



Crab Monsters, Teenage Cavemen, and Candy Stripe Nurses: Roger Corman, King of the B-Movie

Chris Nashawaty, John Landis (Introduction)

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Crab Monsters, Teenage Cavemen, and Candy Stripe Nurses is an outrageously rollicking account of the life and career of Roger Corman—one of the most prolific and successful independent producers, directors, and writers of all time, and self-proclaimed king of the B movie. As told by Corman himself and graduates of “The Corman Film School,” including Peter Bogdanovich, James Cameron, Francis Ford Coppola, Robert De Niro, and Martin Scorsese, this comprehensive oral history takes readers behind the scenes of more than six decades of American cinema, as now-legendary directors and actors candidly unspool recollections of working with Corman, continually one-upping one another with tales of the years before their big breaks. *Crab Monsters* is supplemented with dozens of full-color reproductions of classic Corman movie posters; behind-the-scenes photographs and ephemera (many taken from Corman’s personal archive); and critical essays on Corman’s most daring films—including *The Intruder*, *Little Shop of Horrors*, and *The Big Doll House*—that make the case for Corman as an artist like no other.

Praise for *Crab Monsters, Teenage Cavemen, and Candy Stripe Nurses*:

“This new coffee table book, brimming with outrageous stills from many of Corman’s hundreds of films, looks at the wild career of the starmaker who was largely responsible for so much of the Hollywood we know today.” —*New York Post*

“Vividly illustrated.” —*People*

“An enthusiastic ode to colorful, seat-of-your-pants filmmaking, this one’s hard to beat.” —*Booklist* (starred review)

“It includes in-depth aesthetic appreciations of ten of Corman’s movies, which, taken together, make a compelling case for Corman as an artist.” —*Hollywood.com*

“Author Nashawaty deftly describes how Corman’s legacy is far more nuanced than most realize.” —*American Way* magazine

“Outrageously entertaining . . .” —*Parade* magazine

“Endlessly fascinating.” —*PopMatters.com*

“You’d think it’d be impossible for any writer to put together a Roger Corman biography that’s anywhere near as fun as his movies, but *Entertainment Weekly* writer/critic Chris Nashawaty has done just that.” —*Complex* magazine

Crab Monsters, Teenage Cavemen, and Candy Stripe Nurses: Roger Corman, King of

the B-Movie Details

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From Reader Review Crab Monsters, Teenage Cavemen, and Candy Stripe Nurses: Roger Corman, King of the B-Movie for online ebook

Viridian5 says

What really makes this book is the stories told Corman and the people who worked with him on his low-budget movies, many of whom went on to fame and major acclaim, such as James Cameron, Martin Scorsese, Francis Ford Coppola, Robert De Niro, Peter Bogdanovich, and Jack Nicholson. A lot of people got their first credits and experience working for him, in what many call "The Corman Film School." There was a time when Bill Paxton--yes, *that* Bill Paxton--was James Cameron's apprentice in art direction and special effects, and that's how Bill Paxton later got a role in *The Terminator*.

The stories also trace the evolution of film markets, as Corman goes from providing double-features meant to appeal to teens at drive-ins to making some of the first American films about the counterculture in the '60s to providing a ton of exploitation movies (but also distributing European arthouse films) in the '70s to providing direct-to-VHS and -cable fare in the '80s (while hiring many women to direct, something almost no one else in Hollywood was doing, and creating direct-to-VHS star actors) to going to DVD to providing monster movies to the Syfy Channel. He *had* to start doing the direct-to-VHS and -cable stuff after big studios and big budgets started going into the kind of genre films he'd done for decades and squeezing lower budgeted films out of theaters. The massive success of *Jaws* and *Star Wars* started the change.

The book can also be really funny and shows a lot of entertaining, *very* lurid poster and VHS cover art.

Danny Reid says

Enjoyable for its wacky stories of low budget filmmaking, but undeniably a big old puff piece as well.

