Thomas Mooney

7/17/2015

 In the film Django Unchained, there were many uses of the archetypes form the heroes journey. The examples of the mentor, the first threshold, threshold guardians, and others are prevalent throughout the course of the film.

 One of the first archetypes we see in the film is the archetype of the mentor. He is found in the character of Dr. King Schultz. Dr. Schultz rescues Django in he beginning of the film from two slave owners. At first he does it for his own personal gain. He needs Django to point out a trio of brothers who are wanted. Dr. Schultz ends up giving Django a number of things, clothes, his first bounty hand-bill, and his freedom. He takes Django under his wing and shows him how to be a bounty hunter.

 The hero of the film is Django. Django is a slave who is forcefully bought by Dr. Schultz. After working with Dr. Schultz all winter, Django decides that he is going to track down and rescue his wife. Django is the protagonist of the film from beginning to end and he learns many things. One of the things the he learns is the price of freedom.

 The shadow of the film is Calvin Candie. Candie is a plantation and slave owner who also uses his slaves for “Mandigo Fighting”, which is a fight to the death between two slaves. He is a twisted character and shows that he is a foe not to be taken lightly. Candie is the current owner of Django’s wife. Django and Dr. Schultz must become shape shifters in order to fool Candie and is men. Dr. Schultz poses as a man who wants to buy a slave for mandingo fighting and Django poses as a black slave owner and an expert in mandingos.

 The first threshold guardian that is encountered are the slave owners that Dr. Schultz buys Django from, although they are more of a threshold guardian for Dr. Schultz than they are for Django. The next threshold guardian, and Django’s introduction to the special world, is the people of the first town they arrive in after Django is bought by Dr. Schultz. After that, the next one is the ranch owner whose ranch has hired the men that Dr. Schultz is after.

 The herald of the film is a difficult one to point out. It seems like there isn’t a particular character that plays the role of the herald. Once Django is freed by Dr. Schultz, he already knows what he must do. He knows what his goals are and doesn’t need to be called to action in any way. Django is already prepared to take action, even if he doesn’t have the plan or the skills to do it just yet.

 The roll of the trickster is played by the town main characters, Dr. Schultz and Django. Although it doesn’t seem like it, the two make jokes within their dialogue to each other, but the jokes are subtle and can go unnoticed. At another point in the film, there are a few characters who work for a mining company. They work for the mining company that Django is sold to towards the end of the film. These characters crack jokes amongst each other and once again, Django has to play the role of shapeshifter.

Thomas Mooney

7/27/2015

 After watching Burden of Dreams and Werner Herzog Eats His Shoe, I have noticed quite a number of things. At first I thought that Werner Herzog was a crazy person. After a lot of the hardships that he faced in the Amazon, most people would have given up. I think most people would have given up very early on in the process. Most people would have taken as many risks as Herzog did, and most people would not have gone to such extremes for any film. Also, he ate his shoe.

 In Burden of Dreams, Herzog faced many challenges. He was forced out of his first location due to because of terrible rumors and political pressure, then spent about a year looking for a new location. His lead actor left due to illness and Mick Jagger, his supporting actor, left because he had to go on tour with the Rolling Stones. Herzog had to get new actors and shoot everything over again. He had troubles pulling a boat up a hill.

 Although he had made things more difficult by waiting for the perfect natural lighting and shooting on location so deep in the Amazon jungle, he knew what he wanted. He was trying to get a certain reaction from his actors and he was trying to make his film the way he felt it needed to be made. Herzog felt it had to be made in this specific way, even though it took a lot of time and money to do it, because he felt the movie would have worked and it would not have the impact that he intended it to have.

 In Werner Herzog Eats His Shoe, Herzog cooks and eats his shoe because he tells Errol Morris that if he would make his film, than Herzog would eat his shoe. Morris made his film and Herzog prepared his shoe. For part of the film he talked about how important it is to just make a film if you want to make a film. When asked how Morris was able to get the money to make his film, Herzog didn't have any kind of specific answer. He said that Morris borrowed money, stole money and equipment, as kind of a joke. Essentially what he was trying to say was that if a person wants to make a film than they should just do it by any means necessary even if that person doesn't have the money or the equipment, because that would in turn inspire someone to achieve these goals of money and equipment to put the film together. Herzog seems to think that if there is a film to be made, that it should be made by any means necessary.

 His thoughts relate to guerrilla film making because they are kind of the same idea. Guerrilla film making a method of making a film without legal permission to shoot on particular locations. There are no permits, it’s the of idea of just showing up and shooting what needs to be shot before someone tries to kick you out.

 Herzog’s method of film making differs from most film makers because of the difficulty of his film. There may have been a lot of easier ways to get the shots he needed, and most film makers would have taken that easy route, but Herzog had to make things difficult. The reason why is because of struggle. The characters in the film struggle to accomplish these great goals, and in order to get that out of the actors and to get it on film, the actors and the rest of the crew must also struggle, to accomplish their big goals. Without the struggle, it comes off as fake and uninteresting.