

The godfather "an offer you can't refuse!"



1. Introduction Originally, we decided to write this term paper after our presentation on the first part of The Godfather and quite some time has passed ever since then. So writing this brief guideline is the end of a personal odyssey full of discussions with Godfather fans and the search for information using various media sources.

The result is a survey of everything concerning Coppola's fantastic adaptation of Puzo's bestselling novel The Godfather. Some aspects are processed in more detail; some (which we considered less important) are just mentioned. As far as the purpose of this work is concerned, we have to say that this term paper might not be useful to those who have not seen the films. We see our work more as a guide which is trying to highlight the most impressive aspects of Coppola's epic saga. At the beginning of our paper we give several facts on the trilogy itself by listing its awards and revealing background information. Chapter 2 contains the introduction of Francis Ford Coppola, the well-known director of The Godfather.

Tanja continues with her short summary of all three episodes, which, as said above, should not be considered as a substitute for viewing the films; it should merely help you refresh your memories. Chapter Nr. 5 is about an integral element of all three films. Tanja points out what basic developments the main characters went through. Nick goes on with an analysis of the narrative and stylistic aspects which forms the core of our work. There, narrative aspects like family and violence are examined, but the main emphasis is put on cinematography, lighting, and editing techniques.

In our conclusion we tried an approach which can be considered rather not traditional. Instead of agreeing on one common conclusion, each of us wanted to express his or her own thoughts on the films. This way we were not forced to make any compromises. We hope you will enjoy reading it as much as we enjoyed writing it; or as Vito Corleone would say: " We made a paper you can't refuse!"

2. Facts According to the data given on the " Bonus Material DVD" of the collector's edition of The Godfather, Francis Ford Coppola created one of the greatest " novel to film" adaptations ever. Mario Puzo's bestseller The Godfather, served as the pattern for an epic story the world had not seen before.

The Godfather (1972) was rewarded with 11 academy awards nominations, winning for Best Picture, Best Actor and Best Adapted Screenplay and was one of the most widely imitated, quoted and lampooned movies of all time. The Godfather - Part II (1974) is considered to be one of the most remarkable sequels to a blockbuster movie ever produced. Its incredible success in the movie theatres as well as its various awards (9 academy award nominations, winning 6 of them) make it unforgettable and unique compared to films with similar plots. After a break of more than 15 years, in 1990, the third episode of the Corleone family's story found its way into the cinemas. Nominated for 6 academy awards, and rewarded with a Golden Globe for Francis Ford Coppola's Director's work it was more than just a number behind a great title. The majority of the scenes in Godfather trilogy were filmed at the original locations in New York, Nevada and Sicily, instead of using paramount pictures' outdoor-sets.

Most of the money was spent to create a terrific level of detail and a natural look which gave all three Godfather films its unique atmosphere. The Godfather was often compared with the classic gangster films that Warner's studio made with James Cagney and Humphrey Bogart. It was described as a modern variation of the genre, still sociological but much more epic in scope.

13. Francis Ford Coppola The director of all three Godfather episodes, F.

F. Coppola, was born on April 7, 1939 in Detroit, was given the middle name Ford because his musician father was playing flute on the " Ford Sunday Evening Hour". Francis preferred film to music (though he plays tuba), and eventually graduated from UCLA film school and an invaluable apprenticeship to b-movie mogul Roger Corman. Throughout the Sixties he built a steady reputation for his screenplay work (actually winning his first Oscar for Patton in 1970) and founded the independent film studio American Zoetrope, in between directorial duties on films like Finian's Rainbow (1968) and The Rain People (1969). Following the tremendous critical and financial success of The Godfather (1972) and its sequel, The Godfather - Part II in the early Seventies, Coppola embarked on the infamous Apocalypse Now (1979), a five-year film project that almost cost him his marriage (and actor Martin Sheen his life.

