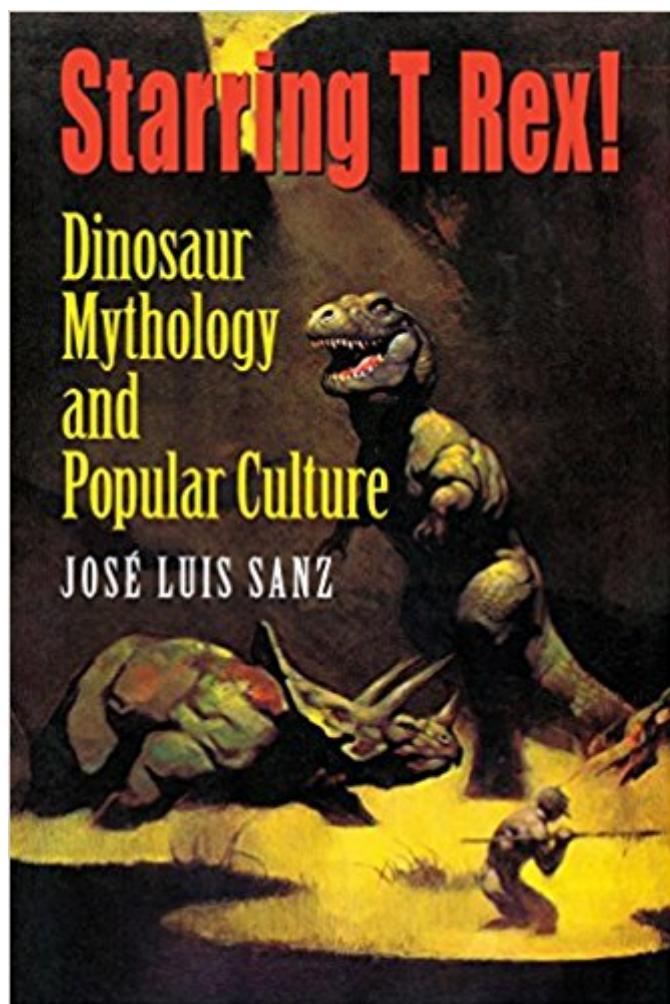


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Starring T. Rex!: Dinosaur Mythology And Popular Culture



Synopsis

In some cases, scientific research into the space-time continuum may have [unexpected] consequences... as occurs in Isaac Asimov's short story "A Statue for Daddy.' In this tale... two scientists... recover 14 dinosaur eggs. The eggs are carefully incubated, and they hatch bipedal dinosaurs about the same size as a medium-sized dog. One of them is accidentally electrocuted, and the scientists discover that their meat is truly exquisite. They become fabulously rich rearing and marketing dinosaur meat under the name of 'dinochicken.'"Ever since the discovery of the first fossil remains in the 19th century, dinosaurs have captured the imaginations of scientists and inspired writers, artists, and filmmakers. Dinosaurs, and legends about them are firmly entrenched in popular culture, where scientific information and our interest in the life of the past most often meet. Starring T. Rex! considers dinosaurs as a cultural phenomenon, seen as the interaction of three factors: paleontological discoveries, the cultural interest these discoveries awaken, and the possibilities they offer for commercial exploitation. José Luis Sanz explains that the knowledge generated by paleontologists enters popular culture at a mythological level and that the mass communication media (for example, science fiction literature, comic books, television, and movies) are the vehicles that link science and its reflection in culture. Sanz first analyzes the historical origins of the dinosaur myth in modern society. He then considers the manner in which information drawn from scientific study enters popular consciousness, discussing, among other things, the coexistence of men and dinosaurs, what dinosaurs looked like, extinction, the presence of dinosaurs in fantasy stories, and the relationship between dinosaurs and dragons.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

From Arthur Conan Doyle's groundbreaking novel The Lost World to Steven Spielberg's enormously popular "Jurassic Park" trilogy, this volume explores the enduring popularity of prehistoric creatures in society and the mass media. An author and professor of paleontology at the Universidad Autonoma de Madrid, Sanz uses his professional knowledge and experience to discuss society's fascination with dinosaurs. By first providing a historical overview of paleontology in relation to popular culture and then analyzing this relationship, Sanz guides the reader through an entertaining study of the dinosaurs that populate the world of literature and cinema. While much of the book focuses on Western society's dinomania, it also pays homage to Japan's take on this popular icon. This book is similar in theme to W.J.T. Mitchell's The Last Dinosaur Book: The Life and Times of a Cultural Icon. However, Sanz provides a more scientific approach to the sociocultural implications of dinosaurs within literature and film, while Mitchell uses his literary background to study dinosaurs in relation to aspects of popular culture such as toys and TV programs. Both are suitable for all libraries. Donna Marie Smith, Palm Beach Cty. Lib. Syst., FL Copyright 2002 Reed Business Information, Inc.

"By first providing a historical overview of paleontology in relation to popular culture and then analyzing this relationship, Sanz guides the reader through an entertaining study of the dinosaurs that populate the world of literature and cinema.... Recommended...." •Library Journal

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