

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	"Overture" from <i>Lawrence of Arabia</i> . A stirring drumbeat plays at normal volume for a moment, then the music fades down and plays quietly as John Roderick speaks.
00:00:04	John Roderick	Host	<i>Lawrence of Arabia</i> is one of those movies you can do a bad job of <u>watching</u> . There's so much happening in this film that you can actually <u>fail</u> at it, as a viewer. To <u>succeed</u> at watching this movie is to leave it more confused than you entered, to have your prejudices challenged and your assumptions upended, and to appreciate that not all of that was the film's intention. The events depicted can't be summarized or diagrammed, you can't dissect them effectively using the blunt instrument of any particular ideology, there are no coherent narratives where the choices were clear or where history could've gone a different way, and maybe none of it happened like this anyway—but maybe it did.

Coming out of this movie with a couple of pat conclusions and a prescription is equivalent to whacking at a turducken with a pocket comb and claiming to have rebuilt a living turkey, chicken, and duck. It's a movie about a man in a time and place, the myth of the man, the making of the myth of the man in his own time, the myth of the making of the myth of the man in his immediate aftermath, and the math of making the myth of the man either stand or be damned after the dashed-off first draft of his plan to salve the wrath of the clans was panned by cads and damned by a new brand of grandstanding also-rans who want to reprimand and ban what they can't understand.

But it's so tempting. Here is a smorgasbord of sweeping takes on imperialism, colonialism, tribalism, bureaucratism, classism, casteism, militarism, Orientalism, pan-Arabism, proto-antisemitism, revisionism, double-triple-revisionism, antidisestablishmentarianism, sang-froid, saxophone, and reckless folly. It is full of lies and tap dancing but it also plausibly true in many ways, or at least if you're prepared to argue it is 100% lies and tap dancing, you'd better have a convincing alternate history of the world. Which I'm sure you do, and I can assure you that no one wants to hear it except your small group of friends who also don't wanna hear it and are just waiting for you to finish. But anyway, go ahead and mail it to Adam.

This is a midcentury opera where the germ of collective Arab identity is credited to a somewhat friendless Englishman. It mocks the colonial enterprise and the folly of empire while making it all look—

[posh British accent] —rather grand—

[Back to regular voice.]

—and it sets the scene for what became the central festering uncurable sore of geopolitics from then until now. Everyone is ridiculous in this movie, and their foolishness is foregrounded! But also made to look gorgeous and unavoidable. Lawrence is a holy fool, but what would we do without him? The British were small-"m"

mistaken and large-“A” Awful throughout but ultimately right, in their wrong-headed way, about a thing that they were fundamentally wrong about. The only ones to escape this movie without being indicted as utterly self-defeating, callow, and culturally suicidal are the Turks, who are simply depraved.

00:02:48 John

Host

Yet the movie is wonderful, an absolute masterpiece. Peter O’Toole’s Lawrence is nuanced and fascinating, a masterwork of characterization, wild-eyed and canny, despite the fact that he was at the very start of his film career and this was his breakout role. Along with director David Lean, he turned in a banger.

We watch a lot of movies that depict real events, but no war movie sets the stage for the world we live in quite like this one. These few years are the neck of the hourglass; there’s the world before and the world after, and although not a comprehensive picture, it’s essential viewing. It’s problematic in many ways characteristic of its time—let’s just say the brown makeup budget was unusually large—but it takes pains to look hard at itself as it goes. It’s an epic in scale and scope, and it’s almost four. hours. long.

So we’re going to inteerogate (*interrogate*) this entry in the canon, and we’re going to do our best. There’s a lot to think about, to talk about, and to argue about, and in that sense this is as good as a movie gets. As the ancient curse goes, “I hope you watch it with a friend that disagrees with you, and then you have to take a six-hour car ride together across the desert to spread the ashes of your dead best friend at the foot of an olive tree.”

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"There's nothing further here for a warrior. We drive bargains. Old men's work." Today on *Friendly Fire*: 1962's *Lawrence of Arabia*.

[*Music fades into the opening drumroll of the next song.*]

00:04:17 Music

Transition

“War” off the album *War & Peace* by Edwin Starr. Impassioned, intense funk.

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!

[Song fades down and plays quietly as the hosts speak.]

