



House of Lost Worlds: Dinosaurs, Dynasties, and the Story of Life on Earth

Richard Conniff

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A gripping tale of 150 years of scientific adventure, research, and discovery at the Yale Peabody Museum

This fascinating book tells the story of how one museum changed ideas about dinosaurs, dynasties, and even the story of life on earth. The Yale Peabody Museum of Natural History, now celebrating its 150th anniversary, has remade the way we see the world. Delving into the museum's storied and colorful past, award-winning author Richard Conniff introduces a cast of bold explorers, roughneck bone hunters, and visionary scientists. Some became famous for wresting *Brontosaurus*, *Triceratops*, and other dinosaurs from the earth, others pioneered the introduction of science education in North America, and still others rediscovered the long-buried glory of Machu Picchu.

In this lively tale of events, achievements, and scandals from throughout the museum's history. Readers will encounter renowned paleontologist O. C. Marsh who engaged in ferocious combat with his "Bone Wars" rival Edward Drinker Cope, as well as dozens of other intriguing characters. Nearly 100 color images portray important figures in the Peabody's history and special objects from the museum's 13-million-item collections. For anyone with an interest in exploring, understanding, and protecting the natural world, this book will deliver abundant delights.

House of Lost Worlds: Dinosaurs, Dynasties, and the Story of Life on Earth Details

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From Reader Review House of Lost Worlds: Dinosaurs, Dynasties, and the Story of Life on Earth for online ebook

Carlos says

If you have ever gone to the Peabody Museum and want to learn more about the impact the museum had in America and in academia this is the book for you . I have gone to the museum before (I live in CT) and let me tell you , it's worth it .

Meghan says

I received this book free from Goodreads Giveaways.

When I first looked the book over I wasn't too sure if it would be my cup of tea, but it was a wonderful exploration of the creation of the Peabody Museum at Yale. Who knew that paleontologists could be so ruthless? If you like learning about science and the creation of an institution than I definitely recommend this book. Wasn't boring at all!

Sherrie Pilkington says

I won this book in a Goodreads Giveaway

This is one of those books that's going to make me buy 5 more books because I want to learn more about certain topics. It's a fun mixture of science and history that I don't know much about. I like that it wasn't longer, because it kept it from dragging on...but I really do want to learn more about the Bone Wars and Macchu Pichu. All in all, I recommend this book to anyone who is affiliated with Yale (I'm not, but if I was I would find a lot to be proud of and a lot to chagrin in this book) and anyone who wants to know more about the history of dinosaur discovery.

Janta says

The usual pre-review comment: text in my copy of this ebook comprised 84% of the total file. The remainder was notes and etc.

This is definitely an example of an ebook done right. The narrative itself was interesting, and had as its focus the history of the Peabody Museum at Yale. To paraphrase Douglas Adams, "to tell the story of the museum it is best to tell the story of some of the minds behind it" -- and so we get histories of the men who created the museum and amassed the collections there. Interesting stuff. And the book is well illustrated with color photos of some of the important artifacts in the collection and some of the people who gathered them. The photos are really nicely handled for an ebook; they're in context (i.e., they're not all stuffed into a separate section) and they don't interrupt the flow of the text.

Pat says

I won this book in a Goodreads giveaway. I've enjoyed some of Richard Conniff's magazine articles, so was interested to see what he would do with the history of the Peabody Museum. I knew little about the Peabody and not much more about the scientists affiliated with it. Mr. Conniff has provided a lot of background information in a reasonably-sized book. The Peabody history is loaded with fascinating stories, and Mr. Conniff tells them well. He also covers enough of the science involved that the importance of the discoveries is clear. Not only do I now wish to visit the Peabody someday, but I wish to learn more about such topics as the Bone Wars and the rediscovery of Machu Picchu. Richard Conniff has aroused my sense of wonder.

Rj says

Conniff's book looks at the history of the Yale Peabody Museum of Natural History and how it became one of the leading palentology collections in North America.

Danielle T says

Like *The Rarest of the Rare: Stories Behind the Treasures at the Harvard Museum of Natural History and Stuffed Animals and Pickled Heads: The Culture and Evolution of Natural History Museums*, this examines the natural history of a natural history museum. Unlike *RotR*, House goes beyond collections and recalls the history of the Peabody Museum itself, from how it initially began as collections in search of home, eventually given by George Peabody, uncle to O.C. Marsh of the Bone Wars. Marsh takes up over half the chapters of this book, as he should given his large personality.

I enjoyed how Conniff takes the story of the museum all the way into modern day, with the age of DNA and discoveries still being made from collection store rooms (deciphering fossilized ink, for example, came from one of Marsh's long forgotten invertebrate fossils). There are plenty of sidebars throughout chapters of other interesting stories of Peabody Museum curators and researchers who could easily have had their own chapters.

Brian says

I won this book in a Goodreads giveaway. I thought it might be interesting and I wasn't disappointed. In fact, it wasn't just interesting, it was enjoyable to read.

I'm not much of a science geek but this book was full of interesting stories and antidotes not just relating to the Peabody Museum but to the history of Science in the US and the world.

I'd recommend it!

Amanda Evans says

I am the perfect target audience for this book - former museum employee, former Yale University employee, New Haven resident, and Peabody Museum member who takes her daughter there at least twice a month - but the happy surprise is that this book is well-written and engaging enough to enthrall anybody interested in natural history, museums, dinosaurs, or, especially, the Bone Wars between O.C. Marsh and Edward Drinker Cope. Coniff has a lively way with words that literally made me laugh aloud on several occasions and truly brings lofty historical figures to life. My favorite line:

"But his (Marsh) vindictiveness was as unstoppable as Cope's perennial sense of injury, and his reply, when it came, was a bid to reach past the jugular and rip out Cope's soul."

How delicious! I look forward to reading more of Coniff's other work.
