Zombies

Zombies is a 2016 zombie film produced by B-movie studio The Asylum, purveyors of low budget horror and sci-fi films such as Sharknado, Ice Sharks, Mega Shark vs. Mecha Shark, and other films that presumably do not feature sharks. In this film, an ill monkey causes a zombie outbreak, infecting the animals living in the Eden Wildlife Zoo just weeks before opening day. The zoo staff and their interns immediately find themselves beset by undead lions, gorillas, and in one of many absurdly violent scenarios, a zombie koala. Interns are ripped in two by zombie giraffes, and a police intervention in the park fails when the SWAT team is devoured by zombie lions. A small group of survivors, led by the zoo administrator and her young daughter, make their way to the zoo’s aviary to prevent the animals from flying away and spreading the infection. They decimate the zoo’s bird population in a massive explosion, despite the best efforts of some zombified parrots and a signing gorilla named Kifo. As the survivors make good their escape in a helicopter, Kifo opens his glassy, zombie eyes, revealing that he was only pretending to be dead, and will no doubt be back.

The monsters of this film, of course, are the zombies, even if they are zombie animals. But they have about as much in common with the Romero zombies of films like Night of the Living Dead (1968) and Dawn of the Dead (1978) as the shuffling corpses
of those films had in common with the Haitian voodoo zombies of Victor Halperin’s White Zombie (1932). Zombie legends historically began in the Caribbean, eventually reaching American shores via William Seabrook’s book The Magic Island in 1929. In Ann Kordas’ essay from Race, Oppression, and the Zombie, this version of the walking dead plays very much as a white power fantasy “to assuage southern guilt and reassure white Americans that African Americans had been (and could be again) willing workers who posed no threat to white power or physical safety” (Kordas, 19). The slavery allegory is very apt: the zombie is a mindless drone, controlled by a zombie master to work inhuman hours on a plantation, as evidenced by Murder Legendre (portrayed by Bela Lugosi in White Zombie).

The current incarnation of the zombie, as a reanimated corpse wandering the countryside looking for brains to snack on, was not in the public consciousness until 1968, when George A. Romero’s Night of the Living Dead established the zombie, gore and all, in the panoply of American movie monsters. Romero’s films resonated with an country embroiled in the Vietnam war. Americans had become accustomed to seeing bloody and graphic images of the conflict on their living room television sets during the evening news. The war had produced what author W. Scott Poole referred to in his book Monsters in America as “a very graphic iconography of death and bodily dissolution that has remained a permanent part of American culture” (Poole, 199). This iconography and culture of violence is key to understanding the continued relevance of zombie properties such as the AMC series The Walking Dead, Max Brooks’ novel World War Z, and the Resident Evil series of video games. Even Zoombies, with its “zombies as theme park
attraction” premise, owes its existence to the Romero films, and their place in American culture.

Fascination with the zombie, be they the ambulatory dead human variety or Zoombies’ four legged undead beasts, has not abated in the slightest in the five decades following Night of the Living Dead, in fact, zombies are more popular than ever. Just as Romero’s zombie films owed their relevance to graphic images of war being broadcast over the nightly news, today’s zombie properties can thank the seemingly never-ending stream of mass shootings that play out in our current media landscape of the 24 hour news cycle. Americans are exposed to more real world violence today than ever before. America’s serious lack of introspection regarding societal violence, coupled with the irrational desire to ensure that all Americans have unfettered access to the most deadly firearms known to man or God, will ensure that the zombie will continue to be the creature of our nightmares in the years and decades to come. Seeing scores of corpses re-animate and roam the land is almost comforting after watching CNN’s relentless coverage of the piles of immobile and bloody bodies in the wake of Sandy Hook and Las Vegas.

A closer look at the cultural subtext and resonance of Zoombies, in addition to being a sentence that I cannot believe I have written, reveals an additional layer of dread and anxiety, beyond its sickly computer generated violence. In recent years, our treatment of animals as an entertainment has been a focal point of organizations such as PETA, the people for the ethical treatment of animals. Sea World San Diego’s long-running killer whale shows ended earlier this year, succumbing to public pressure following the release of the documentary Blackfish, and a new California state law
banning the captive breeding of orcas (Howard, 2017). In May of 2017, Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey circus finally folded its big top for good after nearly a century and a half of operation. The circus, once an institution of American entertainment, had been plagued by low attendance and changing audience attitudes in regards to the treatment and training of wild animals like the African elephant in captivity (Michaud, 2017). No film exists in a vacuum; it is in these times that we live, and Zoombies’ zombified wildlife likely resonated with audiences not only because of the graphic violence and thrills of a more traditional zombie movie, but also due to the general unease that audiences are starting to feel from using nature’s most majestic beasts as clowns for our entertainment. Despite the film’s outlandish premise and ham fisted script, Zoombies fills us with dread by delivering a simple message: wild animals kept in captivity for the entertainment of humans are dangerous. Any attempt to suppress their wild instincts or make house pets of them is doomed to end with a catastrophic result. Because the use of a man-made serum meant to save a monkey actually ends up setting it on the path to zombism and upsetting the natural order of things, Zoombies actually shares its DNA with science run amok narratives like Jurassic Park and Them!

