

Dinosaurs and Nazis: The Influence of the *Jurassic Park* Franchise on Popular and Conspiratorial Versions of History and Historical Culture

Steven Woodbridge*

Kingston University (United Kingdom)

Submitted: May 8, 2023 – Revised version: November 8, 2023

Accepted: December 3, 2023 – Published: December 20, 2023

Abstract

The words 'Dinosaurs' and 'Nazis', when combined in stylistic form or placed in juxtaposition, have exerted both significant textual and powerful visual impact in popular culture since the 1990s, and especially since the creation of the *Jurassic Park* franchise. The words are also signifiers that can shape and embody the 'ultimate dream' or perfect marketing formula for the creative imagination of those engaged in a variety of media platforms within contemporary transmedia production. Utilizing a combination of textual and content analysis, the following discussion investigates and critically reflects upon two rather under-researched aspects of the cultural influence of Steven Spielberg's dinosaur movie franchise. First of all, there was a curious, but nevertheless important, impact of Spielberg's first *Jurassic Park* movie and its sequels on the study by academic historians of the ideology of the German Third Reich concerning science and, in particular, Nazi policy towards nature and the animal world. The language of *Jurassic Park* was increasingly employed to convey a picture of what Nazi scientists supposedly experimented with when it came to their interference with nature. Secondly, this historical dimension and associated research has, in turn, fed into and influenced wider mass entertainment media since the early 1990s, especially when it comes to 'alternative' and conspiratorial versions of popular history and ideas about 'secret' experiments, 'lost' worlds and the rebirth of extinct animal species. These relatively unexplored topics require further scrutiny and critical analysis.

Keywords: Dinosaurs; Nazis; Jurassic Park; Steven Spielberg; Conspiracy Theory.

* ✉ s.woodbridge@kingston.ac.uk

1 Introduction: “Dino” Deceits

In February, 2023, considerable “breaking news” coverage was given to a woman who claimed that China has a “secret land” of dinosaurs hidden from the rest of the globe. She asserted on TikTok that the world was in for a “rude awakening” when it discovered that a *Jurassic Park* style natural area had been covertly found by China — an “uncharted land” containing numerous dinosaur fossils and “hundreds or thousands” of living dinosaur species. It was a classic deceptive conspiracy theory, lacking any measurable evidence to support it; but it was still eagerly seized on by news editors keen for bizarre and attention-grabbing headlines. Almost immediately there was a wave of conspiracy-minded commentators on social media and in countless internet discussion forums speculating wildly about what China might be up to, and whether the creatures were being prepared as bio-weapons, to be somehow let loose on the unsuspecting West. The “weaponization” of dinosaurs is reminiscent of the *Indoraptor*, a genetically enhanced creature that had recently appeared in *Jurassic World: Fallen Kingdom* (2018), the fifth film in the *Jurassic Park* (1993) franchise. Various videos also emerged, asking whether 2023 would turn out to be the year of a real-life *Jurassic Park*, suggesting that the Chinese state could even go as far as to “clone” new dinosaurs from the fossils they had discovered or from the living creatures they were supposedly hiding from the inquisitive eyes of the global community (Trotman 2023; Baker-Whitelaw 2023).

Inevitably, some conspiracy theorists were clearly inspired by *Jurassic Park*-style rumours about the supposed “man-made” origins of the Covid-19 pandemic. They asserted that China’s scientists were engaging in secret genetic engineering programmes with rediscovered prehistoric species, and were determined to echo experiments that Adolf Hitler’s scientists had allegedly undertaken in secret locations in the dark Teutonic forests and remote territories ruled over by Nazi Germany in the 1930s and 1940s. According to conspiracy advocates, Nazi scientists had successfully created the equivalent of a real-life *Jurassic Park*, and may even have passed on this genetic expertise to a new generation of dangerous post-war neo-Nazis out to construct a “Fourth Reich” in the jungles of South America. It sounded like *The Boys From Brazil* (1978) had engaged in an Austrian waltz with Steven Spielberg’s *Jurassic Park*. It was also compelling evidence of the continuing and indiscriminate use by conspiracy theorists of the term “Nazi” in popular culture (Brotherton 2016; Rosenfeld 2019; Evans 2020), and also reinforces Hollywood big-screen stereotypes that have evolved over time about the dangers posed by eccentric or “mad” scientists (Macintyre 1993). Significantly, in relation to the latter point, Macintyre observed that, from *Frankenstein* and Dr. Jekyll, through *Dr. Strangelove* (Stanley Kubrick, 1964) to the *Alien* (1979-present) series of movies, “film-makers have consistently given scientists a bum rap”. Scientists have been portrayed as “unstable, anti-social Professor Branestawms, avidly pursuing their theories but ignorant or careless of the consequences” (Macintyre, 1993).

2 The “Spielbergian” Effect

Many of the articles and items devoted to the Chinese “secret land” conspiracy story were, to borrow a term employed by Friedman (and, more recently, Dean), “Spielbergian” in their language and design (Friedman [2006] 2022: 96; Dean 2023: 4). Many were illustrated with strikingly colourful images of hostile dinosaurs roaming through rocky valleys and densely-wooded landscapes or, more noticeably, were furnished with iconography taken directly from Spielberg’s movie *Jurassic Park* and its sequels. Indeed, thirty years after the release of Steven Spielberg’s original smash-hit film, it was still very apparent that *Jurassic Park* and its director, and arguably the *Jurassic Park* franchise as a whole, has left an indelible mark on popular culture when it comes to any topic related to dinosaurs (whether credible or false) or the malicious and evil intentions of dictatorial regimes and “mad” scientists secretly engaged in menacing “bio-political” schemes. The tradition of the “mad” doctor or scientist in the popular imaginary, especially in the USA, has been extensively analysed in studies of film, TV and popular culture (Tudor 1989; Skal 1999; Frayling 2005; Kirby 2023). In particular, the theme of power-hungry Nazi or neo-Nazi scientists seeking to clone Adolf Hitler has proved irresistible to film-makers (Magilow 2012). Similar themes have also appeared in popular TV series. The first episode of *The New Avengers* (1976), for example, a British-French-Canadian co-production, featured cryogenics and an attempt by fanatical scientists to resurrect the frozen corpse of Adolf Hitler, as part of a plan to create a new version of the Nazi Third Reich.

As far as dedicated conspiracy theorists were concerned, when the two concepts (“Dinosaurs” and “Nazis”) were linked together and spoken of in the same discursive breath, with “cloning” as the unifying theme, then so much the better. It was manna from heaven for those who view conventional and mainstream historical scholarship as an “establishment” or elite plot designed to mislead and “brainwash” the majority of freethinking citizens. As Tucker has noted in his research on the myth of “Nazi UFOs”, in their “alternative” way of viewing history conspiracists have claimed, for example, that dinosaurs had interbred with humans in the past, and that the Nazis had managed to resurrect dinosaurs via secret bio-projects (Tucker 2022). The Chinese communists were now apparently doing precisely the same thing. According to the conspiratorial viewpoint, the “reality” is that dinosaurs are still around today, living in unexplored or secretly guarded remote locations. As I shall argue, this is the marriage of two linguistic signifiers, “Dinosaurs” and “Nazis”, an interface and discourse undoubtedly influenced by one of the most successful films of the 1990s, even though it was a linguistic and conceptual relationship rooted in “bad” science (Fitzner 2017). In truth, the sheer power of *Jurassic Park* and its far-reaching impact on the public mind, including on those who subscribe to “alternative”, fringe or conspiratorial versions of popular historical culture, is still very evident even today. Helped considerably by enthusiastic reviews (Salisbury 1993; Sears 1993), and one of the most energetic and successful movie tie-in marketing campaigns in cinema history (Wollen 1993; Baxter 1996; Taylor 1999 [1992]; Luxford 2018; Friedman 2022), this palpable cultural impact was reinforced by subsequent entries in the *Jurassic Park* franchise. It was therefore no surprise to the present author that a 2023 news item linked to the central themes of the 1993 movie was quickly embellished with a “Nazi” dimension by devoted conspiracy advocates.

