Tropical Tropes in Film

Assignment Overview

Your assignment is to watch **three** films set in tropical rain forests and review how the rain forest setting is presented and advances the films' narrative. Your review should *not* be a summary of the film and it's plot (i.e., a *descriptive review*) or an overall judgment of whether the film is "good" or "bad" (i.e., an *evaluative review*). **For each film need to do the following:**

1. Document the tropes about rain forests used in each film (using the *Trope Checklist*)

    * Trope Checklist as an MS Excel File or as a pdf file
    * List and definitions of Tropical Movie Tropes pdf file.

1. Explain how each film's use of these tropes *reinforces* or *subverts* one or more of the historical stereotypes about rain forests and the people that live in them that we discussed in class. Support your claims with specific examples drawn from these major elements:

    * **Plot**: the narrative, setting, key events, action sequences, resolution, plausibility, themes, cultural context, etc.
    * **Characters**: professions, personality, motivation, interactions, response to rain forest setting, etc.
    * **Visuals**: scenery, flora & fauna, props, wardrobe, shots, perspective, lighting, editing, effects, etc.
    * **Sound**: use and timing of background sounds (or silence), score, animal sounds, songs, etc.

Films to Review

1. ***The African Queen*** (1951): In WWI East Africa, a gin-swilling Canadian riverboat captain is persuaded by a strait-laced English missionary to undertake a trip up a treacherous river and use his boat to attack a German gunship. *(Starring Humphrey Bogart & Katharine Hepburn; Directed by John Huston)*.

2. ***Anaconda*** (1997): When a documentary crew traveling through the Amazon jungle picks up a stranded man, they have no idea it will lead them face-to-face with the world's largest - and deadliest - snake. *(Starring Jon Voight, Jennifer Lopez, Eric Stoltz, Ice Cube, and Owen Wilson; Directed by Luis Llosa)*.

3. **One movie of your choice from this [list].**

Please submit the name of 'Your Choice' via Canvas by 13 September. If it will help you decide you can watch the trailers by searching for the movie on IMDB or YouTube.

How/Where to Watch: Most of the films are available via the UF Library access to Kanopy, other free streaming platforms, or as DVDs that can be checked out from the UF Library's Course Reserves. A few of them are only available on subscription-based streaming platforms such as Netflix or Amazon, but *there are plenty of movies that do not require subscriptions or paying for a rental.* ***Do not spend any personal funds on this assignment.***

Many of the movies can be streamed for free at one of the following online channels:

- Tubi
- Kanopy
- Plex
- YouTube
- Crackle
- Pluto TV
- YuppTV
- IMDB
- Film Detective
- Digitalia

Important Content Warning: The some of the assigned films contain strong language, nudity, sexual situations, and violence, including sexual assault. There may be dialogue about or depictions of race, class, gender, sexuality, or other topics that are uncomfortable, disturbing, or offensive. Analyzing these depictions and their broader cultural implications is an important part of this assignment, so I encourage you to prepare yourself for this possibility. However, if you are concerned that you will find the content of the films you have been assigned to be difficult or even traumatic, please let me know so we can arrange an alternative film for you to review. You do *not* have to tell me why you want to switch, only that you would prefer to be assigned another film.

Language: Some of the films may be partially or entirely in languages other that English and require subtitles.

Extra Credit: Remember what I said about value judgments? Well…let's just put that aside for a moment to say there are some movies that are so ridiculously bad that I will award 10 points of extra credit simply for selecting one of them for your 3rd review.

Submission Requirements and Rubric

For each film you must submit the following:

1. A completed 'Tropical Trope Checklist', and

2. Your analysis of how the use of these tropes reinforces or subverts our perception of rain forests and the people living in them (min. 500 words).

Assignment Submission: Files uploaded via Canvas. Your three essays must be submitted as one MS Word document or PDF file (file extensions .doc, .docx, or .pdf). Your trope checklist must be uploaded as a Microsoft Excel file (file extension .xls or .xlsx file).

Assignment value: 100 points

Due Date: All reviews are due October 4th by 5 pm.

Required Content & Grading Rubric: The review & checklists will be evaluated using the point values and minimum standards in the rubric below. *Note that the rubric on Canvas lists additional 'outcomes' to be evaluated. These additional criteria will **not** be used to grade your assign-*

ment. These are some things the Quest Program is asking us to evaluate internally. Your assignment will be graded **solely** *with the rubric in the table below.*

Section	Max. Points	Exceeds Expectations	Meets Expectations	Below Expectations
Essay	70	Essays are of the required length. One or more historical narratives about rain forests are identified; well-reasoned arguments for how the film promotes or subverts these narratives are backed up by specific examples. An engaging conclusion summarizes the evidence and connects it back to the central thesis. The writing is clear, with few grammatical mistakes or spelling errors. Overall, the paper is well written. **(70-63 pts)**	Essays are somewhat shorter than the required length; a historical narrative is identified but the supporting argument is unclear or backed up by weak or limited supporting evidence. The paper is generally well written but there are some grammatical or spelling errors. **(62-49 pts)**	The essays are much shorter than the required length; no historical narrative is identified or if one is, the arguments in support are poorly articulated or the supporting examples are limited or poorly chosen. Multiple grammatical or spelling errors. **(<48 pts)**
Checklist	30	The film's checklist records 10 or more tropes with a time stamp and description of the event for each one. **(9-10 pts)**	The checklist for a film includes 5-9 tropes and is mostly complete; some time stamps or other details missing. **(7-8 pts)**	The checklist for a film is incomplete (<5 examples for each), or few / no time stamps or additional information. **(<6 pts)**