

Note: This show periodically replaces their ad breaks with new promotional clips. Because of this, both the transcription for the clips and the timestamps after them may be inaccurate at the time of viewing this transcript.

00:00:00 Music Music

A gentle rock beat that plays under John's dialogue.

00:00:02 John Roderick Host

Forrest Gump!

It's come to this. Now I'm not gonna argue whether this is a war film. Let's take it as read. I'm not even going to use this intro as a chance to dump on baby boomers, because I'm confident that history will handle that task, and there's no point in us piling on.

No, what amazes me about this film—this... *Forrest Gump*—is how big a movie it was. Like *American Beauty*, this movie inexplicably took the world by storm.

Why are the middle-brow people of the world so susceptible to this trash?! What collective need is fulfilled by languishing in this miasma of toxic sentimentality?

Well, let's interrogate it.

00:00:41 John Host

Here we have a film where a disability was played for laughs. Gump's slowness is meant to stand in for our simpler natures. Untrammelled and untroubled by irony, or sex, or remorse, or really any kind of human empathy beyond confused sadness that everyone isn't happy.

It's a Vietnam story. Tragic in the way we prefer our Vietnam stories, which is to say small-scale and personal. We're fine watching some boys slug it out. Even fine ruing the senselessness of it all. But for the love of God, don't make us think about what we did, and what it means.

Please, can we just take a dumb giggle ride through a Newsweek Highlights timeline of the boomer half century, and conclude that it was just troubling enough to make us deep and soulful without convicting us of mind crimes and the rape of the world?

Damn it! I was trying not to slam the boomers, but I can't help it! This movie marks the true turning point in their evolution, where they finally renounced the counterculture and regained their innocence in the form of the true anti-hero, shrimp millionaire and early Apple investor the Gumpster. The Gumpmeister. The Gumpinator.

00:01:53 John Host

It's appalling, really, this Clinton-era revisionism. As if after two decades of gross reveling in the reflected cool of Hendrix and Abbie Hoffman while force-feeding the rest of us the hotdog-eating contest of sixties self-aggrandizement and ad nauseam nostalgia-masked-as-virtue-hectoring set to a never-ending loop of Jefferson Airplane and slow motion helicopters—

—the boomers sat atop their pile of laissez-faire Michael Milkin dollars and drug war-financed Arizona planned communities and gloated that all along, they knew the hippie element within them were contemptible dirtbags, and it was actually free enterprise and global

trade that were the realm of the saints.

Who better than Tom Hanks, eternal boy, bosom buddy, to reprise his role in *Big* and assuage the last faint bleats of the dying conscience of a nation?

The only thing this movie didn't do is have Forrest sign a contract with America and date Fawn Hall.

00:02:51 John Host

[Sighs.] I said I wasn't gonna argue, but who cares?! Is *Forrest Gump* a war movie? ...I don't know, man. I guess so.

There's war in it. And war reverberates throughout it. And even though it's a little late to the eighties cinematic re-fight Vietnam party, it re-fought Vietnam on behalf of an American people who still couldn't figure out what happened there, or whether we won or lost.

Well, let me tell you. We lost. And we also lost the supposed culture wars, where we "overturned the hegemony of the greatest generation and replaced it with sexual freedom and drug experimentation and peace! And love! And environmentalism and communitarianism and agrarianism, and anti-industrialization and global peace."

What the boomers brought us instead, in the fullness of time, was a focus on low interest rates, and the dismantling of the social safety net, and neo-conservative endless, boundless war. Cue Jefferson Starship.

Today on *Friendly Fire*... [sighs] life is not a goddamn box of chocolates! As we explore *Forrest Gump*.

00:03:57 Music Music

"War," by Norman Whitfield and Barrett Strong, lead vocals by Edwin Starr.

War!
Huh!
Yeah!
What is it good for?!
Absolutely—
—nothing!
Uh-huh!

War!
Huh!
Yeah!
What is it good for?!
Absolutely—
—nothing!

Say it again, y'all!

War!

[The song continues at a lower volume as the hosts introduce themselves.]

00:04:18 Ben Harrison Host Welcome to *Friendly Fire*, the war movie podcast that's less an exploration of history through the cinema of war, than a paeon (*peen*) to the most important members of our society: the baby boom generation.

I am Ben Harrison.

00:04:31 Adam Pranica Host I'm Adam Pranica.

00:04:32 John Host And I'm John Roderick. A paean (*peen*), huh?

00:04:37 Ben Host Mm-hm. It's one of those, uh, three vowels in a row words. Very scary to pronounce!

00:04:43 John Host I always pronounced it "pane." Or a—a "peon." Or a "pay-in." A pay-in. A pay-in.

00:04:50 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Ben:** Yeah. I'm—I'm—I'm not gonna stand—

Adam: Pay-on?

John: Hm. [*Laughs.*]

00:04:52 Ben Host —by my pronunciation. I looked it up on one of those YouTube "how to pronounce," uh, [*laughing*] channels—

00:04:59 John Host [*Laughing*] Yeah.

00:04:59 Ben Host But it was a robot saying it, so I don't know—

00:05:02 John Host [*Robotic*] Paean (*peen*).

00:05:03 Ben Host —why I would believe the robot.

00:05:04 John Host [*Robotic*] Paean (*peen*).

00:05:06 Ben Host [*Laughs.*] Paean (*peen*). I can tell you've got some paean (*peen*) envy.

00:05:09 John Host I've got some paean (*pay-in*) envy. [*Laughs.*]

00:05:11 Adam Host I watched this film on an airplane, and—

00:05:14 John Host Just recently? [*Ben laughs.*] Did you cry?

00:05:15 Adam Host —and I just want to paint the picture of [*John laughs*] a full-grown man boarding an aircraft in 2019, choosing to watch *Forrest Gump* [*Ben laughs*] of all of the—of all of the in-flight movies.

I don't know what I must have looked like to the person sitting next to me, but I know had I been them, I would have been very suspicious of me.

00:05:40 Crosstalk Crosstalk **John:** Yeah! What kind of person—

Adam: [*Laughing*] "Who chooses to watch this movie?"

00:05:44 Adam Host —is a question I would love to interrogate.

00:05:46 Ben Host This is—this movie was such a big deal when it came out.

00:05:50 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Adam:** Yeah. Massive.

Ben: But—and—

00:05:51 Ben Host —there's a certain kind of person for whom a movie that was a big

deal never stops being a big deal.

00:05:56 Adam Host That's fair.

00:05:57 John Host What kind of person?

00:05:58 Ben Host I don't know. Not the kind of person that Adam is, certainly.

00:06:01 Adam Host I mean, there are—there are people whose engagement of film, uh, begins and ends with, uh, "Me and my wife like watching all of the Oscar-winning films."

00:06:10 John Host Right, right, right.

00:06:10 Adam Host Like, "That is—that is how I enjoy films."

00:06:12 John Host "I love Tom Hanks movies."

00:06:14 Adam Host Right.

00:06:15 John Host Yeah. *[Ben laughs.]*

00:06:16 Adam Host That is a type of person, and there are probably many.

00:06:17 John Host Yeah. I am not the audience for this movie, unfortunately.

00:06:20 Ben Host *[Laughing]* Uh-huh?

00:06:21 John Host When it came out in 1994, I was in the waning days of my drug years. And I did not have money to—or interest in going to see Hollywood films. I was busy sleeping on dirty, sheetless mattresses with punk rock girls.

00:06:40 Ben Host Uh-huh.

00:06:41 John Host And trying to die.

00:06:42 Ben Host *[Laughing]* You didn't have, uh—you didn't have disposable income to see Robert Zemeckis nob up—

00:06:49 Crosstalk Crosstalk **John:** *[Laughing]* No.

Ben: —the baby boom?

00:06:50 John Host No. And I remember the hullabaloo because I—even in my worst hour, I still read the newspaper. *[Adam laughs.]*

But, uh, I didn't see it until many years later, but I think still within the VHS era. And I remember watching it and going—and just shrugging. A big shrug. *[Ben laughs.]*

But watching it this time... boy. *[Laughing]* What a slog.

00:07:14 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Ben:** This—this movie won the Leone d'Oro at the Venice International Film Festival—

John: Yeah!

Ben: —that year, you know.

John: Okay—

Adam: Just like *Lebanon!*

John: Just like the movie *Lebanon*, which I panned, and I'm starting to believe that—

Ben: *[Laughing]* God.

John: —the Leone d'Oro—

Ben: I made that up! *[John cracks up.]* I'm—I'm making a—

00:07:25 Ben Host

—I'm making a joke about my own self, John! You're so fucking defensive, you can't—you can't "yes, and" a silly joke!

00:07:32 John Host

Now wait a minute, who's defensive in this, uhhh, in this little exchange? *[All three laugh.]*

00:07:37 Ben Host

I'm—I'm making a joke at my own expense, so not me. *[Laughs.]*

00:07:40 Crosstalk Crosstalk

John: Okay, settle—settle down! Settle down! You're okay. You're okay. *[Ben laughs.]*

Adam: Boy, I should have known that the *Forrest Gump* episode would be the most argumentative show that we've ever done. *[Ben laughs.]*

John: Yeah. This is the—this is the one.

00:07:49 Adam Host

I remember seeing the—being taken to the theater to watch this film. Like, me and my family watched it.

00:07:54 John Host

By—by your grandma?

00:07:55 Adam Host

Yeah.

00:07:56 John Host

Who was watching you after your parents went out drinking?

00:07:58 Adam Host

But when you talk about the idea—like, I think, a lot like music does, I think films can sometimes have long tails, and the longest tail attached to *Forrest Gump* was its soundtrack.

00:08:09 John Host

Right. Twelve million copies, the soundtrack sold.

00:08:12 Adam Host

I had it.

00:08:13 Ben Host

Whoa.

00:08:14 Adam Host

Everyone I know had it.

00:08:15 John Host

It's massive, and it's a total big chill soundtrack.

00:08:17 Adam Host

Yeah.

00:08:18 John Host

Oh, it's just—it's just... yuppie music from start to finish.

00:08:21 Adam Host

It was one of the—one of the ones that had the two-case, thick jewel—

00:08:26 John Host

Yeahhh.

00:08:27 Adam Host

—situation. *[Ben laughs.]* Which was—

00:08:28 John Host

Thick jewel (*Juul*), that's my favorite jewel (*Juul*).

00:08:30 Adam Host

Yeah. It was always in a Case Logic, phone book-sized CD case. Like, you could always find the *Forrest Gump* discs in there.

But—you know, at the time, I really liked listening to the music of it; but watching the film again now, there's a lot that's cloying about this film.

00:08:46 John Host Ugh.

00:08:47 Adam Host But I think... the thing that I enjoy the least in any film or television is a music choice made that, uh, is so closely expressing the feelings or the activities happening in a scene that it just fucking clangs.

Like, when the lyrics of a song are describing what you're seeing on film, I think that is a total waste of an interesting choice. Because you can make a choice about the music playing in a scene and really say something, uh, strange and interesting.

But at no point does Robert Zemeckis do this. He almost uses the music as a narrator to the film.

00:09:25 Ben Host He's using the music the same way the narration works, which is—

00:09:28 Adam Host Yeah.

00:09:29 Ben Host —that the narration is almost always leading into an anecdote, quoting the anecdote, and then you see the thing it quoted.

00:09:36 Adam Host Right. I don't wanna hear "Running on Empty" as Forrest is running across the country!

00:09:40 John Host Right. How do you feel about, uh, "Fortunate Son" while, uh, helicopters land in Vietnam? *[Ben and John laugh.]*

00:09:47 Adam Host Legally, Zemeckis had to do that. So I understand.

00:09:51 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Ben:** Yeah. Yeah.

00:09:53 John Host **John:** What's interesting about the soundtrack is—
—that the whole first act of the film, which takes place in the fifties, there is no music. We only hear Elvis through the television at one point. No—none of the scenes are scored with... um, you know, with early rock and roll.

It's only when Gump first arrives in Vietnam that—that we see that corny scene, or what—and I don't even remember whether it was "Fortunate Son," although that does play in this movie at some point.

00:10:20 Adam Host Yeah.

00:10:21 John Host But from that moment on, from Vietnam on, it's just one hit of the sixties and seventies after another. All of them super-duper, right down center plate, boomer culture.

And it's cloying, it's manipulative—

00:10:37 Adam Host It's cheap heat.

00:10:39 John Host And I can't believe in 1994 that it was still—by—even by '94, "Fortunate Son" with helicopters and the sun setting in the background was cliché on top of cliché.

And how that—how that went by—how that won a bunch of Oscars—in 1994, did people still not have access to Creedence?!

[Adam and Ben laugh.]

I mean, why would they—why would you buy 12,000,000 copies of

this?! I'm not saying one boomer did it, but—you know, everybody had a copy of this film; it's one of the best-selling records of all time!

00:11:13 Adam Host

Yeah.

00:11:14 John Host

And you, what—you can't find freakin' Creedence?! And The Doors?! Some other place?

I don't—*[laughing]* I barely remember 1994, but I remember there was other stuff going on.

00:11:27 Adam Host

I bought this soundtrack before I bought *Chronicle*. Like, this was the gateway—

00:11:31 John Host

[Whispering] Wow.

00:11:32 Adam Host

—to that.

00:11:33 John Host

[Whispering] Heavy, man.

00:11:34 Adam Host

[Whispering] Right?

00:11:35 John Host

[Whispering] Whoa. *[Laughs.]*

00:11:36 Ben Host

I wonder if there is a way to make a movie that panders as hard to, uh, to Gen X or to the millennial generation as this one does to boomers.

00:11:46 John Host

Well, the thing about Generation X, and I'm—I'm gonna—I'm gonna be your Gen X guide through this.

00:11:52 Adam Host

John Roderick, *[laughing]* Gen X Sherpa. *[Ben laughs.]*

00:11:54 John Host

The thing about Generation—*[laughs]*—Generation X is that we did not have a high opinion of ourselves. Like, Generation X always—

00:12:01 Adam Host

That makes you very different from boomers.

