

When did society start loving dinosaurs?

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It's weird we don't hide dinosaurs from kids. That at 13 or 14, parents don't awkwardly sit down their children and have The Talk: "You know what I said about there being no such thing as monsters...Well..." That we encourage children to play with the scariest creatures that have ever existed. I had multiple plastic replicas of things that could eat me. I played with models of reptile monsters that I was told meant "terrible lizard," and this seemed strange to no one, adorable even.

Of course, I was part of the toy-dinosaur craze in the second half of the 20th century, which was partially due to the Dinosaur Renaissance in the 1960s and 1970s, when dinosaurs got a phylogenetic and public-relations makeover, changing in popular imagination from lumbering beasts that were a shorthand for extinction ("the way of the dinosaurs") to agile, warm-blooded, evolutionarily important ancestors to modern birds.

If you want to know what a society is unquestioningly okay with, look at what it considers cute. Dinosaurs are cute. Monsters rendered transcendently acceptable. Something about the 20th century got kids playing with monsters. My mother was a staunch progressive for the time, in that she had nagging qualms over me make-believe murdering people with toy guns and swords. But for my 5th birthday, there was a giant crocodile-looking thing taped to the outside of one of my presents. For monsters, it was a free-for-all.

Read full, original post: [On Taphonomy: Digging for Dinosaurs in My Twenties](#)