00:04:37	Ben Harrison	Host	Welcome to <i>Friendly Fire</i> , the war movie podcast that leaves no wounded for the Turks. I'm Ben Harrison.
00:04:43	Adam Pranica	Host	I'm Adam Pranica.
00:04:44	John	Host	And I'm John Roderick.
00:04:46	Adam	Host	Yeah, put 'em outta their misery! The pre-misery!
00:04:48	Ben	Host	<i>[Laughs quietly.]</i> Another movie that TurkFan69 is not a great big fan of.
			<i>[John chuckles.]</i>
00:04:52	Adam	Host	No, not at all.
00:04:54	John	Host	The Turks don't shine here, but very few people shine in this movie, really.
00:04:59	Adam	Host	Yeah.
00:05:00	John	Host	I mean, if you really inteerogate (<i>interrogate</i>) <u>anyone's</u> story, front or back, they don't look particularly good.
00:05:10	Adam	Host	I fully came into this movie expecting "Orence" to be <u>the man</u> .
00:05:15	John	Host	<i>[Despairing]</i> "Lawrence!"
			<i>[Ben laughs quietly.]</i>
00:05:17	Adam	Host	The rakish, awesome hero.
00:05:19	John	Host	<i>[Still despairing]</i> "Orence!"
00:05:20	Adam	Host	And the first 90 minutes of this film are basically people whispering behind his back like "The fuck is wrong with that guy? That guy's a weirdo. Let's get him away from <u>us</u> and into the desert!"
			<i>[Ben laughs, Adam and John stifle laughter.]</i>
00:05:31	John	Host	Yeah.
00:05:32	Adam	Host	Right?
00:05:33	John	Host	Well, and you know, I mean... he <u>is</u> a weirdo. He's a weirdo in the desert, too.
00:05:39	Adam	Host	Yeah.
00:05:40	John	Host	It's not like—
00:05:41	Adam	Host	The desert doesn't fix him. <i>[Laughs quietly.]</i>
00:05:42	John	Host	<i>[Stifling laughter]</i> It's not like the Arabs are like "Hurray!"
00:05:44	Adam	Host	Yeah.
00:05:45	John	Host	"What a man!"

[Adam laughs.]

Until he starts to—you know, at least in the way the film depicts him—really lead them into... not just victory in battle, but lead them

into a new conception of what it is to be an Arab. Which is a little—
[breaks off, laughing].

00:06:02	Ben	Host	Like, you really have to swallow a big pill that this movie is trying to feed you, that like, Lawrence invented the idea of Arab identity? <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:06:10	John	Host	Well, except there's... a weird case to be made during the Ottoman days, during the Turkish Empire, and it's something kind of intrinsic to Islam, that Islam in particular is a religion that, in its interpretation, was <u>not</u> confined to a certain race. Right? You could be a Muslim across all nations. And the idea of a <u>Muslim</u> identity was that—was the primary identity of people in Arabia. They were Muslims first. And you know, there <u>wasn't</u> a sense of a united Arab consciousness. It <u>was</u> very tribal.
			So I don't— <i>[sighs]</i> . You're right that I don't think— <i>[laughs]</i> I don't think T.E. Lawrence was the person to invent Arab identity, but it <u>is</u> a compelling, or interesting, story that Arab identity didn't exist, necessarily.
00:07:03	Ben	Host	I mean the nation state is a very, like, European idea that has been sort of projected onto the entire rest of the world at this point.
00:07:11	John	Host	Well, except a <u>kingdom</u> isn't. Right?
00:07:13	Ben	Host	Yeah.
00:07:14	John	Host	A kingdom isn't—is what would exist, or a caliphate. Both of those things are, you know, the natural order of things.
00:07:21	Ben	Host	Yeah.
00:07:23	John	Host	And that's what happened. That's what—I mean, we came outta this whole story with a bunch of kingdoms and caliphates. It's—this is a complicated movie! Because of the 20 stories it intersects with.
00:07:35	Adam	Host	It didn't seem like they would make Lawrence's race or background an issue. And it finally took that Turkish general to like, strip him, grab his chest, and be like "What are you doing here, white man?"
00:07:48	John	Host	Mm. Yeah, that general had a lot of <u>other</u> motivations, too.
00:07:53	Adam	Host	Yeah! Right?
00:07:54	John	Host	He was like "I—" you know, he was like "I don't care what you're doing here. I'm just <u>glad</u> you're here."
			<i>[Ben and Adam laugh.]</i>
			"You're very pretty."
00:08:03	Adam	Host	"You know, uh, let me escort you to my caning basement..."
00:08:08	John	Host	<i>[Laughing]</i> Uh-huh!
00:08:09	Adam	Host	"Where I will leave the door open. <i>[Laughs.]</i> Suggestively."
00:08:13	John	Host	Yeah.
00:08:14	Clip	Clip	Lawrence: This is the stuff that decides what he wants.
00:08:16	Ben	Host	I read that there was a play about T.E. Lawrence that the producer of this film took great umbrage with, because it entertained the idea that T.E. Lawrence was gay. And... I kind of felt like he was coded gay in the movie!

