Intro to *The Godfather*
Silver Screen, Carty

Release Date: 1972
Directed by: Francis Ford Coppola
Based on The Book <u>The Godfather</u> by Mario Puzo
Screenplay by Mario Puzo
Starring: Marlon Brando as Vito Corleone, Al Pacino as Michael Corleone, Diane Keaton as Kay Adams, and others (see imdb.com for a complete list).

"The Godfather" is set in New York in the early 1900s. During this time, established whites kept Italian Americans from joining the upper class by denying them access to prestigious schools, business loans, and upper-class neighborhoods. With little opportunity to prosper legally, some ambitious Italian Americans turned to organized crime[1] and a group of criminals known as The Mafia.

The story takes place from approximately 1945-1950. It follows the Corleones, one of New York's most powerful Mafia families.   It centers on two things: The first is the Corleone's struggle against Virgil Sollozzo, an up-and-coming gangster who hopes to overthrow the Corleone family and bring the mafia into the illegal drug business. The second is the transformation of Michael Corleone, the youngest son of a Mafia boss, who never intended to join *the family business*.

The Godfather won Academy Awards for Best Picture, Best Actor (Marlon Brando), and Best Screenplay, and it has been named the second greatest film in American History by The American Film Institute.

It's a great intro filmmaking. Pay attention to the performances of the actors as well as Francis Ford Coppola's use of color, editing, music, and, most importantly, light and shadow.

---

[1] Organized crime involved theft, prostitution, gambling, loan sharking, and racketeering (profiting from bribery or intimidation).