00:12:03 John Host

It does. And millennials, frankly. Uh—

00:12:06 Ben Host

Boomers can have an IQ of 75 and think they're the best. *[Laughs.]*

00:12:09 John Host

Yeah, the best. Right. I mean—we—the gener—Generation X never had any, um, illusions about the fact that we were losers, we were coming into a world that had been used up, and all that was left for us was sucking fumes. And—the fumes of the baby boomers.

The baby boomers in—you know, still think that they're the greatest thing that ever walked the Earth. And they really did in '94. They really, really—if you challenged them at all, they would talk about all the things they had done.

And as though they invented the civil rights movement. As though they invented the anti-war movement. As though those things didn't exist in 1935. Which they did. And 1955, which they did.

So the boomers took credit for everything, and they made the world a—they—they took—they took the oxygen out of the world.

And celebrated themselves so highly—you know, just like...

And watching it as a Generation X person—when this movie came out, all—we were the youth! Right? Generation X was the sardonic youth. And watching this win Oscars at the time, it just felt like... "Did

you guys not get enough?! Have you not—I mean—"

[Ben laughs.]

"We're having grunge! Right now! Like, we're—we're in the mi—we're in the thick of it, man!"

00:13:30 Adam Host

Yeah.

00:13:31 John Host

"Do you really need to—to create this anaerobic environment?"

And they did.

And they—you know, they continued to do it until—until they—until they lost their hearing, basically. Which is now, and thank God. *[Ben or Adam laughs.]*

But—but the *[laughs]*—you know, their children now are sucking all the air out of the room, too.

00:13:49 Adam Host

Yeah.

00:13:50 Ben Host

I saw this movie as an 11-year-old, sitting between my mom and dad in the movie theater, and I remember it being incredibly meaningful to them.

00:13:59 John Host

Yeah.

00:14:00 Ben Host

But I guess I was too young to—like, the meaningfulness of it seemed to connote importance on it to me, and—and re-watching it now, I just—uh, I had such a radically different reaction.

And I hadn't really seen it since it came out!

00:14:15 John Host

How does 35-year-old Ben, uh, see it?

00:14:19 Ben Host

Like Adam said, it is such cheap heat that I'm just—I'm almost blown away that the movie going public didn't just universally react against it as such a brazen pander that it's not actually worthy of viewing. *[Laughing]* You know?

00:14:36 Adam Host

[Thinking noise] Ah—like, when was the last time Tom Hanks got a negative review for starring in a film? I almost wonder if it's—if it's the magic of—of the Hanks effect. Like, does that insulate your film from the kind of criticism we're giving this?

00:14:52 John Host

I mean, it's not just Hanks. Right? It's a—it's a morality play that if you are bad, then bad things will happen. And if you are a perpetual child with an innocent viewpoint, um, that you will become rich and famous.

[Ben and Adam laugh.]

And, uh—you know? And that's a—that is a crazy, crazy message. And Tom—you know, Tom Hanks had just been in *Big* a few years before.

00:15:20 Adam Host

I mean, not everyone can do it, though! Because Sean Penn tried to do it in *I Am Sam*, but he couldn't save that film. Like, it's not just the—it's not just the performance in a lead role as someone who lives the way that a Forrest Gump does, or—or Sam from *I Am Sam*

does.

I really—I feel like it's specifically Tom Hanks!

00:15:40	John	Host	Well, I don't know about—Leonard DiCaprio—or L—L—L—
00:15:43	Adam	Host	I like your first pronunciation. <i>[John and Ben laugh.]</i>
00:15:45	John	Host	<i>[Laughing]</i> Leonard DiCaprio was—he played that, uh, character in—
00:15:49	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	Adam: <i>Gilbert Grape</i> , yeah. Yeah.
			John: <i>Gilbert Grape</i> .
00:15:50	John	Host	And that made his career. Right?
00:15:53	Adam	Host	<i>[Sighs.]</i> Yeah.
00:15:54	John	Host	And—and <i>Rain Man</i> . Dustin Hoffman finally got his big—
00:15:57	Adam	Host	God, this is a <u>tough</u> film paper to write!
00:16:00	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	John: I'm—I'm con—
			Adam: I—I might just crumple it up <i>[Ben laughs]</i> and write it about something else!
			Ben: Is this—is this printer jammed? What the hell?!
00:16:05	Clip	Clip	Michael Bolton (<i>Office Space</i>): Thing is lucky I'm not armed.
			<i>[Printer noises continue into episode dialogue.]</i>
00:16:07	Adam	Host	I got to page three and now I'm stuck.
00:16:08	John	Host	Yeah.
00:16:09	Clip	Clip	Samir (<i>Office Space</i>): Piece of shit.
00:16:10	John	Host	You—you threw a thesis out there and it's—
00:16:11	Adam	Host	Yeah. Hm.
00:16:13	Ben	Host	I think that <i>Tropic Thunder</i> already wrote this film paper, Adam. <i>[Adam chuckles, John laughs.]</i>
00:16:16	Adam	Host	Well put. Yeah.
00:16:19	Ben	Host	Um, the other side of the coin for Jenny being, you know, the counterexample of—of how to live your life is that, like, when <i>Forrest Gump</i> is describing, like, early family history, it's like, "Yeah, I'm named after the—the, like, Grand Wizard of the KKK," and that's just kind of like—
			<i>[Adam laughs.]</i>
			That's tossed off as like a harmless and somewhat charming element of his family history.
00:16:44	Adam	Host	If you saw me on the airplane, Ben, you would have seen me like— <i>[Ben laughs]</i> —I basically popped up out of my seat, <i>[laughing]</i> like grabbed the iPad.
00:16:52	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	Adam: <i>[Laughing]</i> I was trying to turn it around. I for—
			Ben: You put your Pee—Pee-Chee folder in front of the screen?

[Laughs.]

Adam: I completely forgot that that was a part of this movie, and there are—

Ben: I did, too!

00:17:01 Adam Host There is a not insignificant amount of Ku Klux Klan footage in it.

00:17:05 John Host Right.

00:17:06 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Ben:** Yeah.

John: It's like you were watching *A Birth of a Nation* on your—

Adam: Yes! [Cracks up.]

John: —on the flight.

00:17:10 Ben Host It's actually the footage—the footage is from *Birth of a Nation*. That's—they CG'd, uh, Tom Hanks into *Birth of a Nation*.

00:17:17 Adam Host One thing I wanna say while we're talking about watching this on an airplane is, I watched it, uh, on the seat back. I did not watch this on my own device.

00:17:26 John Host How—how do you do that?

00:17:27 Adam Host It was available in the—in the catalogue of films.

00:17:30 John Host You are joking.

00:17:32 Adam Host Yeah. Yeah.

00:17:33 John Host You—you're—on Delta, you can just scroll through and be like, "You know what I—*Forrest Gump*."

00:17:38 Adam Host Yeah. [Ben laughs.]

00:17:39 John Host How fortunate for you! That you got this.

00:17:40 Adam Host I thought it would be an interesting experiment to watch it on the seat back. Like how is this different?

00:17:44 Ben Host I have a—I have a higher Medallion Status, [John laughs] so they don't give us those kinds of movies in—in my seat.

00:17:49 Adam Host Yeah. This was a—this was a Comfort+ movie selection, [Ben laughs] and—uh, it was in four by three aspect ratio.

00:17:57 Ben Host Oh, wow!

00:17:58 Adam Host Which was not ideal. [John laughs.]

But also, um, edited for profanity in a very interesting way. Uh, the "god" part of "goddamn" was edited out, but every utterance of the N-word was left in.

00:18:10 John Host Interesting.

00:18:13 Ben Host There was definitely that moment when—like, I remember hearing an NPR story about the N-word entering into the list of—of bad words. Like, from a—an FCC standpoint, or whatever.

00:18:31 John Host Yeah. No, that's—that's extremely recent, and I think in 1994 that would have been considered—[sighs]. I think maybe even all the way

to progressive. Like, "We're not afraid to show the dirty history. We're—" You know, "We're gonna confront this head-on by—"

00:18:51 Ben Host Yeah.

00:18:52 John Host "—by, uh, putting it into mainstream films, rather than censoring it." And I think the—I think the Ku Klux Klan played for comedy—

00:19:02 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Adam:** *[Laughing]* Right.

John: —also maybe felt like it was—it was a way of indicating that this film was smarter than your average bear.

00:19:09 John Host By 1994 standards.

00:19:12 Ben Host I was reading that the, uh—uh, edited-for-TV version of this movie—when the school principal bangs his mom, they had a whole different audio track for how—for how the moaning sounded.

00:19:24 John Host Oh. What did it sound like in the—in the other mono—uh—

00:19:28 Ben Host Yeah, I mean, I'm wondering if that's the version Adam got.

00:19:30 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Ben:** 'Cause—'cause it kind of—

Adam: I feel like the sex scenes in *MacGruber* were *[Ben laughs]* inspired by the version that I watched.

[Ben and John laugh.]

00:19:38 Adam Host 'Cause it—it sounded a lot like that to me. *[John laughs.]*

00:19:41 John Host What does that sound like? *[Ben laughs.]*

00:19:43 Adam Host Rob'll drop it in. *[John laughs.]*

00:19:44 Clip Clip **MacGruber (MacGruber):** *[Wordless, almost pained scream followed by moans.]*

00:19:50 John Host What—who is this movie for? It really is for baby boomers, but what is this movie for? Like, what... does it do?

00:20:00 Adam Host The book that it was based on sounds pretty interesting, and there are parts of the book that go a lot darker than this film. This film basically takes the first third and the last fifth of the book, but there is like a meaty center of the book that is dark—

00:20:16 John Host Hm.

00:20:17 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Adam:** —and bad, and weird—

John: A—a dark, meaty center.

00:20:19 Adam Host —that I would have liked to have seen, uh, on film. As it is, its attempt to appeal to the broadest audience that it could get just smears it with this veneer that makes it hard to palate right now.

It's so—it's so naked in that attempt for '94, that you could—I just don't feel like you could make this movie right now in the same way, right? We're too sophisticated, or cynical?

00:20:45 John Host I don't—well, I don't—you couldn't make this movie now. But could you make a movie that was this... bald?

00:20:52 Adam Host I don't know.

00:20:53 John Host I mean, the Tom—the—the scene where he wins the Medal of Honor—

00:20:57 Clip Clip **Lyndon B. Johnson (*Forrest Gump*):** I'd kinda like to see that.

00:20:59 John Host —for going back and carrying his dudes out—

00:21:02 Adam Host It's Desmond Doss, right?

00:21:03 John Host It's Desmond Doss.

00:21:04 Adam Host *[Laughing]* Like, what if you made *Forrest Gump* more like *Hacksaw Ridge*?

00:21:08 Clip Clip **Speaker:** It's a hell of a combination.

00:21:09 Adam Host *[John and Ben laugh.]*

You could probably do it like that! Like, Jenny goes and kills her dad. That's—that would have to happen in 2019.

00:21:16 John Host Why didn't Jenny kill her dad?

00:21:19 Ben Host Why wasn't she driving that bulldozer and the dad was in the house?

00:21:23 John Host Why didn't Forrest kill the dad?

00:21:26 Crosstalk Crosstalk **John & Adam:** *[Together]* Right?

John: If Forrest is mentally challenged to the degree that he doesn't know the consequences of his actions—

Adam: He shoulda Lennie'd the shit out of him.

00:21:33 John Host Right! 'Cause he fights everybody that comes after Jenny in this film.

00:21:36 Adam Host Yeah.

00:21:37 John Host And, uh, yeah. What the—he shoulda Lennie'd him. He shoulda put him in his pocket and stroked him *[Ben laughs]* until... he died.

00:21:47 Adam Host Uh, Zemeckis also did, uh, *Back to the Future*, and when Forrest kicks the ass of that guy that Jenny's dating, that's straight out of George McFly punching Biff in the face when he's all over Lorraine in the back of—of that car.

00:22:00 John Host Right.

00:22:01 Ben Host Right.

00:22:02 Adam Host Like, there seems to be a playbook that Zemeckis has that he's returning to here.

00:22:06 John Host There was a lot of criticism at the time that this movie advanced a conservative worldview.

00:22:12 Adam Host Yeah.

00:22:13 John Host Right? That the hippies, like the head of the—the Students for a Democratic Society is a misogynist, uh, and—and beats Jenny—

00:22:22 Ben Host The Black Panthers are basically cartoons—

00:22:25 John Host Cartoons—

00:22:26 Ben Host —in this movie.

00:22:27 John Host —of Black Panthers. Uh, the Abbie Hoffman character is—is portrayed as kind of a—uh, exploitative dummy; and again, Jenny's

character arc takes her through almost every kind of alternative culture there was between '65 and '75. And she gets the—she's—gets the losing end of everything.

And Zemeckis responded to that criticism saying, "No! It's just"—you know, like, "Gump has no politics."

But the movie has politics.

00:23:01 Adam Host Yeah, and I think it's crucial to remember that, in every scene where Jenny chooses a form of counterculture, she's leaving, physically, Forrest and mainstream culture. She's always getting into a cab or getting into a VW Bus. Like, she's driving away from the center of our film.

That's—like, made into a thing.

00:23:22 John Host Right. And she's running, and she's apparent—you know, she's running from her childhood abuse.

00:23:26 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Adam:** "Who's actually running!"

John: Ohhh!

Adam: "Colon: Forrest vs. Jenny in the movie *Forrest Gump*." There's the title!

00:23:31 Clip Clip *[Background music and printing.]*

00:23:32 Crosstalk Crosstalk **John:** Thank—there's the paper!

Ben: [Simultaneous with above] Yeah! There's a paper!

00:23:33 Adam Host *[Relieved shout]* Oh!

00:23:34 Ben Host Whew!

00:23:35 Adam Host Oh, I'm so tired!

00:23:36 John Host Wow! I'm—

00:23:37 Ben Host Yeah. *[Laughs.]*

00:23:38 John Host —I'm—I'm grateful. *[Adam laughs.]*

00:23:41 Ben Host It does also, like, lick the asshole of the 1950s. That was, like—

00:23:45 John Host Ouch!