00:08:34	John	Host	Yeah, weird choice if you're trying to like, macho-ize Lawrence, to cast Peter O'Toole. Like, slight of figure and... and blond of hair.
00:08:44	Ben	Host	Right.
00:08:45	Adam	Host	"And like, <u>maybe</u> some eyeliner? I don't know!"
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
			"How about some of that?"
00:08:50	John	Host	"Let's oil him up and put him out there with Omar Sharif, <i>[laughs]</i> and just see what happens!"
00:08:55	Adam	Host	"What we should do is get him down on all fours."
00:08:58	John	Host	"Mm."
00:08:59	Adam	Host	"Uh, take an ECU right into his face as he's being back-blasted, uh, for a couple of minutes. See how that feels! Let's just shoot the footage! We don't have to use it!"
00:09:08	Ben	Host	<i>[Laughs.]</i> "This is a four-hour movie!"
			<i>[Adam laughs.]</i>
			"We can add and subtract as needed!"
			<i>[John laughs.]</i>
00:09:16	Adam	Host	I have a question about this. And that is—I mean, there were... liberties taken with his character in this film.
00:09:24	John	Host	Yes.
00:09:25	Adam	Host	And I wonder if—
00:09:27	John	Host	And with history.
00:09:28	Adam	Host	Sure.
00:09:29	John	Host	Yeah.
00:09:30	Adam	Host	I wonder if it—his sexuality, his coded sexuality, was made more palatable to someone in this time period by making him such a cold-blooded <u>killer</u> halfway through this film. He is distributing headshots to people in a way that kind of makes you forget about how gentle he is in the first half of the film. Do you think that's intentional?
00:09:54	Ben	Host	I mean, <u>they</u> drew first blood, Adam.
00:09:57	John	Host	<i>[Cracks up.]</i> You have it coming, Adam.
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
			Uh, no, I think that that's—that is a part of the story that's I think probably pretty true to life, that Lawrence in his own reflection... Yeah, I mean, it's the—it's part of what's dangerous about people <u>like</u> T.E. Lawrence at this time in history. Because you could be a British officer, ostensibly supported by Britain, and <u>completely</u> , like, Colonel Kurtz-ing.
00:10:32	Adam	Host	Mm-hm.
00:10:33	John	Host	Up in... you know, in an entire region. In a—you know, like, galvanizing <u>a people</u> , and with no oversight, and you're kind of

operating in a back theater.

