot speaking engagement aboard an Alaskan cruise and was taken to a port for a medical emergency. He retained his privacy through his health crisis until his death.

Jeff Meldrum was an American anthropologist and academic. He was a full professor of Anatomy and Anthropology in the Department of Biological Sciences at Idaho State University. He was also adjunct professor in the Department of Physical and Occupational Therapy and the Department of Anthropology. He was an expert on foot morphology and locomotion in primates.

Meldrum received his B.S. in zoology specializing in vertebrate locomotion at Brigham Young University in 1982, and his M.S. at BYU in 1984. In 1989, he completed a Ph.D. at Stony Brook University in anatomical sciences, with an emphasis in biological anthropology, with John G. Fleagle as his doctoral advisor. He held the position of postdoctoral visiting assistant professor at Duke University Medical Center from 1989 to 1991. Meldrum worked at Northwestern University’s Department of Cell, Molecular and Structural Biology for a short while in 1993 before joining the faculty of Idaho State University where he taught until his death.

Meldrum published numerous academic papers ranging from vertebrate evolutionary morphology, the emergence of bipedal locomotion in modern humans, and the plausibility behind the Sasquatch phenomena, in addition to being a co-editor of a series of books on paleontology.

The foundational religion background of several individuals interested in Bigfoot research aligns with Meldrum, who was an “active member” of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (including Grover Krantz, Sunn Classic Films, Doug Haijcek, Shane Lester, Spencer W. Kimball, and Brandon Fugal). Meldrum also studied and commented upon issues of genetics and the Book of Mormon in his book *Who Are the Children of Lehi?*, written with Trent D. Stephens.

On September 11, 2025, it was announced that Meldrum had died after a brief battle with brain cancer, at the age of 67.

His family released this statement:



"It is with profound sadness that the Meldrum family shares that Dr. Meldrum has passed following a battle with brain cancer. The illness was brief and he passed with his family at his side. He loved teaching and researching Bigfoot. But he was a husband and father first. I am so grateful to have shared the last 17 years of my life with him. He was a force of nature. Please respect our privacy in our time of grief. Lauren Stewart"

Meldrum attracted media attention due to his interest in "Bigfoot" (which Meldrum preferred terming "Sasquatch"). Meldrum believed that the cryptid hominid Bigfoot exists, and his research on the topic was criticized by some (especially for errors he made in endorsing some shaky evidence). Meldrum authored *Sasquatch: Legend Meets Science* in 2006. Within Bigfoot studies, Meldrum was respected for his scientific thoughts and grounded approach.

Meldrum was interested in Sasquatch beginning in the 1980s, but he initially started speaking on Bigfoot to public groups in 1996, first at "Bigfoot Daze," in Harrison Hot Springs, British Columbia. Meldrum met with Barbara Wasson, Rene Dahinden, and Warren Thompson, 1996.

Meldrum became a frequent guest on television, after 1996. He widely traveled to discuss the topic with associates and to gather evidence. Meldrum was present at a 2011 conference in Siberia regarding the Siberian Snowman, which included investigating alleged footprints that had been spotted in a Kemerovo cave. He acknowledged that the results of the Russian field trip to the cave site were most likely fraudulent. He suggested that the supposed evidence found was simply an attempt by local government officials to drum up publicity. Jeff Meldrum was on the initial "Board of Advisors" of the International Cryptozoology Museum (founded 2003). Meldrum and I (Loren Coleman) often would give concurrent talks at Bigfoot conferences and have conversations at these events. In 2018, Meldrum spoke at the International Cryptozoology Conference held in Portland, Maine.

Jeff Meldrum was an early follower of Grover Krantz, and copied Grover's "one fossil primate" answer to the Bigfoot question. Meldrum's initial position was that *Gigantopithecus* was the solution. But as Meldrum matured in

his thinking, he began to agree with *Paranthropus* theorist Gordon R. Strassenburgh Jr. It became a foundation part of his later writings. Meldrum also developed a new view of the Shipton Yeti cast, and the ICM placed his donated cast on exhibit.

Dr. Jeff Meldrum was a Full Professor of Anatomy & Anthropology at Idaho State University (since 1993). After his death, ISU noted he was the longest serving member of their Department of Anthropology faculty. He taught human anatomy in the graduate health professions programs. His research encompassed questions of vertebrate evolutionary morphology generally, primate locomotor adaptations more particularly, and especially the emergence of modern human bipedalism. His co-edited the volume, *From Biped to Strider: the Emergence of Modern Human Walking, Running, and Resource Transport*, which proposed a more recent innovation of modern striding gait than previously assumed. His interest in the footprints attributed to Sasquatch was piqued when he examined a set of 15-inch tracks in Washington, in 1996. His lab housed well over 300 footprint casts attributed to the mystery primates. He conducted collaborative laboratory and field research throughout North America, and the world (e.g. China, and Russia), and had spoken about his findings in numerous popular and professional publications, interviews, television and radio appearances, public and professional presentations. He made 226 appearances on reality television, in documentaries, and on news magazines, frequently seen on the Discovery Channel, History, and the National Geographic Channel, among others, regarding the evidence for Sasquatch/Bigfoot.

Meldrum authored *Sasquatch: Legend Meets Science* (Tom Doherty Publishers, 2006), which explores his and other scientists' evaluations of the contemporary evidence and also affords deference to tribal people's traditional knowledge of this subject. He has also published a series of field guide pamphlets, on Sasquatch, Yeti and other wildmen, to consider the potential of relict hominoids around the world (Paradise Cay Publishing, beginning 2014). Meldrum was the editor-in-chief of the scholarly refereed journal, *The Relict Hominoid Inquiry* (beginning in 2012).

You may be surprised to find listed within the *Skookum* (2016) cast at IMDb is one Jeffrey Meldrum, playing Dr. Jeff Cameron. Meldrum is also mentioned as a producer. On the set of *Skookum*, Dr Jeff Meldrum is interviewed by Melissa Adair of Squatch Unlimited. In 2006, Dr. Jeff Meldrum received the "Bigfooter of the Year" award bestowed in Daniel Perez's *Bigfoot Times*.

Jeff Meldrum made an intense impact on cryptozoology in the age of early television documentaries and social media, 1990s-2000s. He used the media more than Ivan T. Sanderson, Bernard Heuvelmans, John Green, and Grover Krantz were able to do in the 1960s-1970s. Jeff will

be remembered as a hard-working, kind, scientific, polite, good-natured, humor-filled, passionate, family man who shared freely his labor in the field of Sasquatch studies. Our sincere condolences to his wife, children, friends, colleagues, and associates. His work shall live on.

