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Author(s)	Har.
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# AMAZONIA: VOICES FROM THE RAIN FOREST (DOCU)

An Amazonia Films release. Produced and directed by Monti Aguirre and Glenn Switkes. Screenplay, Aguirre, Switkes, Michael Rudnick; camera (color), Eduardo Poiano; editor, Michael Rudnick; music, Egberto Gismonti. Reviewed at San Francisco Film Festival, April 27, 1991. No MPAA rating. Running time: 70 MIN.

**“Amazonia: Voices From The Rain Forest”** taps into current ecological concerns for the future of the South American jungle and its natives, winning a lot of attention from preservationists. But it has no answers for ancient problems.

Producer-directors Monti Aguirre and Glenn Switkes are clearly sensitive to the Indians, rubber tappers and farmers whose lives are being disrupted, maybe destroyed, by development of lands largely controlled by the wealthy. It's unclear, however, how much the people speaking really want to turn the clock back to simpler times or want to share in the spoils.

Much of the controversy is the old, old story of the rich getting richer and the poor getting poorer. But much of the discussion is overtoned with sympathetic admiration for how much the Indians cared for the forest before the coming of the white man.

Probably it's too much to tackle, but the filmmakers show only limited interest in the deeper complexities of how much modern benefits do the heirs want and how high a price are they willing to pay.

For example, watching a woman play drums for native dancing and yearning for the old ways makes a strong point. But she's also wearing eyeglasses. Would she give up the glasses and the technology they represent for a chance to keep the campfires while the menfolk hunt?

Historically, Indians resented the coming of rubber tappers, who resented farmers, who resented ranchers, etc. Everybody wants the land and the trees and a better life. It's a shame everybody is not going to get what they want. — *Har.*