00:23:46 Ben Host —the best time.

00:23:47 John Host Wow! Grody!

00:23:49 Adam Host That was a time without Toto Washlet, so not a pleasant experience. *[Ben laughs.]*

00:23:54 John Host But the thing is, we watch the three dudes—the three, uh, guys who are sitting in the barbershop throughout the film, who—we're given a picture of them at the beginning as sort of—they're not quite mock—they—*[sighs]*.

When Forrest walks past them in his—in his leg braces, Sally Field challenges them and says, "What, you never saw a little boy in braces before?!"

But the old men didn't actually say anything. They never say a word in the film. They are—they're there as proxies for small-town Alabama, uh, like white dudes sitting around a barbershop.

But they never say anything racist. They just—they're there only for, like, spit-take—they keep watching Forrest do crazy things. But they never actually say anything.

00:24:42	Clip	Clip	Old Man in Barbershop: That boy sure is a running fool.
00:24:45	John	Host	Small-town Alabama is portrayed, as you say, Ben, as sort of an idyllic fifties environment. But we <u>know</u> it to be the wellspring of all the ra—I mean, we see—we see George Wallace.
00:25:03	Ben	Host	<i>[Laughing]</i> Forrest happens to be, like, photo— Right.
00:25:04	John	Host	—photobombing George Wallace. But we don't see him coming from <u>that</u> Alabama, really. Well, there's no racism in the film 'til we <u>get</u> to that George Wallace character, and the Blacks that <u>are</u> in Forrest's life when he's young <i>[laughing]</i> really seem, like, super happy with their lot in life.
00:25:23	Ben	Host	I didn't remember this—the whole George Wallace arc, uh, from—you know, when I saw this movie back when it came out. When he, like, picks up the notebook and hands it to the—to the girl and it's caught on camera, it cuts to the football team coach, and like—all the—all the assistant coaches, like, watching and glowering—
00:25:44	John	Host	Bear Bryant!
00:25:45	Ben	Host	—about that in the locker room, and you <u>think</u> that that's going to then, like, cause a negative—
00:25:50	Adam	Host	Right.
00:25:51	Ben	Host	—like, like they all ostracize Forrest or something. But it's just, like—it's just a moment. It—they—they scowl at him, and then it's over.
00:25:58	Adam	Host	You know what, they care about <u>winning</u> more, Ben.
00:26:00	John	Host	That's right.
00:26:01	Ben	Host	But like, this movie goes <u>so</u> far to trivialize what the— <i>[laughing]</i> what the civil rights movement was about.
00:26:08	John	Host	It whitewashes it <u>all</u> .
00:26:10	Ben	Host	Yeah.
00:26:11	Adam	Host	It almost treats moments in history the way—
00:26:13	Sound Effect	Sound Effect	<i>[Printing as Adam speaks.]</i>
00:26:14	Adam	Host	—a Wayans brothers spoof film treats <u>its</u> original source material.
00:26:18	John	Host	Is this in the—is this <u>in</u> the film paper?
00:26:20	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	Adam: It— John: 'Cause I <u>like</u> it.
00:26:21	Adam	Host	You know what I mean? Like, it's—it's trading on familiarity instead of truth.

00:26:27 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Adam:** Like, "Oh, I remember that moment of the civil rights movement!"

John: Yeah. Yeah, right.

00:26:30 Adam Host "I remember that speech at the Mall of Washington!" Like, "I—I remember that, so I recognize it, but I'm given this new twist."

00:26:38 John Host My memory of—of the way this film was talked about in the newspapers in '94, but also when I watched it in probably '98, my memory was that Forrest's cameos in all those scenes—he somehow intervened in history and played a pivotal role in those moments?

I don't—I don't know where I got that!

00:27:00 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Adam:** Yeah!

John: But I—but I had this sense that it was like—

00:27:02 John Host "Oh, if it weren't for Forrest, there never would have been a Civil Rights Bill!"

00:27:06 Adam Host Yeah.

00:27:07 John Host But it turns out that in most of those films, Forrest is just there. He just meets Kennedy—

00:27:11 Ben Host Uh, if it—if it weren't for Forrest, there would never have been a "Shit Happens" bumper sticker. But—

00:27:16 John Host Right! *[Ben laughs.]* And because there are those moments, right? He invented Elvis's dance. He invented the—invented the—

00:27:21 Ben Host Right.

00:27:22 John Host —smiley face T-shirt and the *[laughing]* "Shit Happens" bumper sticker.

But his meetings with Kennedy and Johnson, and, uh, and Wallace, those are just—they're just photobombs.

00:27:32 Adam Host At the time—

00:27:33 Ben Host Right.

00:27:34 Adam Host —the effects of those scenes were celebrated and awarded.

00:27:38 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Adam:** But now it looks like a Robert Smigel, uh, Conan O'Brien bit!

John: *[Laughing]* Yeah, right? Where the—where the lips are—

Adam: With the moving—yeah! *[Laughs.]*

John: —just like, "Blah blah, blah blerb!"

00:27:44 Adam Host Yeah! *[Ben and Adam laugh.]*

00:27:46 John Host Oh, oh no! He also take—Forrest takes credit for—I mean, you know, the film gives him credit for writing John Lennon's "Imagine."

00:27:52 Adam Host Yeah.

00:27:53 Ben Host Right. *[Laughs.]*

00:27:54 John Host Which is another one where you're just like, "Yeah. That was—sure."

00:27:56 Ben Host Deepfakes, uh, have really come a long way.

00:27:58 John Host They really have.

00:28:00 Adam Host Uh, there was a sequel written to this film by the book's author, that was in pre-production for a little bit and then 9/11 happened, and then it went away forever.

But the sequel to the film was going to be the inverse of this, in that Forrest was proximate to bad things that happened—

00:28:22 John Host Ohhh.

00:28:23 Adam Host —over the course of the next 40 years after this film.

00:28:27 John Host Oh, yeah.

00:28:28 Adam Host And what an interesting, like, dark mirror image of—like, I wonder if that would have changed how we feel about this film, to get a sequel that—that was its counterpoint in such a literal way.

00:28:41 John Host The crazy thing about that sequel script—so Tom Hanks did a thing that Donald Sutherland should have done with *Animal House*. Do you remember that story?

When they were making *Animal House*, they didn't have a ton of money. And they offered Donald Sutherland either, you know, scale—\$25,000 or something—or a percentage of the film, and Sutherland took the money.

00:29:05 Adam Host Mmm.

00:29:06 John Host And if you do the calculation, if he had taken a percentage of *Animal House*, he would have made \$30,000,000 or something from it.

00:29:12 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Ben:** Wow.

John: So—

Adam: Instead of doing fourth sequel to *Body Snatchers* movies—

John: [Laughing] Right.

Adam: —like he's had to do—

00:29:18 John Host Right. [Ben laughs.]

00:29:19 Adam Host —he would have been, uh, making better choices.

00:29:21 John Host So Hanks took no money for *Gump*. He took a percentage of the fil—of—oh, and he's smart! He took a—and this is for all you listening out there, if you ever get this opportunity—he took a percentage of gross.

Which meant that he got—

00:29:35 Ben Host Wow.

00:29:36 John Host —\$40,000,000 for this film.

00:29:38 Adam Host Do you know how much the author of the book made?

00:29:41 John Host Three hundred and fifty thousand dollars. Because—

00:29:43 Adam Host Yeah.

00:29:44 John Host —he—he took a percentage of net, and this movie is one of the legendary films that even though it, like, made \$900,000,000 or whatever, uh, they used Hollywood bookkeeping on it.

And, uh, and it actually registered as a loss for Paramount.

00:30:03 Adam Host So brutal.

00:30:04 John Host So he sued them, and the negotiation—Paramount couldn't pay him more, otherwise their phony accounting would be exposed. So what they did was they bought the script for the sequel from him for some undisclosed millions of dollars.

00:30:22 Adam Host Yeah.

00:30:23 John Host As a—as a workaround. As a reach-around. *[Ben laughs.]*

00:30:26 Adam Host This is why writers strike and unionize. Stories like this. They're always getting screwed.

00:30:31 John Host Never take a portion of net.

00:30:34 Adam Host Yeah.

00:30:35 Crosstalk Crosstalk **John:** Always take a portion of gross.

Ben: I can never remember the difference between net and gross.

00:30:39 John Host And—and yet, you've got the pronunciation of paean (*peen*) fairly confidently.

00:30:43 Ben Host Mm. *[John laughs.]*

00:30:44 Ben Host I didn't say that I stood by that pronunciation! I said that I got it from a robot!

00:30:48 Adam Host I just want to say how grateful I feel to be in a business partnership with Ben Harrison. *[John cracks up, Ben and Adam laugh.]*

00:30:58 John Host "Hey Adam! I—I signed a deal! Uh, I—I—I went with net!"

00:31:02 Crosstalk Crosstalk **John:** "I couldn't remember—"

Adam: "It sounds great!"

John: "Yeah, I couldn't remember what it was, but—"

Adam: "Net catches more money, right?"

John: "Yeah, exactly!"

Adam: "Gross sounds bad!"

00:31:06 John Host "Nothing but net!" *[All three laugh.]*

00:31:10 Music Transition Very brief clip of "War."

War!

00:31:11 Music Music Gentle, patriotic-sounding music.

00:31:12 Adam Promo John, when was the last time you made a meal in under 30 minutes that didn't involve opening a can of Spaghetti-Os and dumping that can into a bowl in your bathtub?

[Ben laughs.]

00:31:21 John Promo It's not a well-rounded meal.
00:31:23 Adam Promo What if I told you in less than 30 minutes, you could have a delicious meal made of fresh ingredients that you made yourself?
00:31:29 John Promo I would scarcely believe it, Adam! *[Stifling laughter]* How would I go about this?
00:31:33 Adam Promo HelloFresh makes that possible!
00:31:35 Ben Promo Yeah, they send you recipes with step-by-step instructions, and then there's pre-measured ingredients for those recipes. You'll have everything you need to get dinner on the table in just about 30 minutes.

If you're a vegetarian, they got you. If you're, uh, watching your calories, they got you. If you're looking to feed an entire family, they can help you with that. And, uh, you can add extra meals to your weekly order, as well as yummy add-ons like garlic bread and cookie dough.

You can save \$80 off your first month of HelloFresh if you go to [HelloFresh.com/fire80](https://www.hellofresh.com/fire80) and enter "fire80". It's like receiving eight meals for free!

That's [HelloFresh.com/fire80](https://www.hellofresh.com/fire80), and enter "fire80".

[Mimics an explosion sound.]

00:32:16 Music Transition Very brief clip of "War."
Huh!
Yeah!
00:32:18 Ben Host Gentlemen, this is a war movie podcast, and this—this, uh, movie does have a lot of Vietnam stuff in it. It's kind of the middle act. Let's talk about that stuff. You know, do what we came to do here today.
00:32:33 John Host *[Singing]* I ain't no millionaire's son! No, no, no!
00:32:36 Music Music Brief clip from "Fortunate Son" by Creedence Clearwater Revival.
—no, no!
It ain't me—
00:32:37 Adam Host Uh, yeah! I mean, all those scenes, I think—*[sighs]*. If they don't hang on Forrest, they hang on Lt. Dan—
00:32:42 John Host Have you—
00:32:43 Adam Host —and your ability to respect, appreciate, and sometimes fear him.
00:32:46 Crosstalk Crosstalk **John:** We love Lt. Dan—
Adam: Yeah.
John: —when he first arrives.
00:32:49 Adam Host Yeah.
00:32:50 John Host He's exactly what you hope your lieutenant will be when you first

arrive in Vietnam.

00:32:53 Adam Host Yeah!

00:32:55 John Host Lt. Dan is good in battle. He's good—he's good in the streets and in the sheets. *[Ben laughs.]*

00:33:03 Adam Host You do not wanna be a Forrest Gump in the sheets, that's for sure.

00:33:07 Ben Host He's the rare soldier that's there, like, looking to fulfill his destiny of dying in battle. *[Laughing]* Which is an interesting illustration of his character.

He's also, like, able to make Forrest and Bubba feel safe. *[Laughing]* Like—like, Forrest's recollections of Vietnam contain one combat scene.

00:33:32 John Host Yeah!

00:33:33 Ben Host Like, everything else is just walking around.

00:33:34 John Host And I—I actually liked that about it. That Vietnam is portrayed as kind of boring for a long time. 'Cause I imagine that was—that was true for a lot of soldiers. They got to Vietnam, they walked around for a year—

00:33:48 Crosstalk Crosstalk **John:** —or they sat on a military base—

Ben: *[Laughing]* Got rained on.

00:33:49 John Host Got rained on, and they—they burned their poo in 50-gallon drums. And, uh, and then they went home.

So that was kind of cool, and so the firefight—and particularly the way the firefight just erupted. And you could see the machine gun—the—the flashes of machine gun fire from—from way off on the horizon.

You did get a feeling of—

00:34:10 Ben Host Tracers coming in.

00:34:12 John Host Yeah! It was—it felt very real, and it felt harrowing.

00:34:15 Ben Host Yeah, it's—I mean, among the best Vietnam combat scenes we've seen, I think.

00:34:20 John Host The scenes of Forrest running through the jungle...

[Singing] Run through the jungle! *[Mimics guitar.]*

[Ben and Adam laugh.]

Had to get it in there.

Uh, those scenes were—you know, the—the—the camera was moving on a—what I presume to be some kind of track. And the—the foliage was really blurred. It was—it was unclear exactly what the geography was, where—what was happening. I thought it was well—well-shot.

00:34:50 Ben Host I did, too. I—uh, yeah. I mean, I guess they do sh—they also show him, like, Pooh-Bearing himself into a, uh, a hole that he's

presumably gonna chase Viet Cong out of.

00:35:03 John Host Right.

00:35:04 Ben Host But it makes the case that Forrest Gump, like, might have gotten some confirmed kills in-country.

00:35:11 Adam Host Yeah. He petted a lot of people to death over there.

00:35:14 Ben Host *[Laughing]* R—right. I just wondered, like—I wondered at the choice to totally leave the trauma of that to the side.