00:10:44	Adam	Host	It's incredible. Like, we see wars of adventure all the time, but this is <u>a man's</u> war of adventure! That he is—he's puppet-stringing the whole thing!
00:10:54	John	Host	And I think that's why he's such a popular character, and was at the time. Was it's just like—this is some kind of crazy Boy Scout adventure that really reads as a pulp fiction, almost.
00:11:07	Adam	Host	Mm-hm.
00:11:09	Ben	Host	Yeah. <i>[Laughs.]</i> I love how, like, in that context that—like, it's really like his personal adventure that he's on, but then like, the British and the French are like "Hey, you know, like, we could turn this into another opportunity for a little dab of colonialism while we're at it." Like— <i>[laughs]</i> . It was like the most 1916 thinking of all time, is like "Hey, when this is all over..." <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:11:38	John	Host	Yeah, they—and that is really telegraphed throughout the film. Just the—I mean the whole exist—the whole reason he was sent there, right? He was sent there as the emissary of the Arab Bureau.
00:11:49	Adam	Host	Mm-hm.
00:11:50	John	Host	Which was the British office designed to—you know, they didn't go in with a <u>plan</u> . They just wanted to figure out "What do we do here? Like, how do we pit <u>these</u> people against <u>those</u> people, but keep <u>these</u> people from getting too much power by pitting <u>them</u> against <u>those</u> people..."
00:12:08	Adam	Host	Yeah, and it's not just speculative, either. Like, you actually <u>get</u> the scene in this film that goes like "They are unable to govern for themselves."
00:12:17	John	Host	Right.
00:12:18	Adam	Host	Like, they <u>must</u> be colonized and fixed. In order to keep the power on, and the water going!
00:12:24	John	Host	Even before, when Lawrence comes back from his original—from the original sort of invasion of—or the capture of Aqaba. And he says to the new commanding general, you know, "I'm telling them that you have no interest—that <u>we</u> have no interest in Arabia. Is that true?" <i>[Laughs.]</i> And the guy is like—I—I loved the moment, because the general had enough authority to just barefaced lie.
00:12:50	Adam	Host	Yeah.
00:12:51	John	Host	And I think that is a sign of real power. Because Lawrence is like "I'm telling all of these Arab kings and princes that we are not going to betray them." And the general's like "Oh, yeah! Totally! You know. Yeah. Tell 'em. Tell 'em that! 100%."
00:13:07	Ben	Host	<i>[Laughs.]</i> That general could shoot somebody on Fifth Avenue and it wouldn't hurt his poll numbers. <i>[John laughs.]</i>
00:13:12	Adam	Host	It's another example of like, no matter what Lawrence does, the generals still hate him, and don't owe anything to him.

00:13:21	John	Host	Yeah, right. He's not one of them.
00:13:22	Adam	Host	Yeah.
00:13:23	Ben	Host	I mean, that's like the advantage of a bureaucracy, is you get a bunch of shit done and then there's like, barriers for blame when it needs to be allotted.
00:13:34	John	Host	Yeah, it's not like General Allenby is gonna shoulder the burden.
00:13:38	Adam	Host	I love that moment of, uh, of Orence getting to Damascus first.
00:13:42	John	Host	"Orence!"
00:13:43	Adam	Host	Like, by a day and a half. Like, he's there. He's already on the ground.
00:13:45	John	Host	Yeah.
00:13:46	Adam	Host	And their bewilderment!
00:13:48	Ben	Host	<i>[Laughing]</i> After slaughtering a retreating column of Turks.
00:13:51	Adam	Host	Yeah! He's been busy!
00:13:52	John	Host	You know, this whole—this—all of this overlaps <u>exactly</u> with <i>Gallipoli</i> .
00:13:58	Ben	Host	Those guys are playing rugby over by the pyramids while Orence is drawing his maps, huh?
00:14:04	Adam	Host	Yeah! They're trying to get a refund for those little statues from the shopkeeper.
			<i>[John and Ben laugh.]</i>
00:14:07	John	Host	Same place! They ran right past... Orence.
00:14:10	Adam	Host	Yeah.
00:14:11	Ben	Host	That would be great. Like in— <i>[laughs]</i> is it <i>Hot Shots!</i> where the two Sheens see each other from the boat?
00:14:19	Adam	Host	Yeah.
00:14:20	John	Host	I think that's <i>Hot Shots! Part Deux</i> .
00:14:21	Ben	Host	Oh. Are those on our list?
00:14:23	Clip	Clip	Charlie Sheen & Martin Sheen: <i>[Shouting over boat engines]</i> I loved you in <i>Wall Street!</i>
00:14:25	Ben	Host	<i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:14:26	Adam	Host	That's a pork chop film!
			<i>[Tone implies "That fits the criteria for a pork chop film," not literally "That is already on our pork chop film list."]</i>
00:14:28	John	Host	<i>[Laughs.]</i> You know, I've—
00:14:29	Ben	Host	Yeah, it might be pork chop time.
00:14:30	John	Host	I've been getting some push-back from people on the Internet who are fans of our show, who are—
00:14:35	Ben	Host	Mm. What?!
00:14:36	John	Host	Yeah, I know.
00:14:38	Ben	Host	People that are fans giving <u>us</u> pushback?
00:14:39	John	Host	Yeah, and what the—and the theory that they're advancing is that

the pork chop feed does not need to just be trash.

00:14:47 Ben Host Wow.

00:14:48 John Host They said "What if you guys covered war-adjacent films that weren't garbage piles?"

