Medicine Man, 1992

A Review of Medical Geography

A pharmaceutical company sends biochemist Dr. Rae Crane into the Amazonian Rainforest to check on Dr. Robert Campbell after he cuts off outside contact, his wife and research partner having left him. Crane is bringing supplies (everything from golf balls to a gas chromatograph), but Campbell is upset that he was not given the research partner he had requested. He tries to send her home but Crane dismisses Campbell's attempts to spurn her, as her job is to evaluate whether the company should continue funding his research.

Campbell reveals to her shock that he has found a cure for cancer, but that subsequent attempts to recreate the formula have failed. With the initial successful serum running dangerously low, Campbell has isolated a mysterious chemical compound connected to a species of flower and with Crane's help is determined to find its source.

Time is of the essence, as a nearby logging company is building a road that is headed straight for the village. Campbell refuses to ask the pharmaceutical company for help, fearing that they would send in more researchers from the outside world, unintentionally wiping out the native population with exposure to foreign diseases. Campbell reveals that a similar event previously had happened when he was conducting field research for a new pain reliever. He feels guilt at causing the death of an entire village, revealing that his wife left because he would not let her forgive him.

Will Campbell and Crane manage to re-discover the cure before the loggers reach the village? Will they manage to convince the loggers to delay or re-route the road – saving the cure and the village?

Optional Assignment: Define and give a specific example from the film for each of the following ten medical geography terms. Do not use the same example twice and use full sentences (worth a maximum of 5 extra credit points).

- Vectored infectious disease
- Non-vectored infectious disease
- Chronic (degenerative) disease
- Genetic (inherited) disease
- Agent (living vector)
- Vehicle (mechanical vector)
- Epidemic
- Infant mortality rate
- Child mortality rate
- Life expectancy