3 The Interface between “Dinosaurs” and “Nazis”

In both film history and in wider culture, the words “Dinosaurs” and “Nazis”, when combined in some form, have exerted significant textual and visual impact, engendering a mixture of fascination and beguiled excitement on the part of readers or viewers. A good example is the *Iron Sky* film series. As Murray noted in his review, for example, the second *Iron Sky* (2019) film was “a fantastical tale of ancient shape-shifting aliens”, with a secret Nazi base as a key element of the plot (Murray 2019). A syncretic blending of the two terms has exhibited what can only be described as a new synergy in popular texts and on the big screen, as well as in the more marginal world of conspiracy theories. The words are also, in many ways, terms that can shape and embody the perfect marketing formula for the creative imagination of those engaged in a variety of media platforms within contemporary transmedia production, ranging from movies to computer games, through to interactive websites and new online platforms, as well as novels, illustrated comics, clothing (such as T-shirts) and innovative forms of online and public exhibition. In 2018, for example, Daniel Hul Attack created *Dinosaurs vs Nazis*, a cartoon-style science fiction story-book for children, featuring time-travelling Nazi scientists seeking to enslave the dinosaurs (Hul Attack 2018). Similarly, in 2012, director Dario Russo made one of the episodes of the *Danger 5* part-animated TV series a Nazi-themed adventure, titled *Lizard Soldiers of the Third Reich*, which even featured the escaped Nazi “racial” scientist and war criminal Dr. Joseph Mengele (Russo 2012).

Although there were no direct references to “Nazis” in *Jurassic Park* or its sequels, Steven Spielberg drew on the techno-pessimism and other markedly ominous themes that underlay Michael Crichton’s two best-selling novels, *Jurassic Park* (1990) and its sequel *The Lost World* (1995). This indirectly raised questions that remain of great interest to any historian or general scholar with a specialism in extreme ideologies: what might happen if new scientific technologies — in this case bio-engineering, DNA research and cloning — fall into the hands of those with naïve, or extreme, or bio-political, or dangerously dystopian agendas? In addition, to what extent have such themes been taken up and distorted by those with “conspiratorial” intentions at the expense of genuine research-informed history — or even manipulated by media production companies who are primarily interested in exploiting the public’s thirst for popular versions of pseudo-history?

Given this, we can reflect upon two rather under-researched interpretative angles on Steven Spielberg’s dinosaur movie franchise. Firstly, there was the curious but significant impact of the *Jurassic Park* franchise on the study by both academic and non-academic historians of aspects of the Third Reich concerning science and, in particular, Nazi policy towards nature, the animal world, and genetic engineering (O’Connor 2017; Luxford 2018). Secondly, this “historical” dimension and associated research has influenced “conspiratorial” and

“alternative” notions of history and the past in wider mass entertainment media since the early 1990s. In fact, one can discern the impact of Spielberg’s *Jurassic* movie franchise on more general and popular perceptions of history and identity (Abrams 2023), including coverage of the Nazis in mainstream culture, but also — more worryingly — in conspiratorial versions of history and alternative interpretations of both the ancient and the more recent past (Icke, 1999). All this should also be placed into the context of increased research into the role of conspiracy theory in films (Knight 2001; Arnold 2008; Donovan 2011; Abrams 2020).

4 The “Nazis” as Mass Entertainment

Steven Spielberg himself commented at one stage that *Jurassic Park* was “not science fiction but science actuality” (Baxter 1996: 160). A number of commentators have echoed this perspective. Taylor, for example, in his unauthorised biography of the director, argued that the whole premise of *Jurassic Park* lies “at the conjunction of science fiction and science fact” (Taylor 1999 [1992]: 141-43). This seeming interaction or synthesis of fiction and fact is also important for those who study the past. From a historian’s perspective, the *Jurassic Park* franchise as a whole, and the way that people have responded to and interpreted its “messages” and infra-narrative, raises interesting questions and possible insights into where entertainment fiction meets and collides with historical accuracy — for example, in how we now view the Nazis and their scientific activities in retrospect. In fact, *Jurassic Park*, in its own way, has a deep sub-textual theme concerning the dangerous “God-like” ambitions of men such as the Nazis in the past or greedy millionaires motivated chiefly by science dressed up as commercialism in the present.

It is undoubtedly the case that the Third Reich has offered what the historian Nichols has called *A Reusable Past* for both politicians and creators of popular culture, including film-makers and documentary producers. Nichols *et al.* have observed:

It does not require great powers of observation to note the pervasiveness of Nazi Germany in contemporary U.S. cultural and political discourse. For better or worse, the discursive landscape is saturated with depictions of and references to Hitler, the Holocaust, and the Gestapo — an obsession visible everywhere, from the progressive left to the far right, from TV shows to Twitter feeds to video games (Nichols *et al.* 2022).

One could make a similar case for Britain, where historians have noted a continuous cultural obsession with the Nazis and the Second World War (*History Today* 2020; Woodbridge 2020). As Nichols *et al.* have also persuasively argued, while the allure of using the Third Reich as a rhetorical weapon may seem obvious in politics, “the resonance of that historical period clearly extends well beyond politics” (Nichols *et al.* 2022). Indeed, at the risk of contributing to the very explosion of interest in “Nazi” obsessed themes just referred to, one can make a strong case that the Third Reich and the Nazis have provided a particularly fruitful range of creative and entertainment possibilities for film-makers and producers. The rise of “Nazi exploitation” cinema, for example, has been well documented by film historians (Hunter 2010; Magilow 2012). Significantly, “mad” Nazi scientists have often featured in this expanding film genre. A typical recent example was the British movie *Werewolves of the Third Reich* (2017), directed by Andrew Jones, which told the story of a group of American soldiers who stumble upon some sinister experiments conducted by an evil Nazi doctor, an “unbalanced” individual who is out to create an army of werewolf warriors.

A similar point about the public’s fascination for anything “Nazi” has been made by Rosenfeld in his work on the “Fourth Reich” and the rise of fears about a Nazi “revival” and resurgence across the western world: “From the early 1960s to the early 1980s, dozens of novels, television programmes, and comic books explored the nightmare scenario of a Nazi return to power”. In fact, in Rosenfeld’s estimation, the idea became a mainstay of western popular culture: “The fictionalization of the Fourth Reich reflected the wider aestheticization of the Nazi past in western culture”. In Europe and north America, a range of novels, films and TV programmes became obsessed with Hitler and the Nazis. The aestheticization of Nazism also shaped popular culture in the process (Rosenfeld 2019: 205-206).

The National Socialist regime and its crimes have certainly proved very influential on Steven Spielberg’s directorial career. Spielberg’s filmic output has reflected both sides of the Nazi coin in the creative imagination: on

one side, there are the one-dimensional and stereotypical “entertainment Nazis” who embody comic-book style villainy and Saturday matinee serial thrills and spills, as displayed in the *Indiana Jones* movies. On the other side of the coin, there have been the more rounded and psychologically complex “serious Nazis” found in Spielberg’s award-winning movie *Schindler’s List* (1993). What the “entertainment Nazis” and the “serious Nazis” have in common, however, is that they share extreme and “God-like” ambitions to break and remake the world in their own perverse image (Magilow *et al.* 2012). Coincidentally, Spielberg’s determination to direct a serious and historically realistic movie about the Nazis and the Final Solution saw him work on *Schindler’s List* at the same time as he completed work on *Jurassic Park*, a process he found both exhausting at the time but also deeply satisfying in the long-term. Spielberg had held an interest in the nature of Nazism and the Holocaust for quite some time, but the opportunity to make *Schindler’s List* reawakened his determination to ensure we remain fully aware of what leads to prejudice and intolerance, and how the historical record needs to be preserved for future generations, a cause he has pursued ever since through his philanthropic work for Holocaust survivors and their archival testimonies (Friedman 2022: 282).