Traci says

I've always been a fan of Roger Corman, but after reading this book, I'm also inspired by the man. I knew about some of his movies, having grown up watching them, but wow! The man is literally unstoppable, a true work-horse, and an innovator in every sense of the word. And still making/producing movies today, in his mid 80s! I had no idea just how long he'd been in the business, nor did I know how many people he helped out along the way. Granted, his tactics weren't always the most popular, but his credentials are impressive (bring up his page on IMDB and there's over 400 entries listing him as producer. Four hundred plus.)

The movies of his I love best are the ones based on Edgar Allan Poe stories, starring Vincent Price. Back when I was in grade school, our local NBC affiliate (WTHR, Channel 13 - back in the days before cable) showed movies at 4 pm weekday afternoons. I would race home when it was Price week, as they almost always pulled out all the Corman flicks: *Masque of the Red Death*, *The Pit and the Pendulum*, *House of Usher*...all fabulous films with one of my favorite horror movie actors, very atmospheric and creepy. Never

mind that I was young enough that the plots were sometimes over my head. Those movies made a big impact on me. Of course, Corman would have been happier if I had somehow bought copies of those flicks, as he was always looking to make money on his movies.

And make money he did. The things I learned from this wonderful love letter (because that's really what it is - a love letter from a fan) are amazing, such as the fact that Corman almost never lost money on his films, able to produce/direct/distribute at a profit. Think about that for a moment. At least 90% of the time, maybe even 95%, he made a profit. What other Hollywood type can say that? Corman worked his casts and crews to the bone, always asking them to do as much as was humanly possible in the least amount of time for very little dough. Many of the actors/directors/other staff quoted mention how they "survived" the Corman School of Filmmaking, not a real school but the very experience of working with/for Roger. And work they did, grueling schedules on shoots plagued with problems.

And yet, everyone interviewed speaks of their time at Roger's feet with love and admiration. I would liken it to summer camp or something similar. Also, not many people worked with/for Roger more than one or two films, specifically if they showed talent; Corman himself would tell them it was time to move on. He showed them the ropes, gave them a crash course education, and then kicked them out of the nest. He did what any good manager should do - he grew his people so that they could move up in the business. And grow them he did, lots of very famous names, such as those listed in the book blurb, not to mention the women he mentored: actresses like Pam Grier and Angie Dickinson to directors like Penelope Spheeris, Amy Holden Jones, Deborah Brock, and Katt Shea. He gave women a chance when others simply wanted them for their...um...assets. Roger knew they had assets, and not the ones that were visible. He truly broke new ground, and did it over and over again.

If you're a film fan, this book is for you. If you're a B movie fan, this book is for you. And if you're a Roger Corman fan, this book is definitely for you. Big, beautiful, and yes, even a bit cheesy at times. Everything that makes a Corman film a Corman film.

Danny says

Roger Corman is a legend of the cinema. Corman started his career in the early 50s and is still active today. Along the way he has managed to direct and produce hundreds of films, rarely losing a dime on any of them. They were cheapies, they were B movies, they were exploitation, they were direct-to-video. Monster movies, biker movies, and women-in-prison movies were just some of the genres Corman dabbled in during his heyday. The films had great names (A Bucket of Blood, She Gods of Shark Reef, Naked Angels), they had eye-popping posters, and the films always had great tag lines: "Their bodies were caged, but not their desires. They would do anything for a man—or to him," boldly declares the poster from The Big Doll House starring Pam Grier.

Crab Monsters, Teenage Cavemen, And Candy Stripe Nurses: Roger Corman: King of the B Movie is an oral history of the Corman universe. It's a fun peek into the world of shoestring production, told by those who lived to tell the tale.

