been surveyed by journalists and other "experts" and are therefore still open to critical discussion.

One drawback: the book seems rushed. Chapters tend to be short and scrappy as the focus shifts frequently. The approach is digestive as production details are consumed from other writers, such as Peter Cowie (one of the first) and Gene Phillips (one of the latest). Moreover, some films are apparently blown off and not treated in sufficient detail. *The Rainmaker* (1997), for example, a good, well-crafted adaptation, is only given a half page of commentary and shoved like an afterthought into a chapter entitled "Coppola as Producer." Coppola's motive for making that film is crudely and foolishly described, as follows; it seems that Coppola had never read a John Grisham novel "and wanted to see what all the fuss was about" (45). *The Rainmaker* deserves better than this, and so does another lesser-known adaptation, *Gardens of Stone* (1987), awkwardly made under tragic family circumstances, involving the death of Coppola's elder son, Gio (Gian-Carlo), in a boating accident as the film production was getting underway. This adaptation is hardly mentioned in coverage that primarily concerns Coppola's grief and personal loss.

Aside from Francis, Sophia gets the most attention in this entirely readable group portrait. The book devotes chapters to *The Virgin Suicides* (2000), the luminous *Lost in Translation* (2003), and the somewhat controversial *Marie Antoinette* (2006). To my knowledge, this is the first book to treat the career of Sophia Coppola, perhaps the strongest candidate to carry on the father's cinematic legacy. Although the book obviously favors family over films, it still deserves shelf-space in any film archive.

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The Francis Ford Coppola Encyclopaedia. James M. Welsh, Gene D. Phillips, Rodney F. Hill. Lanham, MD, Toronto, Plymouth (UK): Scarecrow Press, 2010. H / bk 328pp. ISBN 978-0-8108-7650-7. Price £44.95.

The career of Francis Ford Coppola (1939-) has thus far spanned over fifty years and has seen the venerable cinéphile work as producer,

screen writer, production company owner and, most famously, filmmaker. Although one can debate the quality of Coppola's work, with the prevailing belief being that he had reached his creative peaked by the mid-1980s, it is undoubtedly true that few men have left a bigger imprint on American mainstream film production.

Like many of his contemporaries (including Martin Scorsese), Coppola came from a film school background and began his filmmaking career making low-budget exploitation pictures, in his case working under legendary Poverty Row film producer Roger Corman. Coppola would then go on to become a key figure in the New Hollywood movement of the 1960s and 70s, which sought to move mainstream American cinema away from spectacle and towards a more story-based "director's cinema." By the 1980s, Hollywood had fully reasserted its control over previously indulged filmmakers. Coppola was therefore forced into a pattern of making conservative genre films such as *The Outsiders* (1983), and more original, personal work like *One from the Heart* (1982). The 1990s, meanwhile, saw Coppola make a series of mostly critically-savaged, wholly commercial films such as *Jack* (1996), and it has only been with the recent invention of inexpensive digital production processes that he has been able to make some of the more experimental, formally unrestrained work of his career, such as *Youth Without Youth* (2007).

The authors of *The Francis Ford Encyclopedia* are very much aware of the emblematic relationship between Coppola's career and American film history. However, to tell the story of Francis Ford Coppola's career is to not only sketch out a broad history of American mainstream film production over the past half-century, but also the role of the director within it. The book performs admirably in this respect, with entries on individual films providing excellent detail on their often embattled and convoluted production processes, and the battles fought by Coppola to maintain a degree of personal control over his work. A key facet of the New Hollywood cinema was the tug of war between director and studio, and the sections on *The Godfather* (1972) (104-110) and *Apocalypse Now* (1979) (6-13) are particularly illuminating in this respect. Coppola has clearly always had a fractious relationship with his paymasters, but after reading this book one cannot help but come to the conclusion that the main reason for Coppola's longevity has been his absolute insistence on working within the parameters of the mainstream. In spite of the (at times,

comically) frustrating experiences which Coppola has had working within the system, he has only ever made three post-Corman films, *The Cotton Club* (1984), and *Tetro* (2009) and *Twixt* (2011), without the cooperation of a major Hollywood studio, and has delved even further into pure commerce by directing a theme park attraction for Disney, Captain EO (1986), and featuring in advertisements for Suntory whiskey. This is not to criticize Coppola himself, but more an observation of how remarkable it is that a man who has such high artistic aspirations for his work should continually return to a system which the book makes clear has been implicated in the throttling of his creativity.

One way in which Coppola has attempted to circumvent the studio system is by taking control of the production process himself. Coppola's American Zoetrope production company (which also briefly operated a production facility) is sadly under-explored in this volume, with its own entry (3-4) extending to barely half a page. There are more details to be found in the individual entries on AZ films, and indeed, the splitting of information on a single topic over multiple entries is a structural flaw inherent to the encyclopedia format. A more thorough single analysis of an entity which has allowed Coppola to oversee films made by Paul Schrader, Wim Wenders and Walter Salles (not to mention his own children, Roman and Sofia) would have greatly added to the book. This oversight is particularly frustrating, given that significant space has been allotted to a number of arbitrary entries on actors with a tenuous connection to Coppola; neither Harvey Keitel nor Jack Nicholson have ever appeared in a Coppola film, but they receive entries based on the strange logic that they have at times been considered for roles by Coppola, a designation surely shared by hundreds of actors. Even in the case of actors who have only briefly worked with Coppola, would a reader really think to look in these pages for a summary of Tom Cruise, Claire Danes' or Matt Damon's career?

There is, however, a lot to like about this book. The authors are clearly unashamed fans of Coppola and as such mount impassioned defenses of some of his more maligned works, with guest contributor Paul Raemaker's entry on *One from the Heart* (186-193) being a particularly compelling reappraisal of the formal techniques and technological innovation for which the film was condemned upon its release. The authors should also be praised for adopting a deservedly comprehensive approach to the screenwriting process of *Apocalypse Now* (although this again suffers

from being split into several entries) and for a sensibly generous approach to profiling Coppola's technical collaborators. The book may occasionally appear naive in its almost complete praise of Coppola, but the project has clearly been approached with passion and the result is a lively, informative tome which reveals much about not only Francis Ford Coppola himself, but the American film industry as a whole.

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The Medieval Hero on Screen: Representations from Beowulf to Buffy. Martha W. Driver and Sid Ray (eds.). Jefferson, North Carolina, and London: McFarland, 2004. P/bk 268 pp. ISBN 978-0-7864-1926-5. Price £31.50.

As the subtitle and cover photo of Viggo Mortensen's Aragom suggest, this book adopts a loose conception of the medieval; the debates on *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (1997-2003) and Peter Jackson's *Lord of the Rings* films (2001, 2002, 2003) underlining its broad scope and interdisciplinary viewpoint. This edited collection consists of five main sections: historical authenticity, heroic children, female heroes, weaponry, and a teaching guide. Individual chapters are, by and large, well-structured and argued, and of interest to both specialists and non-specialists. The overall concept of the book, however, has problematic aspects which should be addressed.

Some of these issues are raised in critic Jonathan Rosenbaum's foreword, which in places damns rather than praises a book he is ostensibly endorsing. Rosenbaum notes that key films are mentioned only in passing or not at all, such as *The Passion of foan of Arc* (1928), *Perceval* (1978), and *Die Nibelungen* (1924). He also states with some justification that the overall approach is more about history than cinema, some essays displaying ignorance or disregard for film history and film industry practices, both areas of which could have provided useful context for the material under discussion. I concur with his view that film as an art form, and especially the director as auteur, has been undervalued. For example,