

## Assignment 1 - Movie Reviews

### Overview

Your assignment is to watch 5 films and analyze how tropical rain forests are presented in the film and used to advance the film's narrative. Your essay should not be a summary of the film (i.e., a *descriptive review*), nor a judgment that the film is "good" or "bad" (i.e., an *evaluative review*). Your objective is to present a brief analysis (500-700 words) interpreting:

- how the rain forest setting underscores the film's themes
- how the film reinforces or subverts stereotypes about rain forests and the people that live in them
- how the depiction of rain forests in the film compares with what you have learned about rain forests in class.

You must support your claim with specific examples of (1) Dialogue, (2) Characters or character development, (3) Shots, visuals, editing, (4) Props, sounds, scoring, or songs, and (5) Plot points and action. **Be sure to take notes and fill out the Movie Trope Checklist while screening the film.**

### Film Selection

**Films to review:** These are the films we will be watching and reviewing:

- Aguirre, Wrath of God
- Anaconda
- Fern Gully: The Last Rainforest OR Avatar
- One assigned (at random) by the Instructor
- One chosen by you from the list below.

**Please submit the name of the film you are choosing to review via Canvas by 7 September.** If it will help you decide you can watch the trailers by searching for the movie on [IMDB](#) or [YouTube](#).

**How 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.** Please do **not** spend any personal funds on this assignment. *The platforms where movies stream at no cost are:*

- [Tubi](#)
- [Kanopy](#)
- [Plex](#)
- [YouTube](#)
- [Crackle](#)
- [Pluto TV](#)
- [Film Detective](#)
- [YuppTV](#)
- [IMDB](#)
- [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 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 than 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 5th review.

## Submission Requirements and Rubric

**For each film you must submit the following:**

1. Your critical analysis (250-300 words)
2. A completed 'Movie Trope Checklist'

**Assignment Submission:** These assignments are to be submitted using the Google Forms link provided in Canvas.

**Assignment value:** 250 points (50 points per movie)

**Due Date:** All reviews are due Sept. 30 by 5 pm.

**Required Content & Grading Rubric:** The review & checklist for each of your 5 films will be evaluated using the point values, minimum standards, and rubric below. The individual components will be evaluated as:

1. "Exceeds required standards": Essay is of the required length with thorough and well-reasoned arguments and several specific examples as supporting evidence; engaging conclusion that summarizes the evidence and connects to the thesis and body. Checklist filled out with multiple examples and a time stamp for each event. The examples accurate and the writing is articulate and sophisticated, with few grammatical mistakes or spelling errors. Overall, the paper is well written.
2. "Meets the minimum standards: Essay is of the required length; generally sound argument with some evidence in support of arguments but lacking details or explanation; the checklist is mostly complete but with details such as time stamps missing. There grammatical mistakes or spelling errors. The paper is acceptable.
3. "Incomplete / Unacceptable": Instructor follow-up required to clarify the argument; little or no conclusion. checklist incomplete. Multiple grammatical and spelling errors. Organization is poor.

Section

Value

Exceeds standards

Meets standards

Below standards

Critical Analysis

20

20-18

18-14

14-12

Movie Trope Checklist

30

30-27

27-21

21-18

Total

50

50-45

45-35

35-30

## **Movies**

Movie

Year

Summary

Free

Subscription

Required

African Queen

1951

In WWI Africa, a gin-swilling riverboat captain is persuaded by a strait-laced missionary to use his boat to attack an enemy warship.

Kanopy

Amazon

Aguirre, Wrath of God

1972

In the 16th century, the ruthless and insane Don Lope de Aguirre leads a Spanish expedition in search of El Dorado.

Kanopy, Tubi

Fern Gully: The Last Rainforest

1992

The magical inhabitants of a rainforest fight to save their home, which is threatened by logging and a polluting force of destruction called Hexxus.

DVD

A Perfect Getaway

2009

A romantic Hawaiian vacation turns deadly for two pairs of lovers, when a duo of murderers begins targeting tourists who cannot escape the island.

Tubi

Choose 1 + Assigned 1

Anaconda

1997

A "National Geographic" film crew is taken hostage by an insane hunter, who forces them along on his quest to capture the world's largest - and deadliest - snake.