Corman's longevity was a result of having a finger on the pulse of what would sell, as well as his ability to expertly navigate the changing landscape of cinema. He knew how to produce B movie fodder for double bills and drive-ins in the 50s. He saw a market for biker films and psychedelic films during the rise of the counter culture in the 60s. Once Hollywood started making his kind of sci-fi and monster movies, but with

huge budgets (*Star Wars*, *Jaws*), he knew he had to reposition himself. He became one of the first producers to take advantage of the nascent VHS market, making straight-to-video exploitation in the 80s. He also got in on the ground floor, selling films to cable providers in the early stages of that market. Most recently he has been working directly with cable networks like Syfy looking for low-budget, genre-specific productions. *Piranhaconda*, anyone?

However, Corman's biggest contribution to cinema may be what is referred to as the "University of Corman" or "The Roger Corman School of Filmmaking". Corman had a keen eye for evaluating, or perhaps exploiting, talent. He routinely gave young film students an opportunity to write, direct, and act in feature length films. In the 50s and 60s, the Hollywood system was hard to crack unless you had connections. If you were willing to work hard, work smart, and work cheap, Corman was willing to work with you, and he opened his studio doors to a bevy of passionate young folks wanting to break into the film biz. Luminaries who cut their teeth on Corman productions include Francis Ford Coppola, Peter Bogdonovich, Martin Scorsese, James Cameron, Penelope Spheeris, Ron Howard, John Sayles, Jonathan Demme, Jack Nicholson, and Robert Towne to name just a few.

Crab Monsters weaves together the stories of all of these major players and then some. It's a loving tribute from Hollywood hot shots who openly admit that they owe much of their success to the opportunities that Corman gave them, and from how much they learned under Corman's tutelage. Also touching was the general consensus that once these youngsters got a couple of productions under their belt, Corman actually encouraged them to leave and head on to better projects with bigger budgets. Corman was under no illusion about the kind of work he was making. That said, what makes so many of the Corman productions rise above base levels of exploitation is that those making the films were giving it their all, because they knew the value of the opportunity they were being given.

Though Corman's films were exploitation and gratuitously breast heavy, Corman opened the doors for women as well. Says Gale Anne Hurd (producer *Aliens*, *The Terminator*, *Walking Dead*), "At the time, he was the only person in Hollywood who would ask a woman coming in for a job as an executive assistant, 'Ultimately, what kind of career path do you want to take?' I didn't think there was a career path! It hadn't occurred to me. And I said, 'Roger, I'd like follow in your footsteps and be a producer.' And he said, 'Tremendous!'" Many of the women and men interviewed for *Crab Monsters* attest to the fact that the number of women on Corman productions from directors to writers to producers to crew exceeded what was happening elsewhere in the Hollywood system.

Also of interest is that in the 70s Corman started distributing European art house fare in America. Fellini, Kurosawa and Bergman made it to the theaters courtesy of Corman's support. Corman liked the films, and the ever savvy businessman in him realized that there was money to be made.

Crab Monsters is beautifully laid out with hundreds of pages of photos, posters and graphic goodies befitting Corman's oeuvre. Needless to say, the book is filled with fantastic anecdotes. *Death Race 2000* is one of my favorite Corman productions. Sylvester Stallone tells a great story about straying from the script and inserting his own dialogue into *Death Race*, confident that he could get away with it because he knew the production was too cheap to do second takes. Stallone then credits that experience with building up his confidence to write the *Rocky* script.

Corman, too, was willing to improvise in his own way. Alan Arkush (director of *Rock 'N' Roll High School*) relates a great anecdote about *Cockfighter*. The film was one of the few Corman bombs. The opening weekend was a disaster, but Corman was undaunted. Says Arkush, "We were on the phone with Roger and he's saying, 'You know the scene where Warren Oates leans back and closes his eyes? Cut in some naked

nurses and some car crashes like he's dreaming of that.' We thought he was kidding." Corman was not.