5 The Hazards of “Playing God”

The obvious dangers inherent in fanatics “playing God” is a reoccurring theme in Spielbergian big-screen output, especially in relation to Nazism. As Taylor has observed, Spielberg had owned the film rights to Thomas Keneally’s Booker prize-winning 1982 book, *Schindler’s Ark*, for just over ten years. But the nearest he had come to portraying “the gruesome events of the 1930s and 1940s under the Nazis” had been in his fantasy escapist adventures featuring Indiana Jones — *Raiders of the Lost Ark* (1981) and *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade* (1989). In Taylor’s view, many had seen Spielberg’s portrayal of Nazis, including the quasi-comic sequence in *Last Crusade* featuring Hitler himself, “as being in somewhat comic-book terms — although the sense of menace in both *Last Crusade* and *Raiders* is well handled” (Taylor 1999 [1992]: 143).

Indeed, this “sense of menace” and deep unease is especially important. It is utilized to powerful dramatic effect in many of Spielberg’s movies, and it is no coincidence that the director drew heavily on the ideas of “chaos theory” that informed the warnings in Michael Crichton’s original 1990 novel *Jurassic Park*. Crichton warned at various junctures in his career about the dangers of subverting science “to political ends” (as he put it). In 2005, for example, he claimed: “Auschwitz exists because of political science” (Mooney 2005). Furthermore, in Crichton’s view — and it was a theme he had as the overt background context to *Jurassic Park* — seemingly ground-breaking new technologies and scientific “meddling” with DNA could only have very unpredictable and menacing consequences if not handled with great caution. While Crichton was not against all scientific progress *per se*, he had posed the following question to an interviewer from *Entertainment Weekly* in 1990:

‘Do people have any idea what we’re dealing with?’, he asked: ‘Or do they think nature is some kind of very complicated but ultimately comprehensible mechanical system, and there are just a few details left to sort out, so why don’t we go ahead and do any damn genetic thing we feel like?’ (Der, 2022: 14).

Spielberg appeared to share some of those concerns about the potential of nature for disruption and the unintended consequences if the technological ability to interfere with nature is placed in the “wrong” hands. If men try to be “God-like” motivated only by fanatical ideology (the Nazis) or utopian visions and sheer capitalist greed (as in *Jurassic Park*), the consequences could be dystopian and catastrophic. Similarly, the idea of unpredictability, potential chaos, and a sense of loss of control over a situation is something that is present in other Spielberg movies. In *Schindler’s List*, for example, Oskar Schindler, confident that he has now saved members of his Jewish workforce, suddenly discovers that a steam-train carrying a large contingent of his female workers has been mistakenly re-directed to Auschwitz-Birkenau, and he has to take immediate action to battle inflexible Nazi bureaucracy to regain full control of the situation, save their lives and have them returned to his new factory (Loshitsky 1997).

This theme of potential chaos can also be discerned in Spielberg’s wider attitudes towards the past and about the possible disasters that can result from the irresponsible conduct of bigoted or “evil” human beings in history, including from their malicious treatment of the more general relics and precious archaeological artefacts of

the world's historical evolution, rediscovered again over the ages and redeployed in the present for nefarious purposes. The message was clear: treat history with due respect or it will come back to "bite" you (so to speak).

Significantly, one of the core themes of Spielberg's *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, for example, had been the idea that the Nazis were out to steal ancient and secret "lost" super-technologies, and were determined to resurrect and repurpose such finds for modern-day warfare, in order to eventually menace the globe via the imperial and extreme "God-like" ambitions of the Hitler regime. In *Raiders*, the Nazis seize the legendary Biblical "Ark of the Covenant" which they hope to employ for history-changing and evil purposes, but they do not know until the very last moment how unpredictable and dire the consequences of this act will be, as an uncontrollable and mighty supernatural power is temporarily unleashed.

Spielberg combined 1930s-style matinee serial entertainment with stereotypical evil villains working on behalf of Hitler in both *Raiders* and *Last Crusade*, men who could not know or control the unpredictable chaos they would let loose while the "hero" thwarted their plans. Tellingly, in like vein, *Jurassic Park* indirectly tapped into the *Raiders* and *Last Crusade* ideas of the ancient past colliding with the present, in an atmosphere of impending menace and with individuals meddling with history or with nature, with unforeseen consequences. The sub-textual themes of *Jurassic Park* were still redolent of Indiana Jones-style warnings about the dangers of ancient power being manipulated and misused in the present. In *Jurassic Park*, this takes the form of the enormous force and muscular strength of extinct species which have been bio-engineered and resurrected for the present, whether maliciously or in the name of scientific progress, in the hope that this will bring fame and fortune, and will reap huge financial rewards in today's hedonistic world of "amusement" parks and mass public entertainment. But the creatures do not behave in the ways that their creators plan and envisage. Instead, they run rampant.

The moral of the story was evidently one of "be careful what you wish for". And, for those with an interest in anything "Nazi", there was also a tantalising infra-narrative or subliminal link to the Third Reich in the way that Crichton and Spielberg, in both the textual and screen versions of *Jurassic Park*, had possibly drawn upon some of the real-life, if rather mythologized, historical aspects of scientific research actually undertaken by Nazi scientists during the height of National Socialism. In other words, while this was not apparent to many cinemagoers, there was a kind of Nazi subtext to the movie. This could be detected in the way that it focused on the same configurations of issues that were voiced by Hitler's most zealous acolytes concerning "man versus nature" (a preoccupation of Nazi ideologues), the misuse of technology (the Nazis envisaged new technologies as mere tools to enable their monolithic projects), and the menacing potential of unaccountable power, whether that is the power of a Hitlerite fascist state, or the power of a private bio-engineering company such as International Genetics Incorporated (InGen), the company founded by John Hammond and Benjamin Lockwood for their ambitious Jurassic island park (InGen's slogan is: "We Make Your Future"). During the Third Reich, some leading Nazis, such as Hermann Goering with his private "hunting lands" for wild game, had run their "estates" rather like unaccountable private companies, and became very wealthy in the process (Giaccaria and Mica 2016).

On the other hand, however, it is important to recognise that, in contrast to Crichton, who was warning that new technology and science should be used with great care, especially in relation to the natural environment and animal world, Spielberg demonstrated in his big-screen version of *Jurassic Park* a marked ambivalence towards technology. In *The Lost World: Jurassic Park* (1997), and in films, such as *A.I. Artificial Intelligence* (2001) and *Minority Report* (2002), Spielberg has both celebrated and feared technological progress (Friedman 2022: 141-42). Thus, while he evidently shared some scepticism with Crichton about the utility and value of new genetic discoveries, Spielberg arguably displayed a more nuanced approach. In fact, in *Jurassic Park*, as Friedman has pointed out, Spielberg skilfully presented differing views about science and technology by juxtaposing conflicting characters (Friedman 2022: 141). The character of Dr. Ian Malcolm, played by Jeff Goldblum in the 1993 movie, its 1997 sequel, and in *Jurassic World: Fallen Kingdom* (2018) and *Dominion* (2022), is an expert on the unpredictability of complex systems and scientific projects. He is presented as a contrast to men such as John Hammond (Richard Attenborough), who owns the park, and Dr. Henry Wong (played by B.D. Wong), both of whom seem overly confident, and perhaps far too optimistic, that their new genetic engineering technology has provided them with the "God-like" power to control nature and to influence the behaviour of their reborn ancient species of dinosaurs.