Author Heather Urbanski writes about just such narratives in her book Plagues, Apocalypses and Bug-Eyed Monsters: How Speculative Fiction Shows Us Our Nightmares. In her proposed nightmares model, Science and Technology is one of three classifications used to identify fears used in speculative fiction. Fear of scientific advances, and the fear that we will not recognize the dangers inherent in utilizing these advances, are ideas that many speculative fiction warnings have evolved around for many years (Urbanski, 15). By attempting to save the sick primate with an experimental
and unknown drug, the Eden Zoo’s chief veterinarian made a key blunder that scientists in horror and science fiction movies have been making for decades. But as pointed out by science fiction writer Ray Bradbury, such problems do not lie in the technology, but rather in the person using it (Urbanski, 15).

The zombified animals of Zoombies represent several archetypal theses about monsters written about by Jeffrey Jerome Cohen, in his book Monster Theory. The third thesis, that the monster presents some kind of category crisis, is of particular relevance (Cohen, 6). The zombies do cross categories and defy easy description. They are dead, yet still alive. They are all relatively docile, especially Kifo, imparting kind words to his handlers in sign language. Their tranquility quickly gives way to violent aggression once they are bitten. Zoombies also represent Cohen’s second thesis: The Monster Always Escapes. When the presumed dead gorilla Kifo opens his eyes at the end of the film, it indicates that, as Cohen writes: “the monster itself turns immaterial and vanishes, to reappear someplace else” (Cohen, 4). That someplace else is, in all likelihood, Zoombies 2.

These animals provide the balance of resonance and violation alluded to in Kendall Phillips’ book Projected Fears. The resonance an audience feels when Zoombies’ pro-animal, anti-human stance actually lands, and the violation of seeing the gross beasts themselves (Phillips, 8). The animals are representatives of the natural world, rendered dead and completely unnatural by the vet’s zombie serum. The dichotomy is what makes them monstrous. This shock of seeing a majestic creature appear as a desiccated corpse is what makes Zoombies a horror film, and not a nature documentary.
Overall, Zoombies is an interesting hybrid of the “monster of nature”, Romero zombie, and the created monster. It is a watchable film, even though the computer generated zombie special effects fall somewhere between a Windows 98 screen saver and an undead Snapchat filter. At one point in the film, Eden Zoo’s administrator muses that “endangered animals have the choice to choose their destiny to either evolve, or go extinct”, which demonstrates a profoundly poor understanding of science and evolution, but provides a fitting allegory for the film itself. Zoombies is an evolution of the standard zombie film, at times reflective about the relationship between man and animal, and uglier than a zombified lemur.
Works Cited


Zombie games revolve around the idea of survival zombie apocalypse. These are mainly shooting games, where you upgrade your weapon whether it is shotgun or sniper rifle, and hunger is not your biggest enemy. Zombies are! So feel free to train some zombie shooting online. Read more. Discover the best free Zombie Games online. Play amazing Survival and Shooting games on Desktop, Mobile or Tablet. Free Zombie Games. Our collection of zombie games are the most played by users and the most recommended, do you dare to play an apocalyptic adventure? If you like adventures in which you enter a world full of people who were turned into zombies or undead, the only thing you want. Play our Zombie Games. If you want to survive the zombie apocalypse, odds are that you’ll need some help. Lucky for you, there are other humans alive who find themselves in the same pickle with Zombie Hunters Online. Join up with others to fight off huge crowds of zombies by using guns, explosives, and other fun items! Of course, if you’re the lone soldier type, you can always take to the stunningly-made 3D streets Call of Zombies. A ‘zombie’ is the term associated with a person (often, but not always infected by a virus of some sort), that possesses the brain and shuts down the internal systems of the victim, basically transforming them into one of the walking dead. After this mutation occurs, the victim is no longer a person, but instead a mindless shambling corpse with an insatiable hunger for flesh. In contemporary versions, these are generally reanimated or undead corpses. Stories of zombies are as old as the human race. Play Plants vs Zombies game, a fighting games! Protect the zombie attack and save yourself and your home in this addicting strategy game. It has lots of fun and exciting games. It is one of the largest source of zombie games, including zombie shooting games, zombies war. Enjoy it. Introduction of Plant vs Zombies Game. Play the plants vs zombies game in this free online game at Plants-vs-zombies.com. It provides many best free other zombies games online to his game lover.