DVD, Roku

Apocalypse Now

1979

A U.S. Army officer serving in Vietnam is tasked with assassinating a renegade Special Forces Colonel who sees himself as a god.

Kanopy

Apocalypto

2006

A Mayan warrior braves the treacherous jungle to fight off attacking members of an opposing tribe in order to save his family.

Kanopy, Tubi

Avatar

2009

A paraplegic Marine dispatched to the moon Pandora on a unique mission becomes torn between following his orders and protecting the world he feels is his home.

DVD

Disney Plus

Canopy

2013

An Australian fighter pilot becomes stranded in a Singapore jungle overrun by hostile forces as he journeys to survive war and nature.

Kanopy, Tubi

Congo

1995

When an expedition to the African Congo ends in disaster, a new team is assembled to find out what went wrong.

DVD, Crackle, Pluto, Plex

Netflix

Creature from the Black Lagoon

1954

A strange prehistoric beast lurks in the depths of the Amazonian jungle. A group of scientists try to capture the animal and bring it back to civilization for study.

DVD

Death in the Garden

1956

Chark, an adventurer, comes to a small village near a diamond miners' camp. He is arrested by the local police who accuse him of having committed a bank robbery in a neighboring town.

Kanopy

Embrace of the Serpent

2015

The story of the relationship between Karamakate, an Amazonian shaman and last survivor of his people, and two scientists who work together over the course of forty years to search the Amazon for a sacred healing plant.

Kanopy

Emerald Forest

1985

After the son of engineer Bill Markham is abducted by an aboriginal tribe on the edge of the rain forest, the engineer spends the next 10 years searching for him.

DVD

Fire on the Amazon

1993

When a man is assassinated in the rainforest, a journalist and an activist team up to solve the case when they believe they've encountered a cover-up.

Tubi

Fitzcarraldo

1982

The story of Brian Sweeney Fitzgerald, an extremely determined man who intends to build an opera house in the middle of a jungle.

Kanopy, Tubi

Gauguin: Voyage to Tahiti

2017

Historical drama based on the French painter Paul Gauguin's self-exile in Tahiti where he befriended the Maoris and fell in love with an iconic muse.

Kanopy, Tubi

Gold

2016

A prospector out to strike gold gets a rare chance at his goal when he goes on an incredible trip to the Indonesian jungle with a gung-ho geologist.

Tubi

In Like Flynn

2019

The adventures of actor Errol Flynn before he became a star, as he searches for gold with a ragtag crew in the jungles of Papua New Guinea.

Tubi

Journey 2: The Mysterious Island

2012

Sean Anderson partners with his mom's husband on a mission to find his grandfather, who is thought to be missing on a mythical island.

Yupp Tv

Medicine Man

1992

In the beautiful and dangerous Amazon rainforest, dissimilar people must make their choices between business, science, and love.

DVD

Monos

2019

On a faraway mountaintop, eight kids with guns watch over a hostage and a conscripted milk cow.

Kanopy

Hulu

Mosquito Coast

1986

Allie Fox, an American inventor exhausted by the perceived danger and degradation of modern society, decides to escape with his wife and children to Belize. In the jungle, he tries with mad determination to create a utopian community with disastrous results.

DVD

Hulu

Platoon

1986

Chris Taylor, a neophyte recruit in Vietnam, finds himself caught in a battle of wills between two sergeants, one good and the other evil. A shrewd examination of the brutality of war and the duality of man in conflict.

Pluto

Fubo

Predator

1987

A team of commandos on a mission in a Central American jungle find themselves hunted by an extraterrestrial warrior.

DVD

Amazon

Primal

2019

Hunter and collector Frank Walsh expects a big payday after bagging a priceless white jaguar for a zoo. But the ship bearing Frank's precious cargo has another predator – a political assassin facing extradition to America.

Hulu, Hbo

Rio 2

2014

It's a jungle out there for Blu, Jewel and their three kids after they're hurtled from Rio de Janeiro to the wilds of the Amazon. As Blu tries to fit in, he goes beak-to-beak with the vengeful Nigel, and meets his father-in-law.