Thus, while in numerous interviews Spielberg emphasised that he was a director out chiefly to “entertain” and to make “thrilling” movies above all, there were moments when he acknowledged that there was also a message at the heart of *Jurassic Park*. Speaking at a franchise licencing presentation at New York’s Museum of Natural History in 1993, for example, Spielberg commented on the film: “*Jurassic Park* has all sorts of levels to it. It’s filled with action, but it has a lot of heart and character. It’s also a message movie that says a lot about the environment and the ecosystem. But first and foremost, it’s a high-spirited, entertaining film” (Shapiro, 1993: 10).

6 The Spielbergian Effect and “Hollywoodization”

As research by Kirby has demonstrated, there have been numerous interactions between scientific and entertainment cultures (Kirby 2023). Although *Jurassic Park* was influenced by and drew upon some of the dramatic new developments in science concerning genetics and DNA, the movie in turn has worked in a variety of ways as a source of both inspiration and fascination for those in scientific research institutes and in universities, as well as those who specialise in the humanities (Michaud and Watkins 2014; Melia 2023). A number of scholars and general commentators have pointed, for example, to the weighty and far-reaching impact of the *Jurassic Park* franchise on science (including the natural sciences), zoology (the study of the animal kingdom), palaeontology (the study of ancient life), archaeology (the study of human activity and history through the recovery and analysis of material culture), and even anthropology (the study of the origins and development of human societies and culture), in the sense that new generations of students have gone into those subject-areas after drawing inspiration from Spielberg’s movies in their early cinema-going years.

As Luxford has noted, the film inspired, for example, a boom in DNA research, and increased scholarly interest in palaeontology, launching many prominent careers in the field. In this respect, “movie science” has had a lasting impact on real science (Luxford 2018). Indeed, some ground-breaking research by Adam I. Attwood (2021) argued that representations of anthropology, archaeozoology and related fields in popular entertainment films can be motivational for students to explore those careers or, at least, develop an interest in studying bioethics in social studies and science (Attwood, 2021).

One could also make a good case for the impact of Spielberg’s *Jurassic Park* on parts of the humanities, including popular literature and on fictional representations of great American film heroes in literary form. To give just one example, three years after the release of *Jurassic Park*, Bantam Books included a dinosaur themed adventure in their series of original “Indy” Jones stories; thus, the tenth novel in the series, penned by author Max McCoy, was entitled *Indiana Jones and the Dinosaur Eggs*. Set in 1933, a dinosaur bone has been found in the Gobi Desert but, unlike fossils, the bone is not ancient. Dr. Jones embarks on a mission across remote areas of China and into Outer Mongolia, and ends up in a struggle to save the last living *Triceratops* (McCoy 1996). Such stories about living dinosaurs have, in their own way, contributed to the resurgence of contemporary conspiracy theories, of the type referred to at the outset of this article. It is, of course, important to note that the *Indiana Jones* book series exhibited a direct cultural link to *Jurassic Park*, both being evidently connected to the Steven Spielberg “brand”. A novel in which Dr. Indiana Jones grapples with dinosaurs was clearly part of a careful marketing strategy.

What is less well researched, but arguably is of equal importance, is the degree to which the Spielbergian *Jurassic Park* effect has also impacted upon knowledge about history, and has stimulated interest in general historical research and our understanding of past events. In fact, Spielberg himself has utilized the tools of historians on numerous occasions for his fictional big-screen visions. As Friedman has astutely pointed out, the director “mines the past for artefacts that can illuminate the present, foraging among forgotten touchstones and heroic standards of action that can present models of behaviour for current generations” (2022: xii). Unfortunately, a downside to this is “Hollywoodization”, a worrying process which can be defined as the way in which Hollywood movies often prioritize entertainment over accuracy, with simplifications of historical events and people (Northrup 2023).

This is particularly discernible when it comes to anything connected to the “Nazis” and Adolf Hitler’s Third Reich. A whole sub-genre of “history” research and ill-judged historical documentary-making has developed since the 1990s which has clearly been influenced by *Indiana Jones*-style themes concerning, for example, the

occult, secret lost knowledge, ancient mysteries, and even “Nazi UFOs” (Kurlander 2018; Roland 2021; Tucker 2022), or by Spielbergian *Jurassic Park* discourse, especially at the intersection between science and history. This is particularly apparent where our knowledge of dinosaurs and past species has blended with interest in National Socialist Germany and a number of special Nazi “genetic” projects (Allen 2019).

On a positive note, this influence has resulted in the opening up of the history profession and the general study of the past to a new generation of young enthusiasts and scholars who seek to explore ancient or more modern times in order to uncover and solve conundrums and learn genuine lessons for the present, having cut their teeth on a diet of adventure and historical movies. On the other hand, there has been a negative consequence to all this, too. In the same way that a passion for *Jurassic Park* has also led to the emergence of less credible versions of “science”, such as what critics have termed “Cryptozoology” (a pseudo-science which encourages people to search for legendary or “lost” species, such as the supposed *Plesiosaur* known as the Loch Ness monster in Scotland, or “Bigfoot” and Yetis in America and Tibet), a major downside to the influence of the film on the study of history has been the rise of “pseudo-history” masquerading as adventurous “scientific” discovery (Preston 1997; Warren 1997; Hatcher Childress 2023).

This takes the form of highly questionable and damaging accounts of the past, often conspiratorial in nature, as exemplified in popular documentary series such as *Hunting Hitler* (2015-2018), *Ancient Aliens* (2009-), or the more recent Netflix production *Ancient Apocalypse* (2022), all polished productions which often combine glossy but fabricated imagery with conspiratorial versions of past times (Thiering and Castle 1973; Black 2012; Woodbridge 2018; Dibble 2022). A typical example of this came in the *Ancient Aliens* series. In series 4, episode 10, which was entitled ‘Aliens and Dinosaurs’ and was first broadcast in May, 2012, both *Raiders* and *Jurassic Park* style descriptive language and dramatic effects were used to hammer home its controversial treatment of the ancient past. And a recurring theme, so beloved of conspiracy theorists, was that extra-terrestrials had intervened in history and employed “God-like” superpowers to destroy the dinosaurs and alter prehistory 65 million years ago. There was also the highly dubious assertion that enough dinosaurs had remained alive to have walked the earth alongside humans more recently.

Thus, a key drawback to this Spielbergian side-effect on knowledge about the past has been the incremental “Hollywoodization” of history, in the sense that there has been over-simplification and glamorization by filmmakers of the role of the historian — of what it takes to piece together evidence in the face of a “challenge” or a “mystery”, and to build a truthful picture of what precisely happened (or as near to “truthful” as reasonably possible). Young people in schools and colleges tend to increasingly gain their knowledge about the past solely via movies or TV (Beck 2012). In some cases, this growing Hollywoodization of our understanding of the past has tempted various documentary-makers to indulge in the blatant distortion of history, or even outright fabrication, in order to “sex up” the past for public audiences who prefer sensational stories rather than “dry” or orthodox investigations of complex evidence (Clark 2018).

A further sign of this disappointing trend is in relation to historical knowledge about the Third Reich in movies, and how it has tended to be “filtered” through the lens of dramatic Spielberg-style story-telling for the big screen, with little nuance or balance, creating the impression that history is solely an epic Manichean struggle between “heroes” and “villains”. For example, the impact of such Hollywoodization can be seen in Spielberg’s *Raiders of the Lost Ark* and its sequels, where Dr. Henry Walton “Indiana” Jones, a Professor of Archaeology, is not just an academic lecturer but is also presented as a lone and heroic adventurer, battling against those (in this case the evil Nazis) who wish to darkly manipulate and misuse the artefacts of the past, whether they are artefacts with scientific importance or “lost” ancient treasures with super-human, mystical or special powers.

