**THE RISE AND FALL OF DINOSAURS** MEETING: WEDNESDAY, JUNE 24, 2020

**By Steve Brusatte** 1:30 PM or 7:00 PM

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

**Prologue – Ch. 2**

1. **Are you interested in dinosaurs? If so, when did you first become interested?**
2. **Why do you think dinosaurs speak to our imagination so much?**
3. **Do you think the author has a good mix of history of paleontology, dinosaur info and personal experiences?**

**Ch. 3 – Ch. 5**

1. **“Millions of people look at this cliff every week. Hundreds of thousands of people live on it. Few realize that it is a remnant of those ancient volcanic eruptions that tore apart Pangea and ushered in the Age of Dinosaurs.”**

**Why do you think we sometimes overlook the history close to home?**

1. **Did it surprise you that two paleontologists got into a Bone War with each other? Do you think it benefited paleontology or did the sloppy collection work negate some of the benefits?**
2. **“Siber is a commercial paleontologist: he digs up dinosaurs and sells them. It's a thorny issue for many academic paleontologists like me, who see fossils as irreplaceable natural heritage that should be protected in museums, where they can be studied by researchers and enjoyed by the public, not sold off to the highest bidder. But there is a whole spectrum of commercial paleontologists, ranging from gun-toting criminals who illegally export fossils to diligent, conscientious, well-trained collectors whose knowledge and experience rival that of academics. Siber is in this latter category. In fact, he's the archetype of this kind of collector. He is well respected by researchers and even founded his own dinosaur museum east of Zurich, called the Saurier Museum, which has some of the most remarkable dinosaur exhibits in Europe.”**

**What is your opinion on commercial paleontologists?**

**Ch. 6 – Ch. 7**

1. **“Rex's seemingly sad arms actually turned out to have powerful shoulder extensors and elbow flexors - exactly those muscles needed to hold on to something that is trying to pull away, to keep it close to the chest. It seems that T. rex used its short but strong arms to hold down struggling prey while the jaws did their bone-crunching thing. The arms were accessories to murder.”**

**Did you think Brusatte did a good job of writing a "biography" of the T. rex?**

1. **Brusatte brings up how Spielberg got some things wrong in Jurassic Park. Do you think portrayals of dinosaurs (or other scientific topics) in popular media are detrimental if they aren't completely accurate or do you think the benefits (increased interest, etc.) outweigh the need to be 100% accurate?**
2. **Why do you think hunting for dinosaur remains appears to attract quite the characters (for example Nopcsa)?**

**Ch. 8 – Epilogue**

1. **What did you think of Brusatte's writing style? Did you like the way the book mixes personalities, history of paleontology and science? Or would you like to have seen a bit more of one or the other?**
2. **What amazed you most out of all the things you learned from this book?**
3. **Did the book clear up any misconceptions you had about dinosaurs before?**
4. **Did the book make you look at the world around you differently? If yes, in what way? If not, why not?**
5. **Have you ever been as passionate about something as Brusatte was about dinosaurs as a kid? Did you end up doing something with that passion?**

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