



# Dinosaurs in Fantastic Fiction: A Thematic Survey

*Allen A. Debus*

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From the first illustrated edition of Jules Verne's *Journey to the Center of the Earth* in 1867, dinosaurs and prehistory have fascinated readers. Writers would time and again come back to dinosaurs as an element of fantastic fiction, often using these creatures--through the venue of the written word--to reflect the world of the writers' own time. This literary survey examines how "paleoliterature" originated, developed and matured to the present day. Also discussed are the ways in which dinosaur fiction mirrors contemporary ideas about subjects such as geology, the Cold War, environmentalism, time travel, evolution and bioengineering. Featured authors include Ray Bradbury, H.G. Wells, and Poul Anderson, among others. In select cases, the novelizations of movie scripts are also examined. An appendix provides brief summaries of deserving dinosaur texts.

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