This theme was again noticeable in the third Indiana Jones movie, *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*, where an obsessed Nazi is seeking the hidden key to biological eternity, and in the fifth adventure, *Indiana Jones and the Dial of Destiny* (2023), which again has a “Nazi” dimension and concerns the misuse of high technology as part of its storyline. In a similar fashion, in the *Jurassic Park* franchise the “good” scientists are regularly portrayed as heroic defenders of genuine science and protectors of the ‘innocence’ of prehistoric species, and are out to subvert the misuse of bio-technology by the “baddies” and thus prevent disaster.

7 A Brief Case Study of the “Hollywoodization” of History

Recent historiographical research on the Third Reich has seen increased interest in the relationship between the Nazis and “nature”, something that has certainly been noticed by the media. In 2020, the journalist Crossland noted how research on attitudes to animals on the part of the Nazi regime has shown how both Adolf Hitler, who kept Alsatian dogs because of their similarity to wolves, and Hermann Goering, who owned lions and loved hunting, utilized such predatory animals as icons of power (Crossland 2020). Hitler liked to be called “Wolf” in private and, significantly, named his military HQ in East Prussia the “Wolf’s Lair”. This was near-perfect fodder for a newspaper in need of a “Nazi” themed story which could conjure up images of “wild” beast-like animals.

As academic experts on the Nazis have also pointed out (Hawkins 1997; Weikart 2013; Weikart 2016), Hitler was a zealous Social Darwinist, who subscribed strongly to a highly questionable version of the Darwinian laws of evolution, claiming that all life was a constant animalistic struggle. Moreover, the “races” at the heart of the human species were also inevitably shaped by the forces of “nature” and blood, with the Aryan or Nordic races demonstrably superior to all others. In relation to this, there has also been the emergence of more interest in the “spatial” imaginations of the Nazi regime and how leading Nazis saw the need for greater *lebensraum* [living space] as not just being about the need for more geographical land for the Aryan “race” and population, but as offering new opportunities to implement bio-political projects and create new species of wild animal to re-populate the Teutonic forests for hunting purposes (Giaccaria and Minca 2016).

In the same way that the genetic cross-breeding of animals formed the storyline to *Jurassic World*, with the *Indominus Rex*, interest in the historical and real-life roots of such ideas can be seen in recent research on Nazism. There has been a growth of awareness of two key individuals who sought to engage in the Nazi equivalent of genetic engineering on animal species: the Heck Brothers. Lutz and Heinz Heck had been raised in the grounds of Berlin Zoo, where their father, Ludwig Heck, had been the Zoo’s director from 1881 to 1931. As a result, Ludwig Georg Heinrich Heck (1892-1983), otherwise known as “Lutz”, had developed a deep interest in the world of animals and zoology from an early age. Even before he took over from his father as director in 1932, Lutz had been on various trips abroad to collect animal specimens for the Berlin Zoo. This continued in the 1930s. In 1935, for example, he visited Canada to obtain bison and moose specimens for the Zoo, a trip that was sponsored by Hermann Goering and funded by the Nazi regime.

Lutz Heck, who formally joined the Nazi Party in 1937, was especially interested in and passionate about hunting, an obsession he shared with Goering, and he became a close hunting colleague of Goering. Lutz later described being fascinated by animals that he associated with a mythical and idealised Germanic past (Heck 1954). He also shared with Goering a desire to recreate German ancestral landscapes, and thus talked Goering into allowing him to plan to populate Goering’s large private hunting reserves with specially bred animals, including in the Bialowieza forest, located between Poland and Belarus. One of Lutz Heck’s dreams was to reconstruct extinct animals and, along with his brother Heinz, they set about experimenting with the cross-breeding of certain modern breeds which they claimed still had parts of the original generic heritage in them. They were especially keen on cattle and horses for this, and sought to resurrect the wild cow (Aurochs) and wild horses (Tarpan). Aurochs, for example, were large and aggressive horned cattle that had been extinct since 1627. Their size and ferocity had elevated them to legendary status in the ancient past (Allen 2019). Lutz Heck believed that he could somehow reconstruct the animal through genetic selection and ‘back-breeding’ of cattle with similar features, and achieve “de-extinction” (O’Connor 2017).

The Hecks thought that, by breeding out the “degeneration” they associated with the modern domestication of such breeds, they could somehow recreate wild and fearsome versions of such animal species again, and thus provide eager Nazis from the Third Reich’s elite circles with new hunting opportunities in large territorial reserves, where man would “struggle” again with the forces of nature and, in doing so, engage in the Nazi vision of super-fit Aryan warriors using their physical wits and skills to overcome highly menacing odds (Driesen and Lorimer 2016; Boissoneault 2017).

Much of this thought-provoking piece of Third Reich history would normally have remained confined to academic studies. However, slowly but surely, especially with the rise of the internet from the mid-1990s, the story emerged into the public domain during the course of that decade and increasingly piqued media interest

as we entered a new Millennium. In 2009, for example, the journalist and expert on extreme creeds and conspiracy theory, Jon Ronson, presented a BBC Radio-4 documentary on the Hecks entitled *The Quest for the Aryan Cow* (Ronson, 2009). Ronson's investigative work in Germany and a number of other stories associated with Nazi "bio-projects" became the cultural equivalent of showing a red rag to a bull for TV producers in search of intriguing real-life history they could "sex up" and repackage for less discerning mass audiences. Genuine research-informed historical research on the topic was now pushed aside in favour of "edu-tainment" or the titillation of viewers. It was also music to the ears of conspiracy-minded theorists.

By the tail-end of the 1990s, there had been a noticeable revival of interest in the Lutz brothers and their genetic breeding experiments, and this was arguably stimulated enormously by the first two *Jurassic Park* movies, together with demands by a plethora of new cable and satellite channels for pseudo-historical material to fill up round-the-clock programming schedules. The Lutz experiments were an ideal subject here: the impression that "mad" Nazi scientists had engaged in the genetic resurrection of extinct species in the name of "God-like" ideological delusions was patently something that could be glossily presented to audiences already enthused about "wild beasts" and "dinosaurs", and the tantalising perils of "fanatics" tampering with nature.

Indeed, a purported "history" documentary was produced in 2013 by the National Geographic Channel with a significant title, *Hitler's Jurassic Monsters*, directed by Jeremy Bristow. It concentrated mainly on Heck's work in the Bialowieza Forest. The marketing blurb for the programme, with images of extras dressed as German soldiers intercut with original newsreel footage, told viewers that it "brings to life the Third Reich's confounding plan to recreate the primeval forests of Germanic folklore". Predictably, by mid-2014, this documentary had been unashamedly re-titled as *Hitler's Jurassic Park*, and was heavily promoted as being all about the "Nazi Jurassic Park". Indeed, the marketing iconography was strikingly similar to the graphics and text design used for Spielberg's *Jurassic Park* movies.

The documentary was given greater legitimacy by the contributions of two scholars from Cardiff University in Britain, Dr. Toby Thacker, a Reader in bio-archaeology, and Dr. Jacqui Mulville, of the School of History, Archaeology and Religion at the university (Cardiff University 2014). Yet, predictably, these two experts were merely used for quick "sound-bite" contributions, and the way that the documentary was marketed — with an aura of sensational and "shock" discovery — and even the design iconography employed, owed much to Spielbergian *Jurassic Park* discourse and imagery.

As Rosenfeld has observed, filmmakers have often rebelled against authentic representations of the past, including the realities of the Nazi Third Reich (Rosenfeld 2014: 12). This appeared to be a classic example of such rebellion, shaped by the iconic design style and "message" discourse of the *Jurassic Park* franchise. Taking their cue from *Hitler's Jurassic Park*, other production companies eagerly joined the bandwagon for sensational-style TV material, exploiting the public's familiarity with Spielbergian themes. It was no surprise to find that in June, 2018, an episode of *Ripley's Believe It or Not!* was entitled "The Nazi Attempt at *Jurassic Park*: Was It Possible?" (Clark 2018).