Ron Howard does a great job summing up Corman's low-budget but loving ways. "I was fighting with Roger at one point on *Grand Theft Auto*, trying to get a few more extras in our climactic demolition-derby scene in the stands. Everyone was supposed to be rioting. And he wouldn't give me more than forty-five extras. The grandstand was supposed to seat a thousand people. And we talked about cheating the angles. But I kept begging for more. And finally he just put his hand on my shoulder in a very paternal sort of way and smiled and said, 'Ron, I'm not going to give you any more extras. But know this: If you do a good job for me on this picture, you'll never have to work for me again.'"

And that's why you've got to love Roger Corman.

Anthony Breznican says

A vital sight-seeing tour through some of cinema's strangest neighborhoods. For those, like me, who were largely unfamiliar with the B-movie pantheon of producer Roger Corman, this will be an entertaining and eye-opening experience, certainly provoking unhealthy desires to seek out some of the best of the worst.

Andrew Garvey says

A loving tribute to the now seven-decade-long career of pioneering cheapskate director, producer and sometime actor, this is NOT the place to look for critical appraisals or serious, analytical discussions of Roger Corman's prolific and (often atrocious) output.

But it IS a fantastic, warm tribute, packed with stills from his films (and their filming) and, best of all, Corman movie posters - a thing of schlocky art all by themselves. It's also a reminder that Corman made some genuinely excellent films along the way - his Poe cycle for AIP includes a couple of Vincent Price classics - and of the role Corman played in launching the careers of people like Jack Nicholson, Ron Howard, Jams Cameron and even Don 'the Dragon' Wilson.

I also learned a lot from it. Corman's cheapness is legendary but there are countless anecdotes from those who worked with him detailing just how cheap, and just what a brilliant negotiator and a visionary he is/was. I knew nothing about his 1962 attempt at a serious, issue film, the *Intruder* (starring a pre-Kirk William Shatner and tackling the subject of racial hatred in the American south long before many other directors were willing to touch the subject) or of his involvement, or more accurately, his near-involvement in classics like *Easy Rider* and *the Terminator*.

As mentioned earlier, this beautifully presented book has nothing critical to say and so is, inherently, far from a balanced look at Corman's work and the text and captions are at times repetitive. But it was great fun to read and it's given me a long, long list of Corman 'classics' to track down and enjoy.

Mckenzie Ragan says

Redundancy seems to be the most common complaint across the reviews I've read of Chris Nashawaty's *Crab Monsters, Teenage Cavemen, and Candy Stripe Nurses: Roger Corman, King of the B-Movie*, and while I agree this is the case (many of the blurbs accompanying photos and old movie posters are torn verbatim from the main text), I don't care. In the past, I've measured a book or any other medium of art by beauty and value – how significantly it alters or supplements my world view. This is as it should be, but such a measure is inevitably retrospective and therefore, in my opinion, incomplete. Art is more than rhetoric, it is nowness, immediate experience. While the retrospective impact of a book is something I still weigh heavily, I've reached the point where an artifact is elevated from willfully arranged dead things to art when it becomes an experience. I suppose there is a retrospective element at work here, too, since true experience excludes consciousness – as soon as you become aware of the experience, you've stopped experiencing, therefore contemplation of an experience as such is always retrospective. Maybe that is the appeal of experience, losing yourself. But where loss of self otherwise points to stark terror, this kind of loss is a loss to something. Reading this book, I lost myself to irreverent and absurd adventure, to the dormant worlds creativity and effort open up. In a sentence, I had a hell of a time reading this book.

The book sheds light on five key eras in Corman's career. The first details his rise to fame on the drive-in scene, capitalizing on a hormone-fueled species of teenager ready to break away from the nuclear family's moral code book. Existential fears, wet dreams, revolts against authority, and questions of identity found apt symbolism in distant worlds and rubber monsters. The second brought a shift to the macabre with a jab at bringing Edgar Allan Poe to the big screen, and securing Vincent Price ensured success for the next decade or so. This was also a time of politics, psychotropics, Hell's Angels, and civil rights. Corman exploited these elements in his work while using his work as a catalyst for conversation. He still claims to be a staunch liberal, and this era saw his using his politics both for professional success and as a means of directing change. The third era chronicled in the book was that which gave birth to New Worlds, and the fourth focused on the move to VHS. Nashawaty's account closes on the era of Corman as "elder statesman," having finally received an honorary Oscar and recognition for his achievements from the film community at large.