Like, he does not absorb any—any trauma in this movie from anything, really. I guess—I guess that's a—a character choice, and I'm sure there are people that are capable of going to combat and coming out the other side not damaged, but—

00:35:37 Adam Host Well, he—he notably did not run across country once returning home from Vietnam. He only does that in—in the grief of Jenny leaving him.

00:35:46 Ben Host Yeah.

00:35:47 Adam Host So he—I would argue that he does feel pain, in—in that kind of way, but Vietnam is not one of the things that caused it for him.

00:35:53 John Host It's only Jenny.

00:35:54 Adam Host Yeah. Jenny's the only thing that can move his needle like that.

00:35:58 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Adam:** And I don't mean that sexually.

Ben: That's such a Greatest Generation character trait, rather than a baby—

00:36:03 Ben Host —'cause—'cause I mean, like, the whole thing about the Vietnam vets was that they started to talk about their trauma.

00:36:11 John Host Uh, there is the scene on the Lincoln Memorial where Abbie Hoffman says "Get up here, man, and tell your story!"

And he's been—he's joined this peace movement, uh—

00:36:23 Crosstalk Crosstalk **John:** —like a sit-in or whatever—

Ben: Because he got in the wrong line. *[Laughs.]*

00:36:25 John Host Right! Somebody was just like, "Come on, man!" and he's there in his Medal of Honor—you know, in his uniform.

[The scene starts playing while John continues describing it.]

And the microphone is cut off right as he starts to—to—to speak to this group.

00:36:38 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Ben:** Right.

John: And it stays off until he's like, *[putting on a Southern accent]* "And that's all I've got to say about that."

00:36:42 John Host And—

00:36:43 Ben Host *[Laughing]* Cutting the mic was a real brave choice *[John laughs]* on the filmmakers' part.

00:36:46 John Host Well, yeah! Because we have no idea what he said or what he—
what the—uh, the audience response would have been.

00:36:51 Adam Host That brings us to the fourth film paper we can write about this film,
which is, like—

00:36:55 Sound Effect Sound Effect *[Printer.]*

00:36:56 Adam Host —you have a chance to say something profound, and your main
character is—

00:37:00 John Host Muted.

00:37:01 Adam Host Yeah.

00:37:02 John Host And so we have no idea! We—we—we're also left in the dark.

00:37:05 Ben Host It was very meaningful to Abbie Hoffman.

00:37:07 John Host Yeah, Abbie Hoffman was like, "Thank you, man!" You know, like...
"Yeah!"

We—we know that he, uh, isn't capable of processing the war to the
point that he would be anti-war.

00:37:21 Adam Host Did you go and read the dialogue for that scene as it was written?

00:37:24 John Host No.

00:37:25 Adam Host It was, I think, three sentences. It was something like, uh,
"Sometimes you go to war and you lose your legs. Sometimes you
go and you lose your friend. That's all I have to say about that."

Like, that was it. There was—I mean, even if you were to hear
Forrest's words there, there's nothing profound about them.

00:37:40 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Ben:** So that—that wouldn't have gotten it off of the *[John laughs]*
National Review's Best 25 Conservative Movies of the—

Adam: Yeah.

Ben: —Last 25 Year list? *[Laughs.]*

00:37:46 Adam Host Yeah.

00:37:49 John Host I mean, I feel like—uh, I feel like the missing dialogue in *Lost in*
Translation still—still compels me.

00:37:56 Adam Host Yeah, that's also what Bill Murray said *[John laughs]* in, uh, in her
ear.

How lucky were, uh, Bubba and Forrest to get, like, such a paternal
leader in Vietnam, though? Someone who is, like, more or less
forgiving of their weird eccentricities?

00:38:13 John Host We don't see that a lot in Vietnam movies, and I wonder if that is also
a cliché of other Vietnam war movies.

00:38:19 Adam Host Yeah.

00:38:20 John Host Because there surely were officers that were both capable and nice.

00:38:24 Adam Host Yeah.

00:38:25 John Host Or sergeants, even.

00:38:26 Ben Host Right.

00:38:27 John Host And we always see them as either capable and shitty, or nice and—and take a bullet.

00:38:33 Adam Host Yeah.

00:38:34 Ben Host In *Casualties of War*, Ving Rhames was nice enough until—until Michael J. Fox made it a problem for him.

00:38:42 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Adam:** Mm.

Ben: Yeah.

John: And Elias was—in, uh, *Platoon*—

Adam: Yeah.

John: —is nice and also super hard.

00:38:50 John Host But the movie kills him.

00:38:51 Adam Host But in those movies, and I think every other war movie that I can remember, the injured soldier on the battlefield isn't asked to be left there the way Lt. Dan is. That—that is a new twist that this film gives the soldier.

I think every time we see a wounded person on the battlefield, they're like, "Help me! Save me! Give me the morphine!" But Lt. Dan wants to die.

00:39:18 John Host 'Cause—'cause Lt. Dan has grown up in a family—

00:39:22 Adam Host Of Klansmen? *[Laughs.]*

00:39:23 John Host Of—*[laughs]*. Where it's—*[Ben laughs]*—where—

00:39:26 Adam Host *[Laughing]* It's just Klansmen all the way down!

00:39:28 John Host He's grown up in a family where the eldest son dies in war. And that's part of the family mythology that he—

00:39:34 Ben Host Mm-hm.

00:39:35 John Host —feels obligated to uphold, and that this is hi—that's been his destiny since he was five years old.

And we don't look any deeper into that. He becomes embittered that he didn't die, and turns into an alcoholic whoremonger. And that's an interesting little corner of this movie.

00:39:53 Adam Host Mm-hm.

00:39:54 John Host Lt. Dan's character arc.

00:39:56 Ben Host He winds up being, like, almost baptized to become clean. Right? 'Cause—

00:40:01 John Host When he falls off the boat?

00:40:02 Adam Host *[Laughing]* I—I love that scene, because Lt. Dan's like, "Hey, Forrest. I never thanked you for saving my life back there," and then like, four beats later he still isn't apologizing, and then he goes over the side!

00:40:13 John Host Well, when you—*[laughs]*.

00:40:14 Adam Host What a big city apologized by—apology by Lt. Dan! What a fucking asshole!

00:40:18 John Host When I watched this movie the first time, and in this watch, both of those looked like Lt. Dan was suiciding!

00:40:23 Adam Host Yeah. Yeah.

00:40:24 Ben Host It looked like he's going to Davy Jones's locker.

00:40:26 John Host Yeah, like, "Hey man—"

00:40:27 Ben Host He was just going for a little swim!

00:40:28 John Host "—I just wanted to say, thanks a lot." And then you're like, that's it for Lt. Dan!

00:40:32 Adam Host And he's not in the next scene, so you're really given some time to chew on that.

00:40:36 John Host Right.

00:40:37 Ben Host Turns out he's a business genius, though. He's able to figure out how to invest their shrimp money in the Apple Computer Corporation. *[Laughs.]*

00:40:44 Adam Host You're probably more buoyant without legs, right?

[Beat.]

00:40:48 John Host Interesting. Right, legs are not—

00:40:49 Ben Host Hm!

00:40:50 John Host —they're—they don't have a lot of fat.

00:40:51 Adam Host Yeah.

00:40:52 John Host You—you don't have the use of them as flippers.

00:40:55 Adam Host No. No. But also, Lt. Dan, that's not an apology. *[Ben laughs.]* Any wife will tell you that.

[Laughing] You try—you try stepping to your wife, going "You know, I never apologized for coming home late." *[John and Adam laugh.]*

00:41:10 John Host Um, I don't know if you guys saw this. This was just—uh, it was just on the Internet, and I happened upon it before watching this movie. Before we—we saw we were gonna watch it.

But someone did the calculation, um, how much those Apple stocks would have been worth.

00:41:30 Adam Host Mm-hm.

00:41:31 Ben Host Oh, interesting!

00:41:32 John Host It—it wasn't Apple stock that he could have bought on the market. This was an IPO.

00:41:36 Ben Host Right, he was a—an angel investor or something like that?

00:41:40 John Host And so he would have had to have bought a \$100,000 stake in the company, which at the time would have been 3% of the value of Apple.

Uh, which means that—I think... that he would have made \$1.7 billion from it.

00:41:57 Adam Host Wow. *[Ben laughs.]*

00:41:58 John Host And, um—

00:42:00 Adam Host There are no good billionaires. And that would include Forrest Gump.

00:42:03 John Host Oh, wait, wait, wait. No, I'm sorry. The company was valued at that. By the end of the trading day that first day, he would have been worth—Gump would have been worth \$53,000,000; and if he didn't sell any shares, his stake would—

00:42:18 Ben Host Well, he gave half of the shares to Bubba's mom, remember.

00:42:21 John Host Right. But his stake now would be worth \$18.9 billion. Uh—

00:42:26 Ben Host Wow.

00:42:27 John Host —if he didn't—if—if he didn't sell.

00:42:29 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Ben:** I have a moment of pedantry—

Adam: Do it.

John: Oh, really?

Ben: —I would like to share.

00:42:31 John Host Let's see it.

00:42:32 Sound Effect Sound Effect *[Beeping as Ben speaks.]*

00:42:33 Ben Host The letter from Apple Computer dated 1975 uses the Apple Garamond font below the logo.

00:42:40 John Host *[Groans.]*

00:42:41 Ben Host Apple did not use this font before the introduction of the Macintosh—

00:42:44 Crosstalk Crosstalk **John:** *[Still groaning]* Garamond font...

Ben: —in 1984.

00:42:45 Ben Host Until then, the logo featured the Motter Tektura font. The Garamond font itself was only designed in 1977.

00:42:55 Adam Host Wow! Was that one, uh, submitted by our friends at Hoefler&Co.?

[Ben laughs.]

It's amazing!

00:43:01 Ben Host Yeah!

00:43:02 Adam Host Good catch!

00:43:03 Ben Host I love a font pedant! *[Laughs.]*

00:43:05 John Host I have—I have a moment of pedantry, which—

00:43:08 Ben Host Mm!

00:43:09 John Host —which is that—

00:43:10 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Ben:** You noticed something wrong with this movie, too? *[Laughs.]*

John: *[Laughing]* I—I did!

00:43:12 John Host Which is that once Gump is awarded the Medal of Honor, the protocol for a Medal of Honor winner is that every single person in the military salute him, including, like, the General of the Army.

Because you're saluting the medal. Right?

00:43:30 Adam Host Ohhh.

00:43:31 John Host And, uh—*[Adam laughs]* if you're a—

00:43:33 Adam Host Like, "Hey, my eyes are up here!"

00:43:34 John Host Yeah, that's right. But if you're a Medal of Honor winner, you get the—you get the salute from every military person you encounter. And not a single person in this film salutes him! Including the guy that comes and gives him his dispatch—his, um, his discharge papers.

Like, he—the—the sergeant or whatever comes in, he's like—you know, kinda throws them at him and is like, "You're out!"

It's like—hey, that guy may be playing ping-pong right now, but he's a Medal of Honor winner! And there's, like, heavy—

00:44:01 Ben Host Yeah.

00:44:02 John Host —there's heavy protocol about that! And I didn't even see, on his uniform, the Medal of Honor ribbon. And I'm not talking about the—the choker, but like, the ribbon on his ribbons.

00:44:14 Ben Host Would they put that on at the ceremony, or would that be something that he wouldn't have yet because he's just had the ribbon put around his neck?

00:44:20 John Host But he—we see him in uniform after that.

00:44:24 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Ben:** Oh. Oh, we do, okay.

John: And—uh, like several times.

00:44:26 John Host And—and he is not—he is not sporting it. I think the Purple Heart is the highest ribbon on his—I mean, don't—don't get—don't yell at me about that, Internet. I don't know for sure, *[Ben laughs]* but I don't see it on his ribbons.

00:44:39 Adam Host That's thematically so consistent with how Forrest is treated for the entire film, right? No matter what success he achieves in any area, or—or what accidental historically significant moment he trips and falls himself toward, like, his status in life never changes.

Like, he's never afforded greater respect for doing anything. He's always treated like Forrest Gump throughout. And I think that's crucial in—in how we approach his character and how we approach the film. Like, he must always be an underdog.

00:45:13 John Host Right.

00:45:14 Adam Host He must never win totally.

00:45:16 Ben Host The second he gets that Apple letter, the next scene is him getting a job cutting the lawn at the—

00:45:21 Adam Host Right.

00:45:22 Ben Host —at the football field.

00:45:23 John Host And all of that is—is—it's handed to us as though Forrest is making those choices, and now he has financial independence and so he can.

No one ever—Lt. Dan does not get Forrest a house in town. Lt. Dan—uh—Forrest—he shows up—he shows up at the beginning of the film in that white *Rain Man* suit with the—with a clean shirt.

So we know at least he's—somebody is caring for him?

00:45:49 Crosstalk Crosstalk **John:** Or he's maybe able to care for himself, to pick out his own suit?

Adam: Are you talking about, like, the first scenes of the film?

John: The first scene.

00:45:54 Adam Host Yeah.

00:45:55 John Host But he doesn't, uh—but no one ever says, like, "Hey, Forrest. You're a millionaire now. And you don't have to live in your mom's old house."

He—he—it seems like that's what he wants; he needs the security; he needs the constancy.

00:46:08 Adam Host One bit of trivia about that house is that that's the house from *The Patriot*.

00:46:12 John Host What?!

00:46:13 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Ben:** Whoa!

Adam: Forrest's house is the house from *The Patriot*.

00:46:15 Adam Host Isn't that wild?

00:46:16 Ben Host Daaamn.

00:46:18 John Host Come on.

00:46:19 Adam Host Yeah.

00:46:21 John Host Where's the film paper about that? [Adam and Ben laughs.]

00:46:24 Adam Host The show with the most papers: *Forrest Gump*.

00:46:26 Ben Host Yeah. [Laughs.]

00:46:27 John Host So what does this say—what does it—as a war movie, does it say anything about Vietnam?