8 The Dinosaur-Nazi Interface in "Alternative" Versions of History

At the wider levels of popular culture, the "Dinosaurs and Nazis" paradigm continues to thrive to this day, especially in the creation of "alternative" histories. A range of examples can be pointed to. In the hugely successful world of video-games, for example, *Dino D-Day* was a multiplayer team-based first-person shooter video game developed and published by American studios *800 North* and *Digital Ranch*. It was released for Microsoft Windows on April 8th, 2011. The premise of the game was that, during the Second World War, Adolf Hitler and his Nazi regime found a way to resurrect dinosaurs for use in the German war effort against the Allied nations. Players could battle online by choosing to serve either the Allies or the Nazis. *Dino D-Day* invited players to join one of two teams as they attempt to complete their goal. Players thus had a choice between the Allied nations (Britain, the USA, the USSR, and so on), or the Axis powers (Germany, Italy and Japan), the latter represented predominantly by the Nazis and their dinosaur "bio-weapons" (Black 2011).

It is perhaps worth noting that the game received mixed reviews (Critic Reviews 2011). *IndieGames.com*, for example, argued that the game only worked because it did not take its premise too seriously: "It's filled with

little comedic touches and a fair bit of dark humour". On the other hand, some reviews praised the game's concept, viewing it as a combination of *Jurassic Park* and *Indiana Jones* (Critic Reviews, 2011). As well as a game, *Dino D-Day* offered the tantalising possibility of appearing in other forms of media. In 2013, for example, Icehouse Animation announced that it would produce a *Dino D-Day* animated series and, in a press release, named Tommy Blacha as a writer for the new show. For unknown reasons, the project did not go ahead and the series was not released.

A more tangible kind of progress emerged from the world of comics. On January 9th, 2015, the first issue of the *Dino D-Day* comic was released. It told the "origin" story of Jack Hardgrave and Nigel Blythe-Crossley as they teamed up and heroically attempted to uncover Hitler's latest top-secret dinosaur project hidden in a Nazi submarine base. It was abundantly clear that the whole concept of "Hitler's Dinosaurs" was still highly attractive for mass entertainment purposes, and this story could have come straight out of a Spielberg adventure movie. In like vein, Titan Comics also launched a "Dinosaurs and Nazis" time-travelling series, which featured Allied soldiers battling ancient monsters and Axis soldiers; the Nazis had developed "time-diving" technology, enabling them to transport dinosaurs into the twentieth century (Lewis 2013).

Unsurprisingly, this imaginative intersection between Dinosaurs and Nazis has also proved a fruitful source for the plotlines of a number of downmarket but popular B-movie science-fiction productions, which have often gone straight to video, DVD and Blu-ray release. A prime example has been *Iron Sky* (2012), which features a Nazi elite group who managed to survive World War Two and have lain dormant for 70 years in a secret military base on the dark side of the moon (a lunar-based "Fourth Reich", as it were). Some of the leading Nazis are *Vril*, a race of reptilian/human hybrids, whose ambitions are clearly "monstrous" in scale. The film proved so popular with certain audiences that a sequel was crowdfunded, *Iron Sky 2: The Coming Race* (2019), which marketed itself with a poster showing a reptilian Adolf Hitler and, at one stage, has a sequence where the Nazi *Fuhrer* leads an attack while riding on the back of a *Tyrannosaurus Rex*.

Although it was not obvious to most viewers, who naturally saw it as spoof entertainment, it is perhaps worth noting that the title for this movie was inspired by the infamous 1871 novel *Vril: The Power of The Coming Race*, penned by Edward Bulwer-Lytton (1803-1873), a book which was an influence on some of the leading biological racists of the nineteenth century, and exemplified a strand of thinking which arguably later fed into German Nazi racial philosophy. The term *Vril* has also been taken up by a more esoteric and conspiratorial form of neo-Nazism in recent decades (Goodrick-Clarke 2002) and, furthermore, has played a role in more popular forms of conspiracy theory.

At its most extreme, for example, this latter obsession can be seen in the output of the British arch-conspiracist David Icke, who has spent the last twenty years or so disseminating a highly questionable and nonsensical version of history, blurring the lines between fiction and fact. Inevitably, he has drawn upon "dinosaur" discourse as part of this. Just two years after the release of *The Lost World: Jurassic Park*, the second instalment in the franchise, Icke's best-selling book *The Biggest Secret* (1999), launched in the USA, set out his thesis that reptiles, half-reptilian humans, or "lizard-like humanoids" (*Vril*) — operating through secret societies such as the Illuminati — have been behind many of the major events in world history, and that this "reptile species" can be traced back "more than 150 million years to the dinosaurs and beyond" (Icke 1999: 21-22). Even the Nazis were just another branch of this grand reptilian scheme to manipulate history and control reality.

Ironically, such irrational assertions echoed the plot-line of the unmade *Jurassic Park IV*, where the screenplay by John Sayles involved the genetic hybridisation of humans and dinosaurs. Such fictional ideas have been converted into factual reality in the obsessive mind-set of Icke and his supporters. In point of fact, David Icke and his acolytes have claimed that mass genetic engineering has been perpetrated by "reptilian" Nazis, who have treated the world as a giant nature reserve or "park", ripe for experimentation on, and the brainwashing of, human beings. Icke has even claimed that elements of this "truth" have seeped out in the films of Steven Spielberg, particularly the original Indiana Jones movies and in *Jurassic Park*, "in which DNA is manipulated to create reptilian dinosaurs" (Icke 1999: 82-83). There have also been hints from Icke and his supporters that Spielberg himself is part of this global "plot" and is one of the supposed puppet-masters. Icke has been happy to host on his website discussion forums, for example, articles claiming that a "Pedophyllic" occult ring or network illicitly operates at the heart of Hollywood, together with blatantly conspiratorial allegations that

Spielberg has been part of a secret paedophilia ring, along with A-List celebrities and political couples such as the Clintons and Obamas (Parfrey 2011).

Needless to say, critics have adamantly challenged such claims (Solomon 2017), and rightly so. Yet, just as movies like *Jurassic Park* and its sequels have had a world-wide appeal and performed strongly in many markets, Icke has managed to build up what Lewis and Khan have called “an expansive popular appeal” that cuts across many divides. Lewis and Kahn have also pointed out that Icke’s “Reptoid Hypothesis” — the idea that alien lizards conspiratorially control the earth — is “representative of a major counter-cultural trend that is indeed global in proportions” (Lewis and Khan 2005: 46).

Finally, another strand of thinking in “alternative” and popular versions of history, and which again has often been framed using *Jurassic Park* iconography, concerns Dinosaur “survival”. The 1990s saw a wave of such claims. The monthly magazine *Fortean Times* in May, 1996, for example, proclaimed on its front cover “Dinosaurs Alive! Exclusive Film Evidence Reviewed”, complete with a full-colour image of a *Brontosaurus* dominating the front cover page. The fifth issue of the British magazine *Enigma* also carried on its front cover in 1997 “Dinosaur Survivors Lost in the Modern World”, complete with a dramatic full-colour image of a roaring *Tyrannosaurus Rex*. Similarly, in July of the same year, the magazine *Xpose* — again featuring a menacing *T-Rex* on its front cover — invited its readers to consider “Can dinosaurs live again? The truth behind Steven Spielberg’s *The Lost World*”. In August, 1999, *Fortean Times* returned to the topic by giving coverage to the “new hunt for living dinosaurs” in the Congo, a theme that has been revived regularly in the 2000s, with dinosaur-hunting investigators portrayed as the Indiana Jones-type adventurers of the twenty-first century.