DVD, IMDB

Romancing the Stone

1984

A mousy romance novelist sets off for Colombia to ransom her kidnapped sister, and soon finds herself in the middle of a dangerous adventure hunting for treasure with a mercenary rogue.

DVD

Six Days Seven Nights

1998

Robin Monroe, a New York magazine editor, and the gruff pilot Quinn Harris must put aside their mutual dislike if they are to survive after crash landing on a deserted South Seas island.

DVD

Cinemax

The Mission

1986

Eighteenth-century Spanish Jesuits try to protect a remote South American tribe in danger of falling under the rule of pro-slavery Portugal.

DVD



The Ruins

2008

A leisurely Mexican holiday takes a turn for the worse when a group of friends and a fellow tourist embark on a remote archaeological dig in the jungle, where something evil lives among the ruins.

DVD

Paramount, Amazon

The Rundown

2003

A tough aspiring chef is hired to bring home a mobster's son from the Amazon but becomes involved in the fight against an oppressive town operator and the search for a legendary treasure.

Peacock

Turistas

2006

A group of young backpackers' vacation turns sour when a bus accident leaves them marooned in a remote Brazilian rural area that holds an ominous secret.

DVD

Welcome to the Jungle

2013

A company retreat on a tropical island goes terribly awry.

DVD

Dora and The Lost City of Gold

2019

Dora, a teenage explorer, leads her friends on an adventure to save her parents and solve the mystery behind a lost city of gold.

Paramount

Green Inferno

2013

A group of student activists travels to the Amazon to save the rain forest and soon discover that they are not alone, and that no good deed goes unpunished.

Netflix

Jungle

2017

A group of friends join a guide for a trek into the Bolivian jungle, searching for an Indian village. The men soon realize that the jungle is a difficult place to be.

Amazon

Jungle 2 Jungle

1997

A man learns he has a thirteen-year-old son who was raised in the jungle and brings the boy to New York City, turning his life upside down in the process.

Disney Plus

Jungle Book

2016

After a threat from the tiger Shere Khan forces him to flee the jungle, a man-cub named Mowgli embarks on a journey of self discovery with the help of panther Bagheera and free-spirited bear Baloo.

Disney Plus

Lost City of Z

2016

A true-life drama, centering on British explorer Major Percival Fawcett, who disappeared whilst searching for a mysterious city in the Amazon in the 1920s.

Amazon

Tarzan (animated)

1999

A man raised by gorillas must decide where he really belongs when he discovers he is a human

Disney Plus

The Beach

2020

On vacation in Thailand, Richard sets out for an island rumored to be a solitary beach paradise.

Starz

Extra Credit

Tropic Thunder

2008

Through a series of freak occurrences, a group of actors shooting a big-budget war movie are forced to become the soldiers they are portraying.

Paramount, Amazon

Africa Screams

1949

Two city booksellers scheme their way into an African expedition by posing as seasoned safari hunters to get a piece of a hidden diamond mine.

Tubi

Blood Monkey

2007

A revered but mad professor leads a band of students into the African jungle to find a tribe of killer chimpanzees he believes to be the missing link.

Tubi, YouTube

Bride of the Gorilla

1951

The wife of a plantation owner is terrorized by a gorilla, who turns out to be her husband.

Tubi

DNA

1996

When a mad scientist experiments with the bones of an extinct jungle creature, the voracious beast comes to life, and only two people can stop it.

Tubi

Dragon Wasps

2012

A scientist joins with the U.S. army in the jungles of Belize to find her father and has to deal with war crossfire and flame-shooting giant wasps.

Tubi

East of Borneo

1931

Woman treks through jungle to find her missing husband.

Film Detective

Indigenous - Chupacabra

2014

A group of Americans traveling in Panama trek through the jungle in spite of being warned that the legendary Chupacabra may be on the hunt.

Tubi

Lord of the Elves

2012

In an ancient age, the peace-loving Hobbits are enslaved by the Java Men, a race of flesh-eating dragon-riders. The young Hobbit Goben must join forces with their neighbor giants, the humans, to free his people and vanquish their enemies.

Tubi

Piranhaconda

2012

Two piranha/anaconda hybrid creatures hunt down the scientist who stole their egg and a film crew; making a slasher film in the jungle.

Tubi