Each of these sections are organized in a slightly schizophrenic way, but it works. The chapters open with a brief introduction to the concerns of the time period and the works that dominated the time period for Corman. Most of what follows is excerpts from interviews among a host of people Corman worked with over the years. Most of these actors, directors, producers, etc. were discovered by him and went on to make major names for themselves. The reader hears from Corman's wife and longtime collaborator Julie Corman, Joe Dante, Martin Scorsese, Jack Nicholson, Peter Fonda, Amy Holden Jones, James Cameron, Robert De Niro, Gail Anne Hurd, John Sayles, Lloyd Kaufman, Dennis Hopper, Ron Howard, Diane Ladd, Francis Ford Coppola, Bruce Dern, John Landis, Jonathan Demme, Dick Miller, and many others. Despite the pastiche quality of these people's thoughts and memories, the book still manages to have a narrative flow. The interviews reveal the issues that mattered to Corman, the ways he innovated on short time and less money, his foresight of the film industry's trajectory, and his unique approach to the work itself which gave birth to the "University of Corman" so often reflected on (essentially, unexperienced nobodies in the film world were thrown onto sets and told to make do, forcing them to learn the trade as they worked). The interviews make up the bulk of the book, but they are punctuated with close up looks at particular films. These close ups, like the image blurbs, are often highly repetitious of the main text, which can be annoying.

Some of the niches Corman took advantage of include horror, science fiction, nurses, mobsters, motorcycle gangs, women in prisons, '60s "trippers," and so on. A few of the many movies covered here (and Nashawaty really hasn't put a dent in his filmography) include *The Beast with a Million Eyes*, *The Fast and*

the Furious, Gunslinger, Attack of the Crab Monsters, A Bucket of Blood, The Little Shop of Horrors, The Pit and the Pendulum, X: The Man with the X-Ray Eyes, Dementia 13, The Wild Angels, Boxcar Bertha, Galaxy of Terror, and Suburbia.

Crab Monsters, Teenage Cavemen, and Candy Stripe Nurses has served several functions for me. (1) It better informed me of a man whose filmography is so ample it's almost impossible to be expert in it. (2) It put me in the mood to watch a whole lot of shitty B-movies (It's October, so what better time?). (3) It entertained me with countless behind the scenes anecdotes (like James Cameron's big break coming with his idea to design a space ship boasting enormous breasts). (4) It served as a reminder that strange worlds may be traversed by those who are willing to work their asses off and dispense with worries of other people's opinions. Ultimately, Nashawaty has offered up a scrapbook of memories for those who grew up with Roger Corman, and, for those who are new to him, a treasure map to hoards of cinematic bad taste.

Terry Collins says

Essential for Roger Corman fans for the wonderful color reproductions of posters, lobby cards, and photographs of his directing and producing endeavors. When you combine the eye candy with the interviews on hand and essays from Chris Nashawaty, you have an essential book to shelve in your film library reference collection. Folks like Joe Dante, Bill Shatner, Ron Howard, Jack Nicholson (who talks at length about his Corman experiences), Peter Fonda ... frankly, anyone who ever worked with Roger goes on the record here in honest, yet still admiring memories of their days under the King of the B's umbrella. Five enthusiastic stars!

James Hold says

If you read Corman's *HOW I MADE A HUNDRED MOVIES* then there's no need to bother with this as it repeats verbatim large chunks of that book. It adds nothing new and merely takes up space. There are many added passages from graduates of the 'Corman School' but they add little. Martin Scorsese and FF Coppola make some particularly snide and a-hole-ish remarks. Like Corman's own book it grows less and less interesting as it goes along and he does less and less directing. I got this free off a gift coupon. I wish I had used it for something else.