00:14:53 Adam Host Hm.

00:14:54 John Host And I was like, intrigued!

00:14:55 Adam Host *[Stifling laughter]* People may be more inclined to support the show financially—

00:14:57 John Host Yeah!

00:14:58 Adam Host —if there was something in it for them on the pork chop feed?

00:15:00 John Host I said "Wow. You know, I know for a fact that's never occurred to either Ben nor Adam..."

00:15:05 Adam Host Mm.

00:15:06 John Host "But let me be the one—"

00:15:07 Ben Host I disagree wholeheartedly.

[John laughs.]

There's some really good movies in the pork chop feed! It's got *Wonder Woman*, *Terminator 2: Judgment Day*, *Triple Frontier*, *Edge of Tomorrow*, *Spy Game*, *Lord of War*, *Rogue One*.

00:15:19 John Host Oh, *Lord of War*?

00:15:20 Ben Host Those are all great!

00:15:21 John Host Yeah, I guess...

00:15:22 Adam Host They are. Yeah.

00:15:23 John Host Alright, alright, alright.

00:15:24 Adam Host Every one of 'em.

00:15:25 John Host Okay.

00:15:26 Ben Host There's also some bad movies. Like... *Rambo III*, and—

[Ben and John laugh.]

—*Commando*.

00:15:29 Adam Host And *Rocky IV*.

00:15:30 John Host Alright. You're right. You're right. There are good movies.

00:15:33 Ben Host I would say it's more good movies than bad!

00:15:35 John Host I take it back.

00:15:36 Ben Host Yeah.

00:15:37 John Host I mean I'm not paying attention, obviously.

00:15:39 Ben Host There's recency bias, obviously, because we've done two Stallone films in a row, as of this recording. But...

00:15:45 John Host Right. Right. Right.

00:15:46 Adam Host I'm hoping for a third.

00:15:47	John	Host	Ugh.
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
00:15:49	Adam	Host	Get some—get some—
00:15:50	Ben	Host	You're going for the hat trick? <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:15:52	Adam	Host	Get some <i>Over the Top</i> in there.
00:15:53	Clip	Clip	Speaker: I'm through talking.
			<i>[Synth music sting.]</i>
00:15:54	Ben	Host	I was reading that Lawrence knew about the Sykes-Picot Agreement long before it is depicted in this film. He was aware that the French and the British had designs on a colonial outcome for, like, basically running the Ottoman Empire as a colonial holding of France and England after the war. Like, way, way before it's—you know, it like—like, it's—it drops like a bomb in this movie when they tell him about it, and he's fucking <u>livid</u> . But apparently he did most of the, you know, getting the Arab Revolt going knowing about that as being like, the long-term plan.
00:16:42	John	Host	I think that that <u>is</u> in the movie throughout. Like, Lawrence—like, when he has that conversation with Allenby, and Allenby says "Yes! Absolutely, we have no designs!" Lawrence <u>knows</u> .
00:16:55	Ben	Host	So you're saying it's kind of implied the same way as his homosexuality is?
00:16:59	John	Host	Even more. I mean, I—
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
			You know, I think his homosexuality is only—that's just sort of like a tonal... like a tint?
00:17:09	Ben	Host	Yeah.
00:17:10	John	Host	But the idea that he is working within a system that—where he knows the outcome. Right? He's a member of the British officer class. And we see him interacting with them. He knows he's an outsider. And he <u>knows</u> his viewpoint will <u>never</u> prevail. Which is why he's—I think—I mean he's enjoying his adventure so much. He's... I think he becomes deluded by his power, such that he begins to forget that he—that he's not a world-maker.
			But I think that a lot of his shock and dismay is a put-on at that moment. I think it's a—it's over-dramatism. On <u>his</u> part. And I think the movie is <u>showing</u> us that.
00:17:58	Ben	Host	He engages in a lot of wishful thinking about what <u>everyone</u> is gonna do.
00:18:01	John	Host	Right.
00:18:02	Ben	Host	At various times.
00:18:03	John	Host	And I think the narration of the film, or the Lawrence we're shown, we're not meant to trust him by then. He's let us down repeatedly, he's let the Arabs down repeatedly. Always with the—the camera's always focused on him. He's the nominal hero. But I don't think he's a heroic figure by that point in time. I think he's so compromised that

we can't trust his reactions.