00:46:35 Ben Host I think it kinda makes the case that Vietnam changed his trajectory. It doesn't take it any further than that. You know?

Like, the thing that was important about Vietnam was that he met Bubba and Lt. Dan, and like, I guess absorbed everything one would need to know about running a shrimp boat from Bubba?

00:46:54 John Host Right. [Ben laughs.]

00:46:55 Ben Host That's another thing that really strains credulity, is that he buys the boat and then, like, knows how to operate it. [Laughs.]

00:47:02 John Host Well, it—yeah, it doesn't make being a shrimp boat captain seem like that hard of a job.

00:47:07 Adam Host It doesn't make anything seem like that hard of a job.

00:47:10 Ben Host No. You just have to make it through one hurricane.

00:47:13 Adam Host This movie doesn't make ping-pong look that hard, either.

00:47:15 John Host Right.

00:47:16 Adam Host If Forrest can do it.

00:47:17 John Host Forrest is—is not accorded any additional respect for being—not just a veteran, but a—but a Medal of Honor winner.

00:47:36 Ben Host So the—the war doesn't bring him any—um, it's—it's really, like—it's the capitalism that brings him any gifts.

00:47:50 John Host He never seems to get famous, either. Like, he's on—he's—you know, he's in the Medal of Honor ceremony, he meets a couple of presidents, he's stupendously wealthy, he's on the cover of *Fortune* magazine, he's being covered by the news while he—

00:47:51 Ben Host Yeah!

00:47:59 John Host —while he runs across the country. But, like, nobody recognizes him or knows who he is, even though he's been in all these, like, pivotal moments in history.

00:48:13 Ben Host Right, but still, it would seem like his polymathic qualities—you know, as soon as the—as soon as the newspapers pick up that he basically invented the—the sport of running—

00:48:14 John Host *[Laughing]* Right.

00:48:44 Adam Host —um—that he also won the Medal of Honor would be—that would be the headline! I—you know, Medal of Honor is one of those things that it's right at the top of your Wikipedia entry.

00:48:51 Music Music It's—it's kind of like—you know, it—it absolutely is. It's even better than Oscar winner. Right? So once you do it, everything that happens to you from then on is prefaced with that award.

00:48:52 John Host I—I—I think one of my—one of the things that left a bad taste in my mouth about this film is the—

00:48:58 Adam Host It starts the very rare MEGOT. *[Ben and John crack up.]* Possibly. Get that one going.

00:49:06 John Host Joan Baez's cover of Bob Dylan's "Blowin' in the Wind" begins to play as John speaks.

00:49:06 John Host *How many roads must a man walk down
Before you can call him a man?*

00:49:06 John Host How many—how many roads must a man walk down before you can call him a MEGOT winner?

00:49:06 Ben Host Mm. *[Laughs.]*

00:49:06 Adam Host That's a—that's the worst strip club song, right? "Blowin' in the Wind"?

00:49:06 John Host *[Music fades out. John and Ben laugh.]*

00:49:06 John Host The acoustic version especially?

00:49:06 John Host She is naked behind that guitar.

00:49:07 Adam Host Not gonna get many dollar bills on the rail doing that song.

00:49:11 Crosstalk Crosstalk **John:** But the way the—the way this—

00:49:13 John Host **Ben:** She doesn't want the dollar bills!

00:49:13 John Host She wants to—she wants to be recognized as folk singing cover artist!

00:49:23 Adam Host But the way this movie, like—uh, devalues the Medal of Honor bummed me out.

00:49:23 Adam Host Yeah.

00:49:24 John Host That it's just a—it's just a thing, and it's never... It's not accorded any special significance. And I'm—

00:49:32 Adam Host *[Laughing]* Jenny puts it on and she gets saluted everywhere she goes. *[Ben laughs.]*

00:49:35 John Host Yeah, that's right. She gets saluted at the—at the hippie parties.

00:49:37 Adam Host Yeah! I mean, Forrest doesn't value it himself in that regard, by giving it to her so easily, right?

00:49:42 John Host And that—that seems believable—

00:49:44 Adam Host Yeah.

00:49:45 John Host —but that—that the rest of the world would—would say, like—would—*[sighs]*. I don't know. Would get—would—guys would be buying him lunches in—at lunch counters!

00:49:53 Adam Host Right.

00:49:54 John Host Even if you portrayed him as not understanding what was happening, still it would—it would locate the film in the world.

00:50:00 Adam Host Yeah! It's funny how like, the historical moments aren't the only thing neutralized. It's the idea of wealth and privilege and celebrity, also, that's totally tamped down.

00:50:11 Ben Host Like—

00:50:11 Ben Host Yeah.

00:50:12 Adam Host —Forrest gets rich, and, like—like the ugliest kind of rich people, he immediately dismisses wealth as a thing that changes you or a wealth that can be used to do good. He's like—he says something that his mom told him about, like, you know, "Anything above your means is just window dressing anyway."

But he has the chance to change people's lives with that money. Like his Black housekeeper! Like Lt. Dan! Like—like a whole bunch of people, and he—and it's cool that he only changes Bubba's mom's life, like, I'm with that, but he could have done—like, he could have given money to Jenny!

He could have done a lot with it and he doesn't, and that's, like—that is so—that is such a bullseye for what this film represents when we talk about the sort of person that would like this film, and the—the type of filmmaking that lionizes the perfection of—of baby—baby boomer culture.

Like, Forrest got his.

00:51:08 John Host Yeah.

00:51:09 Adam Host And that's good enough.

00:51:10 Ben Host Yeah.

00:51:11 John Host Well, and his housekeeper, who we are shown in montage—her family has always been—you know, all—all the way back to plantation—

00:51:18 Adam Host Yeah.

00:51:19 John Host —time, has always—they've always worked as servants.

00:51:22 Adam Host Yeah.

00:51:23 John Host House servants. Then we're—we see her being served by a white woman, the same kind of shrimp étouffée —

00:51:29 Adam Host Mm-hm.

00:51:30 John Host —and, uh—

00:51:31 Ben Host Which is like—like the racial comeuppance that she deserves, but also somehow, like, totally—totally overlooks the—the pain of generational, uh, poverty and racism. *[Laughs.]* Like—

00:51:45 John Host Well, because it's only there for the audience to feel good about itself!

00:51:47 Adam Host Yeah.

00:51:48 John Host And to be like, "Well that's—"

00:51:49 Ben Host Yeah.

00:51:50 John Host "—the American story, right? That everything is better now that we are—"

'Cause this is again, '94, right?

00:51:55 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Ben:** Yep.

John: This is happening—

00:51:56 Ben Host Very, like, post-racism idea of how racism works.

00:52:00 John Host This is the post-racial society thing that we see in all these movies we watch from this era, where we're all being flattered by the idea that—uh, that's all it takes, right?

Uh, like, you get a check. Mom faints. And the next scene they're living in a—you know, it's like a—a *Beverly Hillbillies* house somewhere, where, you know, all the past crimes are—are erased by the application of money.

00:52:27 Adam Host It's such a magic trick that this film does, because, like... all of this is out there on the table. Like, you—like, you get a sense of all of this, but by neutralizing every emotion, or every feeling in the film besides nostalgia—like, you can't even get it up to hate Forrest Gump!

[John laughs.]

For—for all of these bad decisions. Like, we're really ripping on this film a lot, but I can tell you that I didn't hate it. And I didn't hate the experience of watching it, and I didn't hate Forrest himself! It's a weird, like—like, numb feeling that pervades it.

When all you get is that nostalgia, nothing else? I can't remember ever seeing a film like this before.

00:53:04 John Host

Well, we're talking about—uh—throughout the eighties, we as a nation—and by that I mean America—we were wrestling with Vietnam. Again, right?

But—but it was 15 years after the war ended.

00:53:18 Adam Host

Some say the wrestling never stopped. *[John laughs.]*

00:53:22 John Host

We wrestled with it through the late eighties. What was the deal? What—you know, what—how did this affect us? It was brutal. What—we actually lost.

And then Clinton re-established diplomatic relations with Vietnam. And there was—maybe, culturally, you could argue that we felt like we'd come full circle. And in being friends with Vietnam again, we—uh, we washed our hands, somehow.

And—

00:53:45 Adam Host

Do we get to win this time? *[Ben and John laugh.]*

00:53:50 John Host

And by '94, are we really in a place where we are post-Vietnam trauma? And we get to just put it in as set dressing for the music, basically? Like, is Vietnam just—just a thing that makes Forrest rich?

Is Vietnam just a thing that we as citizens of the United States kind of put in the same category as Forrest's Ku Klux Klan granddad?

Uh, we don't have to—we're—we're sad about it, but we're just as sad about the peace movement. Uh, it's really—it's "both sides"-ing us through that whole thing.

00:54:29 Ben Host

Yeah.

00:54:30 John Host

"Both sides were bad." And now it's 1994 and we can just cartoonify it!

00:54:34 Adam Host

Well, I mean it's "both sides"-ing it, but it's also punishing one side—

00:54:37 John Host

Right.

00:54:38 Adam Host

—and not the other.

00:54:39 John Host

That's right.

00:54:40 Ben Host

We got a bit of a film paper here! For a movie set in a '94 that imagines that it is—exists in a post-racial society, the cinematography is incredibly bad when it comes to exposing the faces of the Black actors in this movie.

00:54:56 John Host

Perpetually in shadow.

00:54:58 Ben Host

You can't see any detail in their faces! Like—and it—and it's—like, when we meet Bubba, he's on the bus, and there's a light source behind him, so, like, you could maybe forgive it there, but then—

but—and—and he's like, our first, you know, Black character that we spend any time with, but he's—he's hard to see in basically every shot.

And all of the other Black characters, that is true of as well.

00:55:21 John Host Is this film widely known as one that's guilty of that? Because I know that is a thing.

00:55:27 Ben Host It's a thing. I mean, I—I—I don't know that it's widely cited as, uh, an example of that, but, uh, it was certainly on my mind as I watched it.

I think also, maybe partly because we had just watched a movie set in—inside a tank, that was super dark, yet you can see everybody's expression when you need to, the—like, the idea that this movie has all these Black characters that are—you know, mainly there as props to show that Forrest has no prejudice in his heart, *[laughs]* despite coming from a—a Klan family.

Uh, you cannot see them. They're—they're almost silhouetted, in every shot.

00:56:09 John Host Is this film shot really flat? I mean, it's—feels like a dream, and I'm wondering how much of that is in the cinematography.

00:56:17 Adam Host You're asking someone who watched this on a seat back. This is the one time I've seen a film in worse fidelity than you have.

00:56:23 John Host Right. I mean, *[Adam laughs]* I was watching it on my phone while I was in the bathtub.

00:56:27 Adam Host *[Laughing]* Uh-huh.

00:56:29 Ben Host I mean, this—the cinematographer on this is, uh, Don Burgess, and he is still super active. Like, he shot *Aquaman*, he shot *Spider-Man*, he's—he shot a bunch of—

00:56:42 John Host "Man" movies?

00:56:43 Ben Host —uh, huge movies over the years.

I don't know how you can be the director of photography on *The Polar Express*, a movie that was computer-generated diarrhea, *[laughing]* but—

I—I guess he has—he has worked with actors of color. He did the cinematography on *42*. The Jackie Robinson movie!

00:57:01 John Host Hm.

00:57:02 Ben Host So he must have—he must have figured this out eventually, but—

00:57:06 John Host I mean, Zemeckis is a boomer. He was born in '52. And so he was 40 years old, basically, 38 years old making this movie. Mostly a boomer cast with the exception of Robin Wright, who was ten years younger than everybody else, but—but portraying someone who is meant to be the same age, almost exactly the same age, *[laughing]* which is kinda curious.

00:57:29 Ben Host Yeah.

00:57:30 Adam Host What do you make of Forrest's relationship with Jenny, especially at the end? Like, a lot of people—when they quote the movie, they

quote that part that goes, "I'm not a smart man, but I know what love is."

And seeing that scene for the first time since the film came out, like...

I remember being affected by him saying that then, but the part that really got me this time—and I was surprised to actually feel anything for this movie at any point—but toward the end, the line that he says before that is, uh, "Why don't you love me, Jenny?"

And that is such a unique thing to say. Like, I don't remember—that's not a thing that anyone says to anyone else.

00:58:16 John Host

I say it all the time.

00:58:17 Ben Host

Incels say it all the time.

00:58:18 John Host

Oof. *[Ben laughs.]*

00:58:19 Adam Host

Is Forrest Gump an incel?

00:58:20 John Host

Oof. *[Ben laughs harder.]*

Here's the thing we—well, here's the thing we don't see Jenny do. Which is that the day that Forrest becomes a millionaire, Jenny reappears.

00:58:31 Adam Host

Yeah.

00:58:32 John Host

But she has sex with him once, and then leaves.

And the Jenny that we've been introduced through—introduced to and watched go through her life arc, I think when she shows up when Forrest is a millionaire, there's an opportunity to show Jenny as an opportunist.

00:58:52 Adam Host

Yeah.

00:58:53 John Host

And yet, having impregnated herself on him—

00:58:57 Adam Host

Do you think it would have been funny if, uh, Forrest fucked Jenny sounding like the school superintendent did? *[John laughs.]*

00:59:03 Crosstalk Crosstalk

Adam: Like, in exactly the—*[breaks off, laughing.]*

John: "Agh! Agh! Agh!"

Clip: The discussed scene plays in the background.

John: That's all he knows!

Adam: Yeah!

00:59:07 John Host

It's the only—the only sex he understands!

00:59:09 Adam Host

Yeah.

00:59:10 John Host

But then she leaves and raises Haley (*Hah-lee*) Joel Osment—

00:59:15 Adam Host

That is not how you say that name. *[John and Ben laugh.]*

00:59:16 John Host

[laughing]—by—by herself for five years.

00:59:20 Crosstalk Crosstalk

Ben: Give him a break. He learned how to pronounce it by going on a Youtube—

Adam: Right.

Ben: —website to—

John: Yeah.

00:59:24 John Host *[Robotically]* Hah-lee Joe Osment.

What's his name?