Christian says

Having enjoyed Mr. Nashawaty's book on *Caddyshack*, I sought out this earlier work about the legendary B-movie director, Roger Corman, and I was not disappointed. This book is just absolutely jam-packed with hilarious and inspiring stories of one of cinema's true originals and pioneers. Long live Roger Corman.

John of Canada says

This book was just packed. I learned more from this on how to make movies than I was prepared for. Lots of

funny stories, and a nostalgic glimpse of some movies and stars that I've seen that I'm too embarrassed to talk about. He's still kicking around. It's amazing the number of Hollywood giants that he started off.

Anthony McGill says

KING OF THE Bs GETS THE "A" TREATMENT.

Roger Corman deserves a very special place in the annals of American cinema. Probably no other single individual in the movie business has influenced and nurtured so many other great filmmakers e.g. Coppola, Bogdanovich, Scorsese, De Niro, Nicholson, Sayles.

This groovy book is a feast for the eye with page after page of terrific stills and lots of cheesy posters from sixty plus years of remarkable achievements from the 'King of the Bs' during his years at AIP and founder of New World Pictures, his own production and distribution company.

And it is filled with apt and affectionate comments from the various artists who worked under Corman, making this book more a tribute than your standard biography. The admiration and respect that these people have for Corman is obvious and well deserved.

An invigorating history of the 'other side of Hollywood,' filmmaking which many tended to look down their nose at the time without fully understanding the creative juices that were flowing like crazy!

And the subsequent treasures resulting from Corman the filmmaker and nurturer of so much incredible talent in "the new Hollywood" of independent filmmaking. A fantastic collection of schlock and ingenuity.

Simply put, we need many more Roger Cormans in today's Hollywood!

Mark says

Your enjoyment of this book - a detailed trawl through the output of Roger Corman from the early 50s (and including a quick bio) up to date - is going to depend entirely on your ability to enjoy films where you can sometimes see the zip on the back of the monster suit. In fact, Chris Nashawaty sums this up perfectly in a caption to accompany a picture of the eponymous Creature From The Haunted Sea - "...one of the worst looking (or greatest, depending on your sweet tooth for schlock) monsters in movie history". I loved the book, which probably tells you just how big and strong my sweet tooth for schlock is.

Thoroughly illustrated with beautifully reproduced film posters (and wow, they knew how to sell movies then!) and clear screen grabs, this is effectively an oral history of the Corman "factory", told by the people involved. From Corman himself, his wife Julie and brother Gene, through writers and directors and actors and crew personnel, this is frank and often amusing and never less than illuminating. Working to tight budgets (and often tighter schedules), Corman pushed people to be creative and yes, whilst some of the output is stupid, it's often very entertaining. He also served as a kind of unofficial film school, giving the first chances to many people who are now Hollywood A-listers - from Jack Nicholson and Bruce Dern, through Ron Howard, Joe Dante and Jim Cameron, Gayle Ann Hurd and Martin Scorsese, all of them have their say and none of them utter a bad word about their mentor (other than how cheap he was).

The book is broken down into 5 chapters, each dealing with a different decade and I have to confess that my favourites were the sixties and seventies and moving into the early eighties - that's when the format seemed to hit its stride, when the talent being supported (Dante, Nicholson, Dern, Howard et al) was on the cusp of greatness and when they seemed incapable of doing a bad job, even when the material wasn't always as good as it could be. The later eighties is interesting (I was a happy supporter of the burgeoning home video market

myself and loved scanning the shelves in our local video shop) but the nineties and to the present day is a bit more sobering, with the market drying up and a stream of films that seem to be directed by the same two blokes (contradicting everyone else's mantra that once you got your start, you moved on). From what I read, none of the SyFy films currently being made will stand up in 30+ years time, as something like Joe Dante's "Piranha" has. In fact, I was so impressed by the write-up in the book of that film, I bought it on DVD and watched it with my wife and we both loved it.

