

Today's panel will begin with a presentation by each panelist, followed by questions from the moderator and the audience. The presentations will include:

Warren Allmon:

Our images of dinosaurs have changed greatly and repeatedly since the group was first recognized in 1842. Although these changes have frequently been noted, their causes have not been adequately investigated. The history of dinosaur iconography since the publication of *The Origin of Species* can be usefully divided into at least four phases. During each of these phases, images of dinosaurs have been affected as much by what scientists thought dinosaurs should look like according to their particular views of the evolutionary process, as by empirical information derived from analysis of fossils. In the late nineteenth century, when paleontological views of evolution were diverse, views of dinosaurs were highly pluralistic, with some seen as slow and ponderous and others seen as agile and active. In the early twentieth century, as paleontological opinions about evolution narrowed around progressive orthogenesis, the spectrum of images narrowed to a view of almost all dinosaurs as primitive, slow, and stupid. The advent of the modern synthetic view of evolution in the 1940s had little effect on dinosaur science, and it was not until the late 1960s that dinosaurs would be viewed as advanced in many respects, harkening back to ideas first put forward just after Darwin.

Richard Kissel:

Is it really THAT hard?

From bed sheets to Burroughs, dinosaurs and other forms of prehistorica have invaded every niche of our society. But with these many depictions come just as many errors. Does scientific accuracy really have to be set aside? And what does it take to "get it right"? Richard will examine the good, the bad, and the ugly of dinosaurs in pop culture.

Ryan North:

Ryan will talk about dinosaurs as they relate to his webcomic, *Dinosaur Comics*, which features a T-rex, a Dromiceiomimus, a Utahraptor, and, occasionally, God, all of whom are endowed with very particular personalities.

Dinosaurs on Our Minds is moderated and organized by Chris Wildrick in conjunction with his exhibition, *Dinosaurs Had Sharp Teeth!: Parthenogenesis and the Holocene Dinosaur*.

The exhibition investigates a variety of topics within the world of "dinosaur aesthetics," or why we think dinosaurs looked the way we think they looked. What kinds of colors and patterns did they have? How did they move? What did they sound like? How have our conceptions of these things changed over the years? Why are some dinosaurs more popular than others? Why have they become such a major part of our economy and culture in so many ways, from movies to books to toys to food?

Chris seeks to find the answer to these questions and many more by doing interactive creative projects and surveys with people of all ages and in all contexts, from art galleries to science museums to schools to the New York State Fair. He then synthesizes the information from these projects into colorful charts and graphs to see what we can learn from the participants' ideas, experiences, and creative products.

Redhouse Radio will also be podcasting Chris' interviews with several well-known dinosaur illustrators.

Chris teaches in the Department of Foundation in the School of Art and Design at Syracuse University. He has been studying to become a self-taught professional paleontologist since 2001 and is an artist in residence at the Museum of the Earth, where he will exhibit more work from this project in 2010.

DINOSAURS ON OUR MINDS

The Great Post-Extinction Dinosaur Diaspora

A panel discussion on the Representation of Dinosaurs in Art & Popular Culture, featuring Warren Allmon, Richard Kissel, and Ryan North. Moderated by Chris Wildrick.



1:00p.m., Saturday, March 28, at the Redhouse, Syracuse, NY.

Thanks to the Redhouse and the CVPA Interdisciplinary Committee for helping to fund this event.

PANEL PARTICIPANTS



Warren Allmon

Warren D. Allmon is the Director of the Paleontological Research Institution (PRI) and its Museum of the Earth in Ithaca, NY and the Hunter R. Rawlings III Professor of Paleontology at Cornell University.

Allmon's major research interest is the ecology of the origin and maintenance of biological diversity and the application of the geological record to the study of these problems.

Over the past decade, Allmon has led PRI in an ambitious renovation and expansion in staff, volunteers, community involvement, external grants, budget, donations, and collections. He started PRI's quarterly magazine *American Paleontologist*, which they publish in addition to *Bulletins of American Paleontology*, the oldest paleontological periodical in the Western Hemisphere.



Richard Kissel

Richard Kissel is Director of Teacher Programs at the Museum of the Earth and a vertebrate paleontologist. Richard's work investigates the evolutionary history and diversity of the enigmatic group of Paleozoic tetrapods known as diadectids, applying that information to examine questions regarding the development of the modern terrestrial ecosystem.

Richard previously worked at The Field Museum, where he served as the primary scientific advisor for the tremendously successful *Evolving Planet*. Richard has published numerous scientific articles and has presented his research at conferences throughout North America. He is the author of popular articles in *Natural History* and The Field Museum's publication *In The Field*, and he was a featured scientist on NOVA's *scienceNOW*. He recently co-authored the book *Evolving Planet: Four Billion Years of Life on Earth* for young readers.



Ryan North

Ryan North is a Canadian writer and computer programmer who is the author and illustrator of *Dinosaur Comics*, which can be found at www.qwantz.com, as well as the Daily Orange newspaper here in Syracuse. He is also co-creator of *Whispered Apologies* and *Happy Dog the Happy Dog*.

A fixed-art webcomic, *Dinosaur Comics* has run for more than 1,000 issues and has been published by Quack!Media as *The Best of Dinosaur Comics: 2003-2005 AD: Your Whole Family Is Made Of Meat*. In addition to his comics, North has created three tools to aid webcomic authors: Oh No Robot, a webcomic transcription tool which creates searchable text databases for comics; RSSpect, a method of creating RSS feeds for websites; and Project Wonderful, a pay-per-day auction-based ad serving system.

The participants' biographies and images are shamelessly cribbed from their respective websites and, yes, Wikipedia!