00:59:27 Ben Host Hay-lee Joel Osment?

00:59:28 John Host Hay-lee Joe Osment.

00:59:29 Ben Host I think it's Haley Joel.

00:59:31 John Host Haley Joel Os-MENT.

Uh, anyway, she goes and raises him for five years on a waitress's salary, knowing that his father is a multi-millionaire living in a giant house, and that is—that's meant to give us some—that's meant to give Jenny some, like, character that I feel like even I wouldn't have.

00:59:54 Adam Host Well, Jenny knows that Forrest isn't gonna share his wealth. He's gonna hoard it.

00:59:58 John Host Really?

00:59:59 Adam Host That's the message of the film.

01:00:00 John Host *[Laughing]* I feel—I feel like Jenny would walk into that situation and say "Forrest, we have separate bedrooms."

And Forrest would be like, *[As Forrest, exaggerated Southern accent]* "Alright, Jenny."

And then she would say, "We're gonna—"

[Ben and Adam are laughing, John laughs too.]

01:00:12 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Adam:** *[Laughing]* Wow, the rare impression by John Roderick!

Ben: *[Laughing]* I can't believe that's the first one!

01:00:16 Adam Host Oh!

01:00:17 John Host And then she'd fill the refrigerator with corned beef. I mean, maybe I'm projecting here. But—

01:00:22 Adam Host 'Cause that's the life that you want?

01:00:23 John Host —what the hey—why the heck is she working as a waitress?

01:00:27 Adam Host Yeah.

01:00:28 John Host And then she comes back and—does Jenny die of AIDS? Is that what we are—?

01:00:34 Ben Host That is the implication, yes.

01:00:35 Adam Host The sequel says that she dies of Hep C.

[Beat.]

01:00:39	John	Host	<i>[Flat]</i> Really.
01:00:40	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	Ben: What?!
			Adam: Yeah.
01:00:41	John	Host	From her—from her junkie years.
01:00:42	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	Adam: Yeah.
			Ben: That's—that's not canon!
01:00:45	Adam	Host	It's what I read. I do research on this show!
01:00:48	John	Host	It feel—yeah. It feels like, uh, it feels like this is AIDS—uh, uh, an "unknown virus."
01:00:56	Adam	Host	You could <u>only</u> think it was AIDS in 1994.
01:00:59	John	Host	Yeah.
01:01:00	Ben	Host	Yeah.
01:01:01	John	Host	And—and that—and that was, I think, still during a period when, culturally in America, we—it—you could still say that AIDS was <u>punishment</u> . <i>[Adam laughs.]</i>
01:01:10	Adam	Host	Everyone's grandparents in the theater watching in '94 were like "But she wasn't gay!"
01:01:15	John	Host	Right. <i>[Ben and Adam laugh.]</i>
			But it <u>is</u> punishment for promiscuity.
01:01:19	Adam	Host	Right. Yeah.
01:01:20	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	John: And drug—drug use.
			Adam: Right. Yeah.
01:01:21	Ben	Host	And intravenous drug use.
01:01:22	John	Host	Yeah.
01:01:23	Ben	Host	Yeah.
01:01:24	John	Host	And you could—you could still make a movie where—where one of the characters, like, got her comeuppance all the way.
01:01:31	Adam	Host	Right.
01:01:32	John	Host	For everything.
01:01:33	Ben	Host	I mean, if it's not AIDS, it's a hurricane, right?
01:01:36	John	Host	Right. She died of being a slut.
01:01:39	Adam	Host	Uh, it's another instance of someone dying or sacrificing or being hurt that ultimately benefits Forrest, because he gets to care for the son he didn't know he had.
01:01:51	John	Host	That—he's fucking that kid up, big time.
01:01:53	Music	Transition	Very brief clip of "War."
			<i>War!</i>
01:01:55	Promo	Clip	<i>[Wolf howls. Dramatic piano and organ music. Throughout, the wolf howls again, and a crow caws.]</i>

April Wolfe: Hello there, ghouls and gals. It is I, April Wolfe.

I'm here to take you through the twisty, scary, heart-pounding world of genre cinema on the exhilarating program known as *Switchblade Sisters*.

[Sinister echo on the title.]

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[Thunder booms, something growls over April as she cackles evilly, and then all sound abruptly cuts.]

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[Same sinister echo effect] Switchblade Sisters!

[Upbeat, cheerful music begins.]

01:02:41 Promo Clip

Lisa Hanawalt: Hey, if you like your podcasts to be focused and well-researched, and your podcast hosts to be uncharismatic, unhorny strangers who have no interest in horses, then this is not the podcast for you.

Emily Heller: Yeah, and what's your deal?

[Lisa laughs.]

I'm Emily.

Lisa: I'm Lisa.

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Emily: Every other week on MaximumFun.org.

[*Music ends.*]

01:03:19	Music	Transition	Very brief clip of "War." <i>Huh!</i> <i>Yeah!</i>
01:03:21	Ben	Host	The one thing I wrote down that I wanted to interrogate is, um, in the DC scenes, when he's wandering around with his, uh, with his medal on, the SDS guy asks Jenny "Who's this baby killer?"
01:03:37	John	Host	Right.
01:03:38	Ben	Host	Or something like that.
01:03:39	John	Host	Right.
01:03:40	Ben	Host	And I've read, like, a lot of different stuff about—about that, and I feel like I'm not sure what to believe anymore. Because there is this very pervasive popular depiction of the treatment of veterans as baby killers by—by the civilians back home that is—you know, this movie is advancing it. You know, Adam's beloved <i>First Blood</i> series is advancing it. But I've also read that a lot of that has been, like, greatly overblown both in the media and in popular culture. Is that really a thing that—like, a—a war protester would say to a soldier that has just spoken on stage next to Abbie Hoffman? <i>[Laughs.]</i>
01:04:24	John	Host	Yeah, I mean, they—they run through every cliché. Right? And that was—
01:04:27	Ben	Host	When he's in like, the German uniform jacket, <i>[laughing]</i> like—
01:04:30	John	Host	Yeah, uh, that—that—that feels like something that hadn't been refuted yet. And I think you're right. I've read that same thing, that the number of instances where a soldier was actually disrespected getting off the airplane, or spat on, or all that stuff that we were led to believe was commonplace—and <u>somewhat</u> led to believe that by the—the military culture that came in the wake of that—you know, the "pride is back" culture. Uh, any—any time the—any time, uh, the army or, uh, or a veterans organization can portray themselves as <u>victims</u> of the culture <u>now</u> , uh, they jump at the chance. Because seeing themselves as victims really comports with their self-identity as people making the ultimate sacrifice.
01:05:17	Adam	Host	Boy, up until this point I thought this episode was gonna make our show very popular. <i>[John laughs.]</i> And now <i>[Ben laughs]</i> —
01:05:24	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	John: Now the—

Adam: —now I'm ready to lose that—that hope.

John: —veterans groups are gonna write in? [*Adam laughs.*]

01:05:28	John	Host	Uh, and that—you know, that's another—that's another kind of thing that makes this movie so popular with the National Review crowd. It flatters them that hippies are—that hippies no—have no sense of—of, um, honor. Right?
01:05:45	Ben	Host	Right. I mean, I—it—it does not feel like you can make a Vietnam film without landing on one side or the other of a very specific line in the culture war.
01:05:55	John	Host	Yeah. Right. I mean, there are movies that do it, right? But it—but— If <i>Platoon</i> had taken Charlie Sheen and—and done ten minutes of Sheen walking through an airport and out into the world, [<i>Ben laughs</i>] what would Charlie Sheen have encountered in—
01:06:15	Adam	Host	Running to his next plane, like OJ in a Hertz ad? [<i>John and Ben laugh.</i>]
01:06:20	John	Host	What would we—what would <i>Platoon</i> , in the voice of <u>that</u> movie—
01:06:24	Adam	Host	Yeah.
01:06:25	John	Host	—have shown us? I think it <u>wouldn't</u> have done the spit-on-a-soldier thing. Because its—its tone was more sophisticated than that. Although his—or, Oliver Stone's first film was—was <u>his</u> student film of <u>him</u> as a veteran walking around New York City. But being <u>personally</u> alienated, not like, shunned.
01:06:46	Adam	Host	There was a little bit of that when Sheen gets on the helicopter and Jennifer Grey is sitting next to him.
01:06:51	John	Host	Mm-hm.
01:06:52	Adam	Host	On the flight out of—
01:06:53	John	Host	Uh-huh.
01:06:54	Adam	Host	—outta camp. [<i>Ben laughs.</i>]
01:06:55	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	Adam: Like— John: He's in his leather jacket— Adam: Yeah.
01:06:56	John	Host	—and he's just like, "What are you doing later?"
01:06:57	Adam	Host	Yeah.
01:06:58	John	Host	Yeah.
01:06:59	Adam	Host	Little bit.
01:07:00	John	Host	[<i>Singing</i>] Shout-out! [<i>Ben and Adam laugh.</i>]
01:07:01	Music	Music	Gentle music fades in as Adam speaks.
01:07:04	Adam	Host	Before we go: I just wanna share a few of the casting choices not

made in this film.

01:07:10 John Host Oh!

01:07:11 Adam Host Play a little bit of fantasy casting couch!

01:07:13 Crosstalk Crosstalk **John:** Did—was Stallone—

Adam: Oh no, I shouldn't call it that! *[Laughs.]*

01:07:15 John Host *[Laughing]* Oh no! *[Ben laughs.]*

01:07:17 Adam Host Um—

01:07:18 John Host I have a fantasy casting couch.

01:07:19 Ben Host Zzzip. *[John and Ben laugh.]*

01:07:20 Adam Host The author of the book, uh, on—on which this film was based had a very clear idea of who Forrest Gump was going to be, and his first pick was John Goodman.

[Beat.]

He thought John—

01:07:31 Ben Host Wow!

01:07:32 Adam Host He wrote it with John Goodman in mind. I thought that was interesting, but—

01:07:34 John Host Quoi?

01:07:35 Adam Host —uh—

01:07:36 John Host Wait, let's just take a second and think about this movie with John Goodman.

01:07:39 Adam Host Yeah.

[Beat.]

01:07:41 John Host I—I don't know. I kinda like it better. I'm not sure why.

01:07:44 Adam Host I'd like to see—*[breaks off, laughing].*

01:07:46 Crosstalk Crosstalk **John:** I just want to see the screen test.

Adam: I wish I knew that Forrest Gump. *[John and Adam laugh.]*

01:07:50 Adam Host Uh, John Travolta was the original choice to play the title role, and passed on it. Uh—he admitted that as being a major, uh, career regret for him. John Travolta.

01:08:00 Crosstalk Crosstalk **John:** Travolta.

Ben: Could've had a second jumbo jet if he'd—if he'd taken that role.

01:08:05 Adam Host Bill Murray and Chevy Chase. Also in the running for Forrest Gump.

01:08:11 John Host Whoa. Imagine this as a—as like a... Chevy Chase movie. *[Ben laughs.]*

01:08:17 Adam Host I can't. I really can't. Like, you can imagine John Goodman sitting on the park bench, doing the Forrest thing. I cannot imagine Chevy doing that.

01:08:26 Ben Host He just couldn't sit still long enough, he was so coked up. *[Laughs.]*

01:08:30 John Host Was this movie—*[laughs]* yeah, was this movie a comedy? Did it play as a comedy in '94? Did people laugh all the way through it?

I know there's a kind of person that likes to laugh at mentally challenged people. You know, there is an audience for a film where somebody's just like, *[exaggerated Southern accent]* "I don't know how to—"

You know, like th—they're just gonna laugh at every instance.

01:08:52 Adam Host I kind of feel like Zemeckis is a genre of his own, because, like—is *Back to the Future* a comedy?

01:08:59 John Host Yes.

01:09:00 Adam Host No! I—I don't think it is! But I think there are a lot of funny parts in it!

01:09:03 John Host Every single character in *Back to the Future* is hilarious. Crispin Glover? Hilarious. Uh, Doctor—Doc Ock? Or whatever? Hilarious.

01:09:12 Ben Host *[Laughs.]* Yeah. But at the same time, there's not that many jokes. You know?

01:09:16 Adam Host Right.

01:09:17 John Host *[As Lou from Back to the Future]* "Why are you wearing a life preserver?" That's a funny joke. *[Ben laughs quietly.]*

01:09:21 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Ben:** I guess so.

John: "I am your density."

01:09:24 John Host I say that once a week.

01:09:26 Adam Host I think there's a tonal relationship that is familiar there. But I don't think this, or that, is a comedy.

01:09:33 John Host Jenny's character arc is not funny. But—but Bubba? I mean, that lip, that lower lip on Bubba, was a prosthetic! He nee—they wanted that lip so bad.

01:09:44 Adam Host Mykelti Williamson couldn't get work after this movie because they thought that's what his face looked like.

01:09:50 John Host Why the lip? What—what does that do except make that a comedy character?

01:09:55 Adam Host Sort of lip that sells itself! *[All three laugh.]* I'm sorry, Ben, I tried to sneak in a *Heat* line and that was—

01:10:01 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Adam:** —do you have a better—

Ben: Yeah.

Adam: —better way to do that?

01:10:04 Ben Host The—all through those I was waiting for an opportunity to say, *[laughing]* "We don't gotta sell shrimp 'cause them kinda shit sell themselves," but—

01:10:10 Adam Host That's better. That's better!

01:10:12 Ben Host It—it's not—the—it's not better, 'cause I didn't—I didn't find the—I didn't find a place to put it!

01:10:18 Adam Host David Alan Grier, Ice Cube, Dave Chappelle. All offered the role of

Bubba—

01:10:24 John Host Whoa!

01:10:25 Adam Host —but turned it down.

01:10:26 John Host I wanna—I wanna—

01:10:27 Ben Host Tupac auditioned for it.

01:10:28 Adam Host Yeah! Tupac Shakur auditioned for this. Didn't get it.

01:10:32 John Host I wanna see Chevy Chase and Ice Cube *[Adam and Ben laugh]* in this film.

