

Michael Crichton Wrote About the Scarier Side of Science and Technology

Also: A question from France about Marlon Brando. And music by Lucinda Williams. *Transcript of radio broadcast: 13 November 2008*

HOST:

Welcome to AMERICAN MOSAIC in VOA Special English.

(MUSIC)

We remember the popular writer Michael Crichton, who died last week.

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Michael Crichton

HOST:

Michael Crichton wrote exciting and intense books that explored the moral and political sides of science and technology. His best-selling books included "The Andromeda Strain", "Congo" "Jurassic Park" and "Rising Sun." Many of his books were made into popular movies. Mister Crichton died last week of cancer at the age of sixty-six. Bob Doughty tells us more about his life and successful career.



Michael Crichton

BOB DOUGHTY:

Michael Crichton was born in nineteen forty-two in Chicago, Illinois and grew up in the Long Island area of New York. He studied English at Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts, but later changed his degree to anthropology. In nineteen sixty-six, he began medical school at Harvard.

To help pay for his studies, Crichton began writing novels. In nineteen sixty-nine he wrote "The Andromeda Strain." It is about a group of scientists who try to stop the spread of a deadly organism from space. The book became a huge best-seller and was made into a movie. Mister Crichton soon gave up his medical career to spend more time writing.

He published "The Terminal Man" in nineteen seventy-two. It tells about a man who has a computer device put into his brain to improve a mental disorder. But the man becomes a killing machine when the technology fails. In Mister Crichton's book "Congo", violent gorillas attack a group of explorers trying to find a special kind of diamond that could change modern technology.

Michael Crichton's most famous book was "Jurassic Park," published in nineteen ninety. It is about scientists who create genetic copies of dinosaurs. But the dinosaurs soon take control of their creators. The film version three years later was also a huge success.

Michael Crichton's books have sold more than one hundred fifty million copies. But he had his critics as well. Some critics thought his books had weak characters and were written to be movies, not literature. Critics attacked Mister Crichton as racist for his description of Japanese businessmen in the book "Rising Sun." Others denounced Crichton's book "State of Fear" about evil environmentalists who create fear about the existence and cause of climate change.

Michael Crichton was also involved in movies and television. He directed many of the movies based on his books. He even helped create the popular television show "E.R." about an emergency room in a busy hospital. Mister Crichton combined his knowledge of science, technology, and medicine to bring exciting entertainment to millions of people around the world.