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Consumed by their Creation: Mad Scientists of the New Millennium

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Abstract: Steven Spielberg's 1993 film *Jurassic Park* kicked off a cycle of films that struck a cautionary note about the possibilities of science: "Don't play God!" This paper examines the "creatures features" of the millennial period, focusing upon the suspicion of science and scientists that was generally on display. This paper will bring into the discussion a wide range of such films in focusing upon the portrayal of scientists, the manner in which gender provides an intersection between the science fiction and horror genres, and finally how this intersection is indicative of the creature feature's ambivalence toward scientific advancement. The examination of mad scientists will constitute the bulk of the paper, split into discussions of the "bad" scientist and the "good" scientist. The former category includes the Ahab character, the profiteer, and the romantic, while the latter category includes the outsider, the scientist-father, and the married science couple. In the depiction of these characters and others, the message is clear: don't distinguish yourself too greatly, advancing too far down the path of scientific achievement, as bio-engineered sabertooth tigers and boa constrictors roam the landscape, punishing humanity for attempting to play god.