

At Los Alamos, making science fiction a reality

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In Michael Crichton's 1990 science fiction novel Jurassic Park, scientists working for billionaire entrepreneur John Hammond successfully cloned dinosaur DNA strands with the help of frog DNA. And just like that, these scientists created living dinosaurs.

Although Hammond got many things wrong in the novel, he did get one thing right: Hammond thought like a scientist and acted like an entrepreneur. He homed in on science capable of creating dinosaurs, and he used this science to populate an amusement park like no other. At Los Alamos National Laboratory, scientists often mimic Hammond's mindset when developing radical new ways to use science to help humanity.

Around the world, a discipline known as synthetic biology continues to take baby steps in making the science fiction of tomorrow a reality today. For instance, scientists have assembled DNA components in living cells to produce new types of molecules with characteristics researchers can exploit to solve useful problems.

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