ASSIGNMENT 5

Comparative Analysis – Film Review
Mass Media Representation of Science

Movie Justification Due: Monday, February 26th
Draft Due: Wednesday, March 7th
Final Draft Due: Monday, March 12th

This paper is a comparative analysis (at least 1500 words) that uses research to compare a media representation of the environmental change issues (scientific concept) with books and scientific peer reviewed sources (the type used in your research papers). You are to synthesize the different (or similar) kinds of information provided by these sources into a single coherent analysis. We will discuss the difference between observation and analysis in class.

You will write a 5-6 page (5 full pages as a hard minimum) in which you analyze an environmental change issue represented in one of the movies listed below, or a movie of your own suggestion, and books and peer reviewed scientific literature on the same issue. For example, describing the shut down of the thermohaline circulation in The Day After Tomorrow as compared to current theories and research in scientific journals such as Science or Nature.

You need to discuss how the media representation of the climate change issue is different (or similar) to its representation in scientific literature. How well does the film handle the science? Is the film using scientifically accurate explanations? If not, why not? You will need to be clear about why the environmental change issue is included in the film and why or why not it is represented accurately. Include also a section on how you think the media representation of the environmental issue/s used in the movie is/are viewed by the general public, i.e. does it make viewers more or less likely to believe in them or their likelihoods?

You will be writing this paper in the form of a film review for the newspaper or magazine of your choice. You audience will therefore be the readers of that newspaper or magazine. You will want to make your comparison and explanation of the science (well represented or misrepresented) accessible to the audience of readers you imagine for that magazine or newspaper.

You will need to watch one of the following movies or another of your own suggestion (after my approval) and choose a scientific concept or aspect to discuss:

Day After Tomorrow – massive global climate change
Dante’s Peak – volcanic destruction
Volcano – volcanic destruction
Waterworld – sea level rise
Core – Earth’s magnetic field shuts down (human causes)
Outbreak – disease transmission and
Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles – Water pollution and biological mutation
Tank Girl – Decimation/environmental water availability due to war
**Mad Max** – Decimation/environmental catastrophe due to war
**Civil Action** – effects of water pollution
**Erin Brokovich** – effect of water/environmental pollution

**Student Suggested Film** – If you want to do a comparison using a movie not listed you will have to provide a brief description of the movie and then justify why you want to use it for the paper and how the film would be appropriate for this type of assignment.

---

**Movie/Concept Justification: DUE MONDAY FEBRUARY 26th:**

Decide which movie you will move for your analysis. In a paragraph or two tell me:
1) which movie you’ve chosen (provide additional justification if not on my list above)
2) provide a brief summary of the plot (you can find info on [http://www.imdb.com/](http://www.imdb.com/) )
3) which environmental/scientific concept or issue you would like to address
4) an initial idea of where you plan to find scientific information support or debunk how this issue or concept is represented in the movie

---

Below is a summary of the main assignment requirements and deadlines.

---

**ASSIGNMENT 5 – Comparative Analysis**

**Films:** View one of the movies listed above choosing one scientific concept used or shown in the film to focus on.

**Your Role:** Movie Reviewer providing a Critical Analysis of a film

**Your Assignment:** To write a paper comparing a media representation of an environmental change issue/concept with scientific peer reviewed literature.

**Movie/concept Justification:** Monday, February 26th
**Draft Due:** Wednesday, March 7th
**Final Draft Due:** Monday, March 12th

**Form:** Film Review for the magazine or newspaper of your choice
**Audience:** Readers of the magazine or newspaper of your choice
**Length:** 5-6 pages (1500-1800 words)

**Format Details:** Double-spaced, 12 pt font, Times New Roman, 1 ¼" margins all around, single sided pages

**Format General:** Name, date and class in upper left hand corner, title centered and bolded

**Citations:** MLA format (see handouts and writing guide)