More recently, discussion of the topic has shifted away from a focus on the “lost” areas of Africa and South America, and a series of glossy YouTube films have claimed there may be “living dinosaurs” still inhabiting the far-flung regions of Canada or the Arctic (Peters 2021). Much of this kind of material has been designed to provide viewers with movie-style sensationalism and, indeed, has drawn heavily on *Jurassic Park* iconography.

9 Concluding Observations

The foregoing discussion has explored the extent to which there has been a marriage or, more accurately, an interface or juxtaposition between two linguistic signifiers, “Dinosaurs” and “Nazis”, and has sought to reflect upon the influence that Steven Spielberg’s *Jurassic Park* franchise has exerted on this notably popular pattern or paradigm. In particular, we have explored the degree to which this Spielbergian infra-narrative has influenced the world of popular, “alternative” history and, more ominously, the rather murky field of conspiracy theory.

As noted earlier, to borrow the words of Spielberg himself, *Jurassic Park* “has all sorts of levels to it”. The influence and impact of the *Jurassic Park* franchise in popular culture, and upon *both* conventional and “alternative” versions of history, cannot be overestimated. The very way that much of the general public in the United States, Britain and elsewhere across the western world think about and consume knowledge about dinosaurs today has been profoundly shaped by Spielberg’s original movie and its sequels. This, one suspects, is now also the case in many corners of the globe. According to natural history experts, for example, *Jurassic Park* has fundamentally changed the way public museums exhibit their dinosaur fossils. Even the very discussion of this cultural trend has seen articles invariably illustrated with stills taken directly from the *Jurassic Park* movie franchise (Rodrigues 2019).

When he was first offered a *Jurassic Park* screen treatment penned by Michael Crichton, Spielberg commented: “You know, I’ve had a fascination with dinosaurs all my life, and I’d really love to read it” (Baxter 1996: 357). Generations of cinemagoers have benefited from Spielberg’s sentiments, and beguilement with extinct ancient species has grown relentlessly. As Hawkes so aptly put it at the time *Jurassic Park* was released: “The public’s appetite for dinosauria apparently has no limits” (1993). Perhaps the last word should be left with Wollen. Writing in 1993 after his first viewing of *Jurassic Park*, Wollen noted how the movie enables audiences to engage in a kind of historical “time travel”: viewers are taken back in time to the “Age of the Reptiles”, but the reptiles themselves are brought forward to the “Age of Humans”. Manipulation of DNA, the core theme of the film, “acts as a kind of reverse time machine, harnessed now to the interests of the entertainment industry”

(Wollen 1993: 7). In fact, one can argue that herein lies the timeless appeal of the *Jurassic Park* franchise as a whole.

References

- Abrams, Nathan (2020). "Kubrick and the Paranoid Style: Antisemitism, Conspiracy Theories and *The Shining*." *Senses of Cinema* 95, July.
- Abrams, Nathan (2023). "Jew-rassic Park." In *The Jurassic Park Book: New Perspectives on the Classic 1990s Blockbuster*, edited by Matthew Melia. London: Bloomsbury.
- Allen, Ryon (2019). *The Heck Brothers, 1920-1945: Legend Becomes Reality*. <https://affiliate.wcu.edu> (last accessed 27-02-23).
- Arnold, Gordon B. (2008). *Conspiracy Theory in Film, Television and Politics*. London: Praeger.
- Attwood, Adam I. (2021). "A Perspective on the Educational Psychological Value of *Jurassic Park* and Similar Films for Bioethics Discussions." *Frontiers in Education* 6, September. <https://www.frontiersin.org> (last accessed 02-03-23).
- Baker-Whitelaw, Gavia (2023). "TikTok conspiracy theory claims that live dinosaurs were discovered in 'uncharted lands' in China." *Daily Dot*, February 22. <https://www.dailydot.com> (last accessed 26-02-23).
- Baxter, John (1997). *Steven Spielberg: The Unauthorised Biography*. London: Harper Collins.
- Beck, Peter (2012). *Presenting History: Past and Present*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Black, Riley (2011). "Dinosaurs and Soldiers Skirmish in Dino D-Day." *Smithsonian Magazine* August 12. <https://www.smithsonianmag.com> (last accessed 2-3-23).
- Black, Riley (2012). "The Idiocy, Fabrications and Lies of Ancient Aliens." *Smithsonian Magazine* May 11. <https://www.smithsonianmag.com> (last accessed 4-3-23).
- Boissoneault, Lorraine (2017). "When the Nazis Tried to Bring Animals Back from Extinction." *Smithsonian Magazine*, March 31. <https://www.smithsonianmag.com> (last accessed 5-3-23).
- Brotherton, Rob (2016). *Suspicious Minds: Why We believe Conspiracy Theories*. London: Bloomsbury Sigma.
- Cardiff University (2014). *Hitler's Jurassic Monsters*, press release, June 17.
- Clark, Ryan (2018). "'The Nazis' Attempt at *Jurassic Park*: Was it Possible?" *Ripley's Believe It or Not!* broadcast June 1. <https://www.ripleys.com> (last accessed 4-2-23).
- Critic Reviews (2011). "Dino D-Day for PC Reviews." <https://www.metacritic.com> (last accessed 5-3-23).
- Crossland, David (2020). "Nazis used animals as trappings of tyranny." *The Times* June 1: 29.
- Dash, Mike (1996). "Dinosaurs Caught on Film?" *Fortean Times* 86: 32–35.
- Dean, Jonathan (2023). "I realised the power of cinema young." *Sunday Times* January 29: 4–7.
- Der, Bob (2022). "A Different Kind of Writer", *The Story of Jurassic Park*, part 1, in *Time* magazine special edition.
- Dibble, Flint (2022). "With Netflix's Ancient Apocalypse, Graham Hancock has declared war on archaeologists." *The Conversation* November 18.
- Donovan, Barna William (2011). *Conspiracy Films: A Tour of Dark Places in the American Conscious*. London: McFarland.
- Driessen, Clemens and Lorimer, Jamie (2016). "Back-breeding the aurochs: The Heck brothers, National Socialism and imagined geographies for nonhuman *Lebensraum*." In *Hitler's Geographies: The Spatialities of the Third Reich*, edited by Paolo Giaccaria and Claudio Minca, 138–157. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