[Beat.]

00:18:28 Ben Host

Do we wanna rate it?

[Ben laughs quietly. John cracks up, pounding the table.]

00:18:35 John Host

I'm just—I'm watching the gears turn in Adam's head. *[Laughs.]*

00:18:37 Ben Host

Pretty much all there is to say, right? *[Laughs.]*

Is he supposed to be speaking Arabic with everybody in this movie?

00:18:44 John Host

Yes.

00:18:45 Ben Host

It's like one—it's maybe the most confusing, like, language... movie. Because there's no... I get—like, there's like very few times when any of the Arab characters are in a room with any of the non—T.E. Lawrence British characters? Like, I guess when he brings Farraj into the officers' mess, that's like maybe one of, you know, a handful of brief scenes where you're like "Oh, yeah. This guy..." Like, Farraj can't communicate with anybody in this room. So he is going to be silent for this scene.

00:19:19 John Host

I mean we know that Feisal—King Feisal and Sherif Ali both are—you know, had Western educations. And they routinely are speaking to people in English. There's no distinction between the way they speak in English and the way they speak to one another in... presumably Arabic. But Lawrence is famous for his command of multiple languages. He's shown at the beginning of the movie reading an Arabic newspaper. So...

00:19:53 Adam Host

He quotes the Quran back at Feisal.

00:19:56 John Host

Yeahhh, eat that. Right?

00:19:58 Adam Host

That was a fun moment.

[Ben laughs.]

00:19:59 John Host

That's when he—that's when he wins Feisal's heart.

00:20:02 Adam Host

Lot of prosthetic noses in this movie.

00:20:05 Ben Host

Yeah. The one that Anthony Quinn is wearing is so badly matched to the brown makeup that they covered him in, also. It's like a—it's like a totally distinct color. It looks like those glasses with a fake nose on 'em that people wear in comedy films.

00:20:23 Adam Host

I really thought that Omar Sharif's Ali character was going to steal the movie from O'Toole, but it's Anthony Quinn that steals it from Omar Sharif! I thought every scene with them together was great.

00:20:38 John Host

Anthony Quinn is a tough—that is a tough, like, degree to ever match.

00:20:45 Adam Host

Yeah.

00:20:46 Ben Host

Yeah.

00:20:47 John Host

He's so—he's so wonderful.

00:20:49 Adam Host

Yeah. I really like him a lot in this movie.

00:20:51 Ben Host

Did his own makeup for the film.

00:20:54	John	Host	Really? <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:20:55	Adam	Host	I mean... not surprising. <i>[Stifling laughter]</i> Did he—did he get an Academy Award for Achievement in Makeup?
			<i>[John and Ben laugh.]</i>
00:21:02	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	Adam: This film won like 20 Oscars.
			Ben: The first time an actor has been nominated? <i>[Laughs.]</i>
			Adam: Yeah. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:21:06	John	Host	That's funny that he would negotiate for that. Like, "No, no, no! I'll get—I do my own makeup!"
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
00:21:11	Adam	Host	Yeah.
00:21:12	John	Host	Weird.
00:21:13	Ben	Host	Yeah. He, uh—I guess apparently like, would put the makeup on before getting to set, and the first day he showed up, David Lean the director "mistook him for a native and asked his assistant to ring Quinn and notify him that they were replacing him with this new arrival." Wow!
			<i>[Ben and John laugh.]</i>
00:21:28	Adam	Host	That's gotta feel great as an actor, right? That's not insulting!
00:21:31	Ben	Host	Yeah! No!
00:21:32	Adam	Host	That means you've nailed it.
00:21:34	John	Host	Yeah.
00:21:35	Ben	Host	Yeah! Amazing.
			I love his character. He's like—he's this local—I don't know. He's not a prince. He's not at the same level as Feisal. But he's like, the leader of this army of like thousands of guys, but he also <u>personally</u> patrols all his own wells with his son. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:21:55	Adam	Host	Yeah, that was a fun introduction to him.
00:21:58	Ben	Host	Yeah!
00:21:59	John	Host	I mean what's strange about the cast of characters represented here, all of these people were vying for—had for centuries—their families had vied for control over wells and areas. And now they were beginning, for the first time, this process of like, trying to consolidate into a <u>nation</u> . And I mean, it's an astonishing moment in history, and astonishing