01:10:40 Adam Host We already saw that movie in *Cops & Robbersons*. *[John laughs.]*

Wow! I mean, of all the choices—probably made the best one, casting-wise, right?

01:10:50 Crosstalk Crosstalk **John & Ben:** Yeah.

01:10:51 John Host Tom Hanks. I mean—

01:10:52 Ben Host I think it works best with Hanks.

01:10:53 Adam Host Yeah.

01:10:54 John Host —didn't he get an Oscar for *Philadelphia* the year before?

01:10:57 Adam Host Back to back.

01:10:58 John Host This is—this is Hanks at his peak. This is Hanks that can do no wrong.

01:11:03 Crosstalk Crosstalk **John:** He was a comedic actor—

Adam: Before he got canceled.

01:11:05 John Host Did—? *[Ben and Adam laugh.]* Hanks never got canceled!

01:11:08 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Ben:** Between the recording of this and this being released—

Adam: We got a couple months! It could happen!

Ben: —there's a 50/50 chance, uh, yeah.

[All three laugh.]

01:11:15 Adam Host Yeah, once *Mister Rogers* comes out, it's over for him. *[All three laugh.]*

01:11:22 John Host What's their hot take gonna be?

01:11:23 Adam Host Really bold choice by Hanks! *[Ben laughs.]*

01:11:28 Ben Host "Mister Rogers wasn't actually that racist. *[Adam laughs.]* Tom Hanks just wanted to put that into the movie!" *[Adam and Ben laugh.]*

01:11:35 John Host I was at an Emmy Awards party where Tom Hanks won an Emmy and taped it to the hood of his car on his way—as he left the party. I, uh—I didn't actually see the—but I was there, at the—at the party itself. And, uh—

01:11:52 Adam Host He had to remove the Rolls-Royce hood ornament and replace it with the Emmy? *[Ben laughs.]*

01:11:56 John Host Yeah, I think it—I think it—I think it was a Lincoln, but yeah.

01:11:58 Adam Host *[Laughing]* Uh-huh.

01:11:59 John Host Right, he had to—well, he—yeah, he pried it off and turned it into a necklace for his son.

01:12:02 Adam Host Right.

01:12:03 Ben Host He pushed the button in the—on the dashboard that made the Rolls-Royce thing lower down *[John mimes a drill sound]* into the car, and then he stuck the Emmy on top of it.

01:12:10 John Host But that's the kind of man Tom Hanks is. *[Ben laughs.]*

01:12:19 Crosstalk Crosstalk He—he DGF. Oh, DGAF. That's what he does, he degaffs.
Ben: I think I like that about him!
John: I do, too.
Ben: I think that's one of his most appealing properties!
I do, too. I like it about him, too. I like Tom Hanks. And I cannot lie.
Ben: He is not what is wrong with this movie.
Adam: But do we like the film? There's only one way to find out. That's in the construction of a custom rating system that I design, based off something that I see in the film.
We really get out in the world in *Forrest Gump*, and we see a lot of things. Lot of things that would qualify for such a rating system.
So there's a leitmotif in the film that goes, like, every time there's a still photograph of Forrest Gump, his eyes are closed. Did you notice that?
John: *[Laughing]* No.
Adam: Like in the standees for famous ping-pongman Forrest Gump, his eyes are closed in that—in that cutout of him. *[Ben laughs.]*
And in every photograph of him in the film, his eyes are closed.
John: That's neat. I like a cookie like that.
Adam: That would have lent itself nicely to a film that does what it does to historical events. Like, how many closed eyes *[Ben laughs]* would you give *Forrest Gump*?
Ben: *[Laughing]* Uh-huh.
Adam: But instead I'm gonna go the other way. I'm gonna go with, um—Forrest really likes things that are sweet, and I think that is in keeping with the—with what this film was trying to do.
Like, nothing bad ever happened, uh, from 1960 to 1985 in this film. Like, everything is cool and nice! And comfortable. Comfortable, especially. Comfortable and free.
And when Forrest is at the White House, he is given the opportunity to drink just as many Dr Peppers as he pleases.
John: Love it.

01:13:58 Adam Host Dr Pepper is a delicious beverage. It's a beverage I wish sponsored this show.

01:14:02 John Host Are you a pepper?

01:14:03 Adam Host I'm a pepper!

01:14:04 John Host I'm a pepper.

01:14:05 Adam Host Are you a pepper, too?

01:14:06 John Host I am a pepper, too! What about you, Ben?

01:14:08 Ben Host *[Slight pause.]* Love Dr Pepper.

01:14:09 Adam Host He drinks a dozen Dr Peppers, and, uh, and is just so ready to go to the bathroom after. But watching this movie feels like drinking too many Dr Peppers. It is just sweet on top of sweet on top of sweet until you're just full. Full and leaving the theater.

So on a scale of one to five Dr Peppers, we will rate *Forrest Gump*.

I feel like we've really taken the bats to this thing, and I'm so—I'm so confused come rating time, because, like, I still can't say that I hated the film.

I'm really tortured by it, though. It's a film I—I never really wanna see again, 'cause there's just nothing new to interrogate here. It's so shallow in every conceivable way.

I'm shocked we were able to get such, uh, a fun and argumentative conversation about it! I didn't think there would—there'd be much for us to go over! But as it was, there was!

It's sad—and we've talked about this a bunch in other war films that we didn't like—it's sad when a film has an opportunity to say something and chooses not to.

It's sad when a war film, especially, has a chance to say something meaningful about a conflict and chooses not to. I think *Forrest Gump* misses on both of those.

01:15:26 Ben Host Not a single Vietnamese person in the movie.

01:15:29 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Adam:** No.

Ben: Right?

01:15:30 John Host Oh, right.

Wait, what was—who—Lt. Dan's wife?

01:15:34 Ben Host Potentially Vietnamese.

01:15:35 Adam Host This was her only film credit. *[John laughs.]* Did you know that?

01:15:37 John Host *[Laughing]* Really?

01:15:38 Adam Host Yeah, I looked her up.

01:15:39 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Ben:** Wow!

Adam: I was like, "She's gotta be in something else, right?" *[John*

laughs.]

01:15:41 Adam Host No! One credit! Known for *Forrest Gump!*

01:15:43 John Host Wow.

01:15:44 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Ben:** No kidding.

Adam: She is an interior designer, I think.

01:15:46 Adam Host She pivoted, uh, into another career.

01:15:48 John Host Hm.

01:15:49 Adam Host Anyway, it's weird to watch a movie that is so clearly a fable, but without any moral. Like, you come out of the film like, "What was it really trying to say?"

I have no idea! I don't wanna keep watching it to find out, though! It was bubbly and effervescent, but without really any point to it but empty calories, right?

01:16:11 Ben Host Yeah.

01:16:12 Adam Host So this film was worse than average. I'm gonna give it, uh, two bottles of Dr Pepper. It—it—I had assumed it would hold up in some way, either in its, uh, ability to put Forrest in these situations—like, technically I thought it would hold up, and it didn't even do that!

So yeah. Two for me. I'm gonna—I'm gonna pass my bottle opener to you, Ben.

[Ben laughs.]

01:16:37 Ben Host I feel very similar to you. I—I think, uh—I—I really walked away from—from watching the movie just wondering what I was to make of it. And I wondered why it was such a colossal hit. I mean, I think that—I don't know.

Like, I—uh, maybe when I'm, you know, 48 and somebody makes a movie that panders this hard to my generation, I will be just as much of—you know, just as receptive an audience to it as my parents and—and the baby boom was to this film, but I—it's—it's hard for me to imagine.

It's hard for me to imagine not feeling, like, kind of insulted. 'Cause it's—it's almost just a string of fond reminiscences of—of history, rather than—you know, it's—it's like, uh—Dane Cook as a comic gets, you know, criticized a lot for not having jokes so much as just like, "Hey, like, remember this? Remember this?"

Like, references rather than jokes, and I think, to some extent—you know, like, say whatever you want about him. But I—I think—sometimes that's fair and sometimes it's a little mean-spirited. But this kinda feels like what that criticism sets up, which is that it's—it's more just a series of references, like, "Oh, yeah! I remember that! I remember that time!"

Like, in saying nothing about it, it becomes the—you know, one of the Best 25 Conservative Movies of the Last 25 Years. Like, in

leaving out commentary, it becomes something that the National Review is gonna love.

And I think that that's kinda where—where I part ways with the movie.

And—and—and—and I think it's kind of like, exactly what my criticism of conservatism is. It's like—it is like looking back and—and wanting to look at it through rose-colored glasses, and wanting to look at the past as—as having been better than the present, or—more aspirational in some way.

01:18:45 Adam Host And also doing nothing on your way to success.

01:18:48 Ben Host Right! It does a great job of being entertaining, somehow, in spite of that.

01:18:52 Adam Host Yeah.

01:18:53 Ben Host You know, it goes a lot of places and touches a lot of—a lot of events in a way that does keep it interesting, and—and makes surprising choices along the way, too, like why—why ping-pong? *[Laughing]* I don't know! But somehow, that was like—really fun to watch?

Like, really fun to watch Tom Hanks pretend to be a world-class ping-pong player?

01:19:14 Adam Host We all like the performances, right? Like, I—I like—

01:19:18 Ben Host Yeah!

01:19:19 Adam Host I thought the acting in it was strong and good!

01:19:20 Ben Host Super strong, super good. Um, but yeah. I—I think I'm gonna come right, uh, right in at two Dr Peps.

01:19:31 John Host I'm just trying to imagine the film that panders to Ben's generation.

01:19:38 Adam Host Uh, it's been made. It's called *Kids*. *[John laughs.]*

01:19:40 John Host I'm—I'm trying to picture—I think the—the soundtrack would be, like, what? Chumbawamba? *[Adam chuckles, Ben laughs.]*

And Backstreet Boys and Hanson and stuff? Third Eye Blind?

01:19:50 Ben Host "I get knocked down but I get up again" *[John laughs]* is a great message for a movie!

01:19:53 John Host I don't think that soundtrack would get 12,000,000 downloads on Spotify or whatever.

01:19:58 Ben Host It would, and the artists would all receive \$0.13 *[John laughs]* for their trouble.

01:20:03 John Host I think that this movie was made for its time, and when I think about 1994...

We're in the middle of the Clinton administration. We are now in a post-Soviet environment for the first time. Right? We're only a couple of years into the fact that the Russians are no longer a threat. We're in this world where maybe it's the end of history?

The kind of beginning of this idea that we're in a post-racial society.

We feel like we've dealt with Vietnam, and—and—and through a process of Rambo and Chuck Norris winning it for us again, *[Ben laughs]* and then a—you know, some—some also deeper looks at it so that we realize that we lost, but it's okay.

I mean, there was a movie called *1969*, starring Winona Ryder, that came out in the late eighties. That was one of the first—

01:21:03 Adam Host

Nice.

01:21:04 John Host

That—that was one of the first, uh, that I saw that just full-on did this—Crosby, Stills & Nash, uh, starts to play as the camera pans, you know, as the camera flies away on a helicopter and we watch a Volkswagen Bus drive across a bridge as they drive across a—you know, just like, complete cartoon of—of the sixties.

But yeah! By—by '94, what did we want as an American culture when we went to the movies? Just something that didn't hurt our feelings, that made us feel like everything had worked out.

And people just fell all over themselves about this thing! And—you know, I—and I feel like watching it now, we see through it, and we're not that thrilled about the baby boomers now. Kinda for the first time in my life.

Because I grew up in the shadow of them, in the shadow of their music and in the shadow of their—what they felt like was their accomplishment in ending the war in Vietnam and "liberating America" from the suit and tie, um, conformism of the fifties, and giving us all these wonderful things.

Casual Friday, and... tambourines. And—

01:22:17 Adam Host

Those are the top two.

01:22:18 John Host

—marijuana, and then also, you know, a return to conservatism and Wall Street capitalism.

And it's only now that the—that the millenniums are so mad at their parents and the world that they wrought, that we're getting a strong critique of the boomers. Because the Generation X critique of—of the boomers was just—it was passive.

But we didn't have an answer. And we weren't a big enough generation. And we just—we were—*[laughing]* we—we were exhausted at—at 17 years old. We already felt like *[Ben laughs]* there was just—we were so tired.

And it's nice. It's nice to look back now and have a real criticism of that generation that they can't just smother with Creedence. Which they did for so long! They just—they just smothered any argument.

01:23:10 Adam Host

John Fogerty's not your human shield.

01:23:12 John Host

Well, the—it was for a while. He was for a long time.

01:23:14 Adam Host

Not anymore!

01:23:16 John Host

So we're looking at it now through a 2019 lens. This movie is 25 years old. When this movie came out, 1970 was 25 years before.

Like, we are the same distance from *Gump* as *Gump* was from the era depicted.

Um, that blows my mind.

01:23:36 Ben Host

Yeah.

01:23:37 John Host

But I agree with both of your critiques of it. I think we've—I think we've talked about everything in this movie that—that drove me crazy. I just also brought to it the feeling that all this hagiography of the era and the way this movie just—just kind of paints it, also felt very [*sighs*] '94, and I hated the boomers in '94.

So I give this movie two flat Dr Peppers.

01:24:06 Adam Host

Mm.

01:24:07 Ben Host

Oh, no! Somebody left them open all night?

01:24:09 John Host

Someone left the Dr Peppers out in the rain, and I don't think that I can take it. [*Ben laughs.*]

01:24:13 Adam Host

It's the magic of a Dr Pepper, though! Even flat—

01:24:15 John Host

Even flat, they got a little bite!

01:24:17 Adam Host

—not too bad!

01:24:18 John Host

They're a little crispy.

01:24:19 Adam Host

Yeah.

01:24:20 John Host

And I don't think they were out all night, I just feel like somebody o—somebody at the White House didn't wanna open each Dr Pepper for each—each time Gump went back to the bar, so they just popped the lids and they sat there fizzing.

01:24:34 Adam Host

I'm gonna tell you something about my feelings about Dr Pepper. Five Dr Peppers is what I rate Dr Pepper.

01:24:39 John Host

Agreed. I don't think you can—you can ding Dr Pepper a single Dr Pepper.