) After various minor film productions like Hammett (1982), One from the Heart (1982), and The Outsiders (1983) financial pressure forced him to return to familiar ground in 1990 to direct the third film in The Godfather saga. Although there were controversies on casting his own daughter Sophia for a major role in The Godfather - Part III², the Coppola family ties are as legendary as those of the Corleones. Composer Carmine Coppola is his

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father; Talia Shire is his sister; Nicholas Cage and Rushmore actor Jason Schwartzman are his nephews; up and coming filmmaker Spike Jonze (Being John Malkovich) is his son in law. The death of his son Gio in a tragic boating accident in 1986 had a profound affect on Coppola, and in the decade following the release of " Part III", Coppola has spent more time building a winery that bears his name than on directing.

The writer, producer, director and winemaker also owns and operates two restaurants, as well as few small hotels in Belize. Most recently Coppola also took a venture outside of the filmworld as he recently became a partner in an old-fashioned pasta factory located in Brooklyn, New York. 34. A short summary of the three films4. 1 The GodfatherThe first film actually is about Vito Corleone who is the head of one of the rival families in New York and has to select one of his sons to take over his role as the " Godfather" after his death.

Sonny is the eldest brother and seems capable to replace his father but the situation becomes more complicated when Sonny is murdered. The family is shocked and the new Godfather is said to be Michael, the youngest son. Fredo, who is older than Michael cannot understand his father's decision and is of course very jealous. At first Michael doesn't seem to fit this new role, but he learns a lot from his father and as his father finally dies in the end he is known and honoured as a very mighty man.

The main " bad guy" in the film is Solozzo, the head of a rival family. He wants Don Vito to help him in the beginning to expand his criminal empire but since the Don refuses, war is said to be between the two families.

Solozzo's men kill a strong defender and friend of Vito's (Luca Brasi), and kidnap Vito's adopted son Tom Hagen. Michael, who has always rejected his father's business, realizes that his wounded father will remain in danger until Solozzo dies.

So he takes over the necessary vengeance and kills him. Consequently, he has to flee to Sicily where he marries a young Sicilian. His wife gets killed with a bomb, which was meant for him and he returns to N. Y. after his father set up a peace-contract with the other families. There he marries his college love Kay and as the new Godfather he promises to her that he will legit his father's business.

4. 2 The Godfather - Part II The second film contains two stories - one shows how Vito Corleone immigrates to America after the death of his family in 1901, at the time he is only nine years old. He had to watch his mother being shot and is then smuggled on a ship to America since the same is supposed to happen to him. There he has to spend three months in an internment camp because he might have brought in some disease.

The next scene featuring him is in 1917 in New York City. He then lives with his wife and child and leads an honourable, decent life until he meets Don Fanucci. He is the head of the local Mafia and forces everybody to pay him a certain amount of money for the assurance of security. Vito cannot accept this and finally kills Fanucci. This being his first criminal act he enters the mafia-business and gradually becomes "The Godfather".

The second story plays in the late 1950s and shows the rise of Michael Corleone as the new Don. He is married to Kay and they have two children

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but Kay wants to leave him as he becomes more and more immoral. Michael also has a problem with his brother, Fredo, who turns out to have betrayed the family (which is the most important thing to Michael) and finally has him killed. 4. 3 The Godfather - Part III The third film shows Michael Corleone in his sixties.

He is searching for a successor and wants to free his family from crime. His children are now adults but his son Anthony refuses to take over the business. He speculates about making Vincent, his nephew, his successor, but known as being fairly corrupt Vincent would hardly be able to legitimize the business as Michael intends to. The Don also doubts whether he can trust Vincent or not - the fact that his daughter Mary falls in love with her cousin does not make things easier. But Vincent proves himself as being a worthy successor and finally Michael transfers his power - "Nephew, from this moment forward, call yourself Vincent Corleone." 5.

Character development I chose to describe the three main characters who went through the most significant changes - Michael Corleone, who led a very decent life until he slipped into his father's shoes; Vito Corleone, who actually never intended to set foot in the Mafia business but one day did so nevertheless which of course changed his life completely; and Conny Corleone, who changed remarkably after the death of her first oppressing husband.