

# WHY DRAGONS?

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Periodically, over the last couple decades, elaborate stories about Dragons have gone from imagination, fiction and the realm of fantasy to animation, cartoons, and movies. Dragonheart, How to Train your Dragon I and II, the blue Avatars that plug into the planet, Pacific Rim, Lord of the Rings... some good, some bad, some scary...

No doubt, the fossil record shows great giant lizards roamed the earth millions of years ago, and that many of them could fly. The pterodactyl of the late Jurassic period, for example, lived about 150 million years ago. It is thought to have been a carnivorous airborne predator with wings formed by a skin and muscle membrane stretching from its elongated fourth finger to its hind limbs.



Dragon-like creatures have indeed existed upon this very earth. Did they breathe fire? This too is possible. Perhaps a chemical reaction of strong gasses and acids from the stomach might be regurgitated to cause a combustion like reaction in the mouth when it came in contact with the air... it is not that much of a stretch for the scientific imagination.

The Eragon Quadrilogy by Christopher Paolini gave us a magically new dimension to the folk-lore of dragons: Intelligence ! Sentient beings not only capable of sagacious thought, but Paolini's dragons could *convey* their thoughts to their "Riders." Moreover, the brightscaled dignitaries in his narrations are able to perform reality-defying feats of magic in the land of Alegacia. Dragons were a species so powerful they went to war for hundreds of years with the elves. And when it seemed that the dragons would wipe-out the powerful elves just as it was thought the elves would slay every glittering razor toothed dragon they formed a pact. The allegiance between species became an alliance upon which he weaves a magnificent tale of humans, heroism, hearts, and wisdom.

It is important to imagine what was once nature and what may come to be. We are not too far from Jurassic Park's reconstruction of DNA that was once extinct. Much farther is the leap that there might exist another thinking, communicating, contemplating genus and order of organisms. It is the stuff of this lore that lures the beast out of the humbled human. Thus, a magical transformation takes place within the symbolism of a dragon. It gives adolescence everywhere the courage, fortitude, curiosity, and sagacity to become a dragoman- to become *Fiercely Intelligent*.

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