01:24:43 Adam Host

Not at all. Delicious.

01:24:45 John Host

But I agree, also, that this movie was distracting, at least. You know? You could put it on, and every time, like, the—the California Raisins started to sing "Heard It On The Grapevine," get up and shake it a little bit [*Ben laughs*] if you don't look at it too hard.

01:25:00 Adam Host

What are you shaking?

01:25:02 John Host

Your raisin.

01:25:03 Adam Host

[*Stifling laughter*] Oh—oh no.

01:25:04 John Host

Shake your box of raisins! All you Beyoncé's and Lucy Liu, get on the floor.

01:25:09 Music Music

Short excerpt from "Hey Ya!" by OutKast. ^

*Lend me some sugar
I am your neighbor
Ah, here we go!*

Shake it, sh-shake it, shake it, sh-shake it

01:25:13 John Host Shake it like a box of raisins! *[Ben and Adam laugh.]*

01:25:18 Adam Host You ever have a—a—a root beer float with Dr Pepper and not

01:25:21 John Host I—

01:25:22 Adam Host —root beer?

01:25:23 John Host I have.

01:25:24 Adam Host That is a—that's a tasty beverage.

01:25:25 John Host Thank—have you ever had one with Fanta?

01:25:26 Adam Host No.

01:25:27 Crosstalk Crosstalk **John:** It's like a—

Ben: Ugh.

John: —it tastes like an orange—uh, like a, like an orangesicle!

01:25:30 Adam Host Let me tell you, I'm giving Fanta three bottles of Dr Pepper—

01:25:33 John Host Ouch!

01:25:34 Adam Host —as a rating.

01:25:35 Crosstalk Crosstalk **John:** Ohhh, I—

Adam: I think Dr Pepper's a superior drink!

01:25:37 Ben Host I had one with maple flavored ice cream and ginger ale one time—

01:25:43 John Host Whooooa.

01:25:44 Ben Host —that was really tremendous.

01:25:45 Adam Host Wow!

01:25:46 John Host Whooooa.

I'm gonna give Fanta four and a half Dr Peppers.

01:25:49 Ben Host Huh.

01:25:50 John Host I—

01:25:51 Ben Host I'm giving it one Dr Pepper. Fuck Fanta.

01:25:52 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Adam:** Whoa!

John: You don't like Fanta?!

Ben: No.

John: We just lost our entire European audience.

Adam: Yeah. It's over. *[Ben laughs.]*

01:25:57 Adam Host It's over. It's over for us. We'll never tour in Europe. *[Laughs.]*

01:26:02 John Host I'm there for you, Fanta drinkers.

01:26:05 Adam Host Mm. Uh, was your guy a Fanta drinker, though?

01:26:09 John Host Um, my guy was the feather. *[Ben bursts out laughing.]*

01:26:13 Adam Host Come on.

01:26:15 John Host The feather—the feather introduces us to this movie. We follow the feather just like we follow the trolley in—or, you know, with the—the feather basically goes over Mister Rogers' neighborhood—

01:26:26 Adam Host Mm-hm. *[Ben laughs.]*

01:26:28 John Host —for no reason. The feather lands at Gump's feet. He picks it up, and he puts it in his *Curious George* book.

01:26:35 Ben Host Interesting that that's his favorite book, given what an incurious man he is.

01:26:39 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Adam:** Whoa—

John: Yeah, I know.

Adam: —we got a sixth paper!

Sound Effect: *[Printing.]*

John: That's a nice paper.

Adam: Here it comes!

01:26:42 John Host But *Curious George* is also someone who stumbles through life, finds himself consistently in one goofball situation after another, and he always—

01:26:52 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Ben:** *Failing Up*—

John: That's—

Ben: *[laughing]*—the—the *Curious George Story*. *[Laughs.]*

01:26:55 John Host He always is rescued, and it never—he ends up—uh, he's everybody's friends, even though halfway through the story he's screwed it all up.

01:27:02 Ben Host Yeah.

01:27:03 John Host The feather, at—at its—at—as it introduces us into the film, it seems like the feather is going to be some kind of narrative device, that we follow the feather. Right? He's gonna open that book, the feather's gonna blow out, we're gonna follow the feather to something else.

Right? That is the whole reason you introduce a thing like a feather at the top of a movie.

01:27:21 Ben Host They built so much of the marketing for this movie around that feather, too. I remember seeing that feather everywhere.

01:27:26 John Host The freaking feather. And yet the feather plays absolutely no role in this movie at all, and in fact when the feather falls out of the book, it's not resonant of anything. We've been through 40—or we've been through 25 years of—of, uh—of Gump's life. The feather was not with him!

The feather was only in that book for a couple of years. The feather didn't make any of this journey. The feather is just us. We start the movie, and we end.

[Beat.]

[Ben laughs.]

The feather enters the movie, and it exits the movie.

01:28:00	Adam	Host	[Stifling laughter] That's pretty great! [John laughs.]
01:28:01	Ben	Host	Feather remembers to take its, uh, popcorn bucket and soda—
01:28:05	John	Host	That's right.
01:28:06	Ben	Host	—and throw it out on the way out of the theater.
01:28:07	John	Host	The feather keeps the floor neat beneath its feet. It's the new—
01:28:10	Ben	Host	Hm.
01:28:11	John	Host	—movie mess bag.
01:28:13	Adam	Host	I don't like it, but I have to accept it.
01:28:15	John	Host	I know. It's not right.
01:28:17	Adam	Host	Uh, my guy is the nurse at the bus stop in the very beginning, who leaves before the film really gets going. [Ben laughs]. Kinda like I wish I had been able to.
			She is the type of person that is my type of person, who just wants to fucking sit on a bench and not be talked at by a stranger.
01:28:38	John	Host	She—she <u>really</u> sticks to that magazine.
01:28:40	Adam	Host	She does! I thought for sure she would bend into becoming curious the way everyone else who sits on that park bench does. And maybe for a moment before she catches her bus, there's a moment where she's half paying attention, but everyone else skips their bus when it shows up, and she gets on. Mostly to get away from Forrest.
01:29:00	John	Host	As you would!
01:29:02	Adam	Host	And I like that about her.
01:29:03	John	Host	Yeah.
01:29:04	Adam	Host	I read somewhere that, uh, [John and Ben laugh] her character was based on Rosa Parks as a person whose feet hurt, and Rosa Parks was someone whose—who mentioned that, like, one of her reasons for not moving seats on the bus was that her feet hurt.
			And that was like, a little—a little—just, you know, a little wink and a nod to Rosa Parks!
01:29:23	John	Host	I just wanna—
01:29:24	Adam	Host	From the makers of <i>Forrest Gump</i> !
01:29:25	John	Host	I just wanna <u>punish</u> them for that.
01:29:26	Adam	Host	Yeah. Yeah, pretty rough.
			But anyway, because of who she is—
01:29:31	Ben	Host	National Review [John laughs] thought that that was really astute and cool of them.

01:29:34 Adam Host Yeah.

But, uh, but whether or not she is Rosa Parks, her treatment of Forrest in her scenes was great. And so she's my guy.

01:29:45 John Host Your guy is proximate Rosa Parks.

01:29:47 Adam Host Yeah. Yeah, beat that, Ben.

01:29:49 Ben Host *[Sighs.]* Uh, my guy is Dick Cavett. *[Adam snickers, John bursts out laughing.]*

One of the, uh—*[laughs]*.

01:29:55 Adam Host That's great.

01:29:58 Ben Host One of the only people in those, uh, in those scenes that are remade old television who actually, you know, came and filmed his stuff.

01:30:05 Adam Host Cool.

01:30:06 Ben Host And, uh, I loved that he just seems dumbfounded and not sure what to do with the fact that he has Forrest Gump on his show. Like, the idea that a—a—uh, television talk show interviewer would just be like, "Huh. Yeah."

[John laughs.]

"That's, uh... That's really something." *[Laughing]* Is so funny to me!

01:30:27 John Host The fact that Dick—Dick Cavett in 1994 can portray himself in 1974—

01:30:31 Adam Host Right.

01:30:32 John Host And that's just, like, "Yeah!"

01:30:33 Ben Host I know!

01:30:34 Adam Host He's got that Paul Rudd thing going on.

01:30:35 John Host Yeah.

01:30:36 Ben Host Yeah. And, uh, I feel like he knows what's wrong with the movie—

01:30:38 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Ben:** —and put it into his portrayal of himself, somehow.

Adam: *[Whispering]* Wow, great guy...

01:30:42 Adam Host Great guy!

01:30:44 John Host That is a great guy.

01:30:45 Adam Host Not many opportunities to choose Dick Cavett in the *Friendly Fire* "my guy" selection. *[Ben laughs.]*

01:30:50 John Host He doesn't show up in a lot of war movies.

01:30:52 Ben Host No.

01:30:53 Adam Host Yeah. Shoot.

01:30:54 Ben Host Gotta take them when you can find them.

01:30:55 Adam Host Great job.

01:30:56 Music Transition Very brief clip of "War."

War!

Huh!
Yeah!

01:30:59	Ben	Host	Do you guys wanna pick our <u>next</u> war movie?
01:31:01	Adam	Host	Yes.
01:31:02	John	Host	Alright, I got my little 120-sided die. [<i>Die clattering on surface.</i>] Let me create a little corral for it.
			Adam, you endorse, uh, my die-roll technique, don't you?
01:31:11	Adam	Host	Of course I do.
01:31:12	John	Host	Alright, here we go.
			[<i>Sound of die rolling.</i>]
			49. We're at 49.
01:31:21	Music	Music	Intense, dramatic music plays over Ben's next sentence.
01:31:22	Ben	Host	49 is a Kathryn Bigelow-directed movie from 2012, <i>Zero Dark Thirty!</i>
01:31:29	John	Host	Oh, I'm <u>so</u> excited by this. Did I put this on the list?
01:31:34	Ben	Host	You <u>did</u> put this on the list.
01:31:35	John	Host	Yeah. That's good.
01:31:36	Ben	Host	I have not seen this movie since it came out.
01:31:38	Adam	Host	Me neither.
01:31:40	Ben	Host	I wonder if it holds up!
01:31:42	John	Host	Let's hope it holds up.
01:31:43	Ben	Host	Ever since I saw <i>Spy Game</i> , I've been, like, well-disposed to movies that show a raid like that, and I feel like, uh—I feel like it—it is a—a great raid movie, so—
01:31:56	John	Host	It—it—it—it got, uh, interrogated pretty heavily in, um—
01:32:00	Ben	Host	Yeah!
01:32:01	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	John: —in its time, for misrepresenting—
			Ben: We've got a lot of reading to do.
01:32:04	John	Host	Yeah. Misrepresenting, uh, the—the—the hunt for bin Laden. So—
01:32:10	Ben	Host	Yeah.
01:32:11	John	Host	—this should be fun.
01:32:13	Ben	Host	It seems like—it shows torture as having—as having played a crucial role in that, and that was—that was a lie, right?
01:32:20	John	Host	It was debunked that they ever got any meaningful intel from torturing anybody.
01:32:25	Music	Music	"War" begins fading in.
01:32:26	John	Host	Which I think is pretty clear when you go into torture, that the conventional wisdom, over the years of scholarship—it's pretty clear that torture does not... do anything.
01:32:39	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	John: But—but the—

Ben: Yeah.

John: —Bush administration—

Ben: Well, retweets are not endorsements, [*John laughs*] so that's not to—

01:32:44 Ben Host

We're gonna—we're gonna watch this thing and review it.

01:32:47 John Host

Listen. We are against torture here at *Friendly Fire*. We take the torture for you.

01:32:52 Adam Host

Pro—Dr Pepper, anti-torture. That's the *Friendly Fire* promise.

01:32:56 John Host

That's right.

01:32:57 Ben Host

Well, that will be next week on *Friendly Fire*. We'll leave it with Robs from here. So for John Roderick and Adam Pranica, I've been Ben Harrison.

To the victor go the spoiler alerts.

01:33:06 Music Music

"War" continues.

*Absolutely—
—nothing!*

Listen to me!

War!

It ain't nothing but a heartbreaker

[Music continues as Rob speaks.]

01:33:10 Rob Schulte Producer

Friendly Fire is a Maximum Fun podcast hosted by Benjamin Harrison, Adam Pranica, and John Roderick. It's produced by me, Rob Schulte.

Our theme music is "War," by Edwin Starr, courtesy of Stone Agate Music, and our logo art is by Nick Ditmore.

Friendly Fire is made possible by the support of our listeners. Like you! And you can make sure that the show continues by going to MaximumFun.org/donate. As an added bonus, you'll receive our monthly pork chop episode, as well as all the fantastic bonus content from Maximum Fun.

If you'd like to discuss the show online, please use the hashtag #FriendlyFire. You can find Ben on Twitter at [@BenjaminAhr](https://twitter.com/BenjaminAhr). Adam is [@CutForTime](https://twitter.com/CutForTime). John is [@johnroderick](https://twitter.com/johnroderick), and I'm [@robkschulte](https://twitter.com/robkschulte).

Thanks! We'll see you next week.

01:34:03 Music Music

"War" continues.

Is there no place for them today?

They say we must fight to keep our freedom

But Lord knows there's got to be a better way

01:34:15	John	Host	We know that, uh—I almost said Trump. We know that—Dump—Grumpf—no, what's his name? Tru—dz—Drumpf—
01:34:22	Adam	Host	...Who are you talking about?
01:34:23	John	Host	Gump! Gump. Gump. We know that Gump had—
01:34:28	Ben	Host	Wow. <i>[John and Adam laugh.]</i>
01:34:29	Adam	Host	Hold up both arms, John.
01:34:31	Ben	Host	<i>[Laughing]</i> Did—did Freud hit you in the face with a baseball bat or something?
01:34:35	Music	Transition	A cheerful guitar chord.
01:34:36	Speaker 1	Guest	MaximumFun.org .
01:34:38	Speaker 2	Guest	Comedy and culture.
01:34:39	Speaker 3	Guest	Artist owned—
01:34:40	Speaker 4	Guest	—audience supported.