- Evans, Richard (2020). *The Hitler Conspiracies: The Third Reich and the Paranoid Imagination*. London: Allen Lane.
- Fitzner, Zach (2017), "Nazis and Dinosaurs: A brief history of bad science." <https://www.earth.com/news/dinosaur-fossil-racist-nazi-science/> (last accessed 5-3-23).
- Frayling, Christopher (2005). *Mad, Bad and Dangerous? The Scientist and the Cinema*. London: Reaktion Books.
- Friedman, Lester D. (2022 [2006]), *Citizen Spielberg*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.
- Gibbons, Bill (1999). "Dinosaurs in the Congo." *Fortean Times* 125: 66.
- Giaccaria, Paolo and Claudio Minca (eds.) (2016). *Hitler's Geographies: The Spatialities of the Third Reich*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Goodrick-Clarke, Nicholas (2002). *Black Sun: Aryan Cults, Esoteric Nazism and the Politics of Identity*. New York: New York University Press.
- Goorwich, Siam (2014), "'Hitler's Jurassic Monsters sheds new light on the Nazis' terrifying vision for the future." *Metro* June 18.
- Hatcher Childress, David (2023). "The Bigfoot Files." *Nexus* 30 (2): 49–57.
- Hawkes, Nigel (1993). "Age of the dinosaur is back in a big way." *The Times* January 15: 12.
- Hawkes, Nigel (1993). "Reviving Rex." *The Times* June 12: 32.
- Hawkins, Mike (2019), *Social Darwinism in European and American Thought, 1860-1945: Nature as Model and Nature as Threat*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Heck, Lutz (1954). *Animals: My Adventure*. London: Methuen.
- Hibbert, Tom (1993). "The Movies That Time Forgot." *Empire* 50: 82–83.
- History Today* (2020). "Why is the Public so obsessed with the Nazis?" *History Today* 70 (3). <https://www.historytoday.com> (last accessed 6-3-23).
- Hul Attack, Daniel (2018). *Dinosaurs vs Nazis*, vol. 1: *What Really Killed the Dinosaurs*. Independently published.
- Hunter, Jack (2010). *Sex, Death, Swastikas: Nazi Exploitation Cinema*. London: Creation Books.
- Icke, David (1999). *The Biggest Secret*. Scottsdale: Bridge of Love Publications.
- Kirby, David A. (2023). *Lab Coats in Hollywood: Science, Scientists, and Cinema*. London: MIT Press.
- Knight, Peter (2001). *Conspiracy Culture: From Kennedy to the X-Files*. London: Routledge.
- Kurlander, Eric (2018). *Hitler's Monsters: A Supernatural History of the Third Reich*. London: Yale University Press.
- Lee, Jason (2018). *Nazism and Neo-Nazism in Film and Media*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2018.
- Lewis, Andy (2013). "Titan Comics announces Dinosaurs and Nazis time travelling series." *The Hollywood Reporter* February 15.
- Lewis, Tyson and Richard Kahn (2005). "The Reptoid Hypothesis: Utopian and Dystopian Motifs in David Icke's Alien Conspiracy Theory." *Utopian Studies* 16 (1): 45–74.
- Loshitsky, Yosefa (ed.) (1997). *Spielberg's Holocaust: Critical Perspectives on Schindler's List*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Luxford, Victoria (2018). "Mammoth Impact: 9 Ways Jurassic Park Changed Cinema." <https://www.amexessentials.com> (last accessed 7-3-23).

- Macintyre, Ben (1993). "Mad scientists on the loose." *The Times* June 25: 14.
- Magilow, Daniel H. *et al.* (eds.) (2012). *Nazisploitation: The Nazi Image in Low-Brow Cinema and Culture*. London: Continuum.
- May, Caroline (1997). "Rex Effects." *Xpose* 12: 14–22.
- McCoy, Max (1996). *Indiana Jones and the Dinosaur Eggs*. New York: Bantam Books.
- McKie, Robin (2022). "Lost city of Atlantis rises again to fuel a dangerous myth." *The Observer* November 27: 54.
- Melia, Matthew (ed.) (2023). *The Jurassic Park Book: New Perspectives on the Classic 1990s Blockbuster*. London: Bloomsbury.
- Michaud, Nicholas and Watkins, Jessica (eds.) (2014). *Jurassic Park and Philosophy: The Truth is Terrifying*. Chicago: Open Court Publishing.
- Mooney, Chris (2005). "Some Like It Hot." *Mother Jones* May-June. <https://www.motherjones.com/environment/2005/05/some-it-hot/> (last accessed 8-3-23).
- Murray, Noel (2019). "Review: Dinosaur-riding Nazis in *Iron Sky: The Coming Race* and more." *Los Angeles Times* July 18. <https://www.latimes.com> (last accessed 7-3-23).
- Nichols, Bradley *et al.* (eds.) (2022). "A Reusable Past: The meaning of the Third Reich in Recent U.S. Discourse." *Central European History* 55: 551–75.
- Northrop, Ryan (2023). "Tom Cruise's WWII Thriller Assed by Historian as 'Hollywoodization' of History." <https://screenrant.com> (last accessed 25-8-23).
- O'Connor, M.R. (2017). "The Fascist History of De-Extinction." <https://www.undark.org/author/m-r-oconnor/> (last accessed 6-3-23).
- Parfrey, Adam (2011). "Pederastic Park?" <https://forum.davidicke.com> (last accessed 3-1-23).
- Peters, Hammerson (2021). "Prehistoric Monsters of the Nahanni Valley". <https://www.youtube.com> (last accessed 5-1-23).
- Peters, Hammerson (2021). "The Monster of Partridge Creek: A Dinosaur in the Arctic?" <https://www.youtube.com> (last accessed 5-1-23).
- Preston, F.A. (1997). "Dinosaur Survivors!" *Enigma* 5: 23-26.
- Rodrigues, Olivia (2019). "How Jurassic Park Has Changed the Way We Exhibit Dinosaurs." *Frieze* April 18. <https://www.frieze.com> (last accessed 4-3-23).
- Roland, Paul (2021). *The Nazis and the Occult: The Third Reich's Search for Supernatural Powers*. London: Sirius Entertainment.
- Ronson, Jon (2009). "Jon Ronson and the Quest for the Aryan Cow." *BBC Radio 4* February 10.
- Rosenfeld, Gavriel D. (2014). *Hi Hitler! How the Nazi Past is being Normalized in Contemporary Culture*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Rosenfeld, Gavriel D. (2019). *The Fourth Reich: The Spectre of Nazism from World War II to the Present*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Russo, Dario (2012). *Danger 5 Super Spies* TV series, Series 1 Episode 5: *Lizard Soldiers of the Third Reich*. Australia: Cyan Films.
- Sears, Rufus (1993). "It's Big!" *Empire* 50 August: 72–84.
- Shapiro, Marc (1993). "Jurassic Park." *Fangoria* 123 June: 6.
- Skal, David J. (1999). *Screams of Reason – Mad Science and Modern Culture*. London: W.W. Norton and Co.

- Solomon, Marlon (2019). "Forget The Lizards: David Icke Is Dangerous And We Should Take Him Seriously". <https://www.marlonsolomon.wordpress.com/2017/01/04/forget-the-lizards-david-icke-is-a-fascist/> (last accessed 3-1-23).
- Taylor, Philip (1999 [1992]). *Steven Spielberg: The Man, His Movies and Their Meaning*. London: B.T. Batsford.
- Thiering, Barry and Castle, Edgar (eds.) (1973). *Some Trust in Chariots: Sixteen Views on Erich Von Daniken's Chariots of the Gods?* Kent: Bailey and Swinfen.
- Trotman, Claudia (2023). "Wild conspiracy theory claims China has new land full of dinosaurs." *Daily Star* February 18.
- Tucker, S.D. (2022). *The Saucer and the Swastika: The Dark Myth of Nazi UFOs*. Stroud: Amberley Publishing.
- Tudor, Andrew (1989). *Monsters and Mad Scientists: A Cultural History of the Horror Movie*. London: John Wiley and Sons.
- Warren, Russell (1997). "The American Monster Scares." *Enigma* 3: 28-31.
- Weikart, Richard (2013). "The Role of Darwinism in Nazi Racial Thought". <https://www.csustan.edu> (last accessed 6-2-23).
- Weikart, Richard (2016). *Hitler's Religion: The Twisted Beliefs that Drove the Third Reich*. Washington: Regnery History.
- Wollen, Peter (1993). "Theme Park and Variations." *Sight and Sound* 3 7: 6-9.
- Woodbridge, Steven (2018). "History as Hoax: Why the TV series *Hunting Hitler* is fiction not fact". <http://www.historyatkingston.wordpress.com> (last accessed 2-3-23).
- Woodbridge, Steven (2020). "Historians reflect on the UK public's obsession with the Nazis". <http://www.historyatkingston.wordpress.com> (last accessed 6-3-23).

Steven Woodbridge – Kingston University (United Kingdom)

✉ s.woodbridge@kingston.ac.uk

Dr Steven Woodbridge is a senior fellow in Humanities at Kingston University, UK. His research has focused on the culture of fascism, rightwing extremism, and conspiracy theory, together with the history of film.