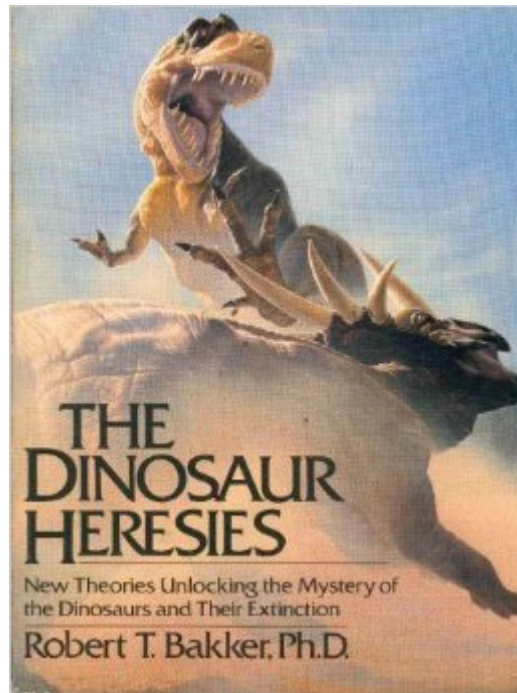


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The Dinosaur Heresies: New Theories Unlocking The Mystery Of The Dinosaurs And Their Extinction



Synopsis

For over a century, dinosaurs have been thought of as plodding, dim-witted giant lizards too awkward and ill-equipped to survive the ravages of environmental change. Bakker offers startling new evidence destined to forever alter the perception of the much-maligned monsters, depicting them as never before imagined: hot-blooded, amazingly agile, and surprisingly intelligent.

Illustrations. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

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Customer Reviews

Dinosaur Heresies is everything a popular science title should be. This book is a free-wheeling, thought-provoking, incredibly fun jaunt through the range of controversies and rethinkings paleontology has seen in the past twenty years or so. Robert Bakker, first of all, is probably the best popular science writer I've ever come across. His voice is accessible, full of humor and character, and he writes a lean, sharply-turned argument that's easy and fun to follow without being at all pedantic. You don't think, at all, about the welter of disparate arguments Bakker's making in this book, because he just tells them so darn well, he really does. This book is pure delight for anyone with even a passing interest in dinosaurs. I will mention, again, that this is a pop science title. It's a summary of the sorts of things that show up in academic articles, and a broad, idea-spinning take on those issues and problems. If, reading some other reviews here, you get the impression Robert Bakker singlehandedly rethought the whole cold-bloodedness thing, well, don't get too carried away. Pop science books don't do that work. Peer-review journals are where the evidence lives, in science, and books like Dinosaur Heresies get the word out to you and me. I would recommend this

as a gift to give anyone twelve or older who has an interest in Dinosaurs. Later on someone may be enthused enough to try Jack Horner, who's slightly less accessible in my experience, and closer to the journal writers than Heresies is. Then, too, reading this book might throw you in all sorts of other directions. (I personally became really excited about prehistoric mammals.) I hate to be hackneyed, but that's what a dazzlingly good popular science book will do; it'll broaden your world and make you remember what curiosity is good for. Dinosaur Heresies does that, in spades. You'll reread it.

I've been reading dinosaur books ever since I was a little boy in the 1970s. I remember being fascinated at these creatures that the then "conventional wisdom" said were bulky, obese, overweight, dumb, slow witted, slow moving, cold blooded swamp dwellers. Ha! Our knowledge of dinosaurs sure has come far since then. In this book, Bakker presents a tremendous amount of evidence to challenge many of the popular ideas about dinosaurs. Bakker uses evidence in the fossil record to argue that dinosaurs were warm blooded, active creatures who lived in groups, and migrated, and raised their young, and were capable of running at rather rapid speeds, and who did not live in swamps. Actually, many of these ideas had been proposed during the 19th century, only to be swept under the rug. Bakker revives many of these ideas, as well as coming up with many original ideas of his own. This is an excellent book.

Bakker's heresies, revolutionary as they were in the 70's, are accepted science now. Every other fossil emerging out of China seems to have more feathers and is more birdlike than the one before it, which is testament to his original theories. What used to be radical is now the standard. But I still like to read The Dinosaur Heresies every so often just because it's such a pleasure to read. Bakker is that exceedingly rare specimen: a brilliant and original-minded scientist who writes beautifully. The Dinosaur Heresies is conversational, accessible, even (horrors!) humorous in parts, and, ultimately, convincing. Bakker weaves together paleontology, the history of science, and his own methodology to create a book that is both enlightening and entertaining. It's a joy to read, and lavishly illustrated--by the author himself. Is there anything this guy can't do? The real value of the book, now that Bakker's original heresies--the dinosaurs were warm-blooded, smart, fast, and the most successful chapter in the history of life, and oh, they're still around, but we call them birds today--have been vindicated is to watch a first-class mind assess the evidence and arrive at the proper conclusions, and then explain, readably and entertainingly, how he got there. It's a little like reading Sherlock Holmes, only with dinosaurs. Thirty years down the pike, no one has yet done it better than Dr. Bakker. His book is a classic of popular science, and ought to be required reading for

every high school student in the country.

Any dinosaur enthusiast should have this book. The text is eminently readable, and many of the proposals made are ahead of their time and thought-provoking. The drawings are excellent and more realistically approximate the probable appearance of dinosaurs, especially ceratopsians, than any others I've seen. Bakker is entitled to his occasional displays of hubris given the number of times he has successfully defied convention and been proven correct. However, I cannot agree with his theories regarding extinction of these animals, since the impact theory is simply too compelling in terms of hard evidence. Only for this reason do I not give the book a five star rating. Even so, it is a must read.

The book by Bakker was really ahead of its time. Bakker did present heretical ideas and his book is filled with amazing black and white drawings which reveals his artistic side. His drawings have a sense of aliveness even though the drawings are black and white. The cover painting was done by a very talented dinosaur artist named John Gurche. Google his name and search for images to see his other works. What you may read or watch on TV about dinosaurs having brilliant colored feathers showed how evidence had to wait while Bakker was already presenting his innovative ideas. Get the book and read what the fuss is all about. Bakker is also a staple on TV shows on dinosaurs. It's a fun read. Like another reviewer had said, it's a great pop science book. It's not dry but presented in an exciting fashion. Another two books I highly recommend which have amazing art and scholarship are the volume 1 and 2 of "Dinosaurs Past and Present." Sylvia J. Czerkas (Author), Everett C. Olson (Author). Both volumes are large formatted books with brilliant illustrations. ISBN-10: 0938644246, ISBN-13: 978-0938644248. Another really great dinosaur book is "Predatory Dinosaurs of the World: A Complete Illustrated Guide" by Gregory S. Paul.

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