Roger Corman is a legend, finally recognised by the Oscars for his contribution to films and he's shaped a lot of culture that we now readily accept today, believing in genre films even when others didn't appear to. This book does him perfect justice, a thorough, wonderfully written and researched slice of movie history that I think is essential reading for those who like their films (on occasion), to be on the cheap, cheerful, sleazy and gruesome side. I loved it, I wish it was twice as long and I highly recommend it.

Joe Aguiar says

For fans of the films of B movie auteur Roger Corman, this book is a real treat and a blast to read. Tracing his career and a good number of his most famous... and infamous... films from his beginnings as a messenger in the 20th Century Fox mailroom to one of the most prolific producer/directors in film history, author Nashawaty wisely lets the stories come from the mouths of Corman himself and the talented people whose careers he gave start to. We get quotes and anecdotes about this legend of filmmaking from legends in their own right like Jack Nicholson, Joe Dante, John Landis, Sylvester Stallone and Peter Fonda to name a scant few. Obviously we also hear from Corman himself, his wife Julie... who once went into labor on the set of a film she was producing for her husband... and brother Gene. Some of the stories are downright hilarious as we read first hand accounts of Corman's thriftness in action. We get fascinating tales of the making of some of Roger Corman's most famous and successful productions from the low budget horror Attack Of The Crab Monsters to his Star Wars inspired Battle Beyond The Stars. Among some of the delightfully fun stories is one from Titanic's James Cameron. The future director of The Terminator tells about his method of having all his workers go on break when Corman arrived at the studio for the production of Battle Beyond The Stars because, if Roger didn't see anyone working on the sets, he assumed they were done and didn't get angry that they were actually running behind schedule. But, whether it's stories of the relationships between Corman and the future stars that worked for him or of Corman's thriftness and inventiveness, this fun book is a very entertaining look at the amazing career of an amazing man who beat the Hollywood system again and again. A man who still is ahead of his time and still stays one step ahead of the latest trends. If I was to have a complaint about this wonderful book about of my favorite filmmakers is that it isn't long enough. Despite all the fun stories and the informative look at some of his most classic films, I closed the book wanting even more... and now that I think of it, that is more of a complement than a complaint! A great read and a MUST for Roger Corman fans or fans of his films.

Diamond says

I love films in all its forms. I am comforted just as much by a fancy art house picture as I am by the cheesiest of Z-grade schlock. Needless to say, I have quite a long and memorable relationship with the films of Roger Corman. Growing up, most of the movies I got to see were the ones budding cable networks like USA and TBS could afford to purchase for broadcast. Corman's output, as director, producer or both, were abundantly shown. A lot of them I would seek out because of their reputations, like "A Bucket of Blood," the original

"Little Shop of Horrors" and "Death Race 2000." Some I discovered on my own, such as seeing "Piranha" one Saturday afternoon when a cable channel ran it after "Jaws." When I discovered Vincent Price and actively sought out anything I could see, Corman's Poe adaptations were the first things I devoured.

This book is an oral history of Corman's career, so far. He was the guy who gave young people wanting to get into the industry their first jobs, allowing them to learn all kinds of aspects of making a film, sometimes all on the same movie. So many people who became big, and even HUGE, names went through what became known as the University of Corman. Jack Nicholson, Dennis Hopper, Bruce Dern, Peter Fonda, Francis Ford Coppola, Martin Scorsese, Joe Dante, Jonathan Demme, Ron Howard, James Cameron, Bill Paxton and many others not only went through the U of C, but also told their stories of their time there for this book. There are so many great anecdotes here that I believe anyone with a love of film will enjoy this book, no matter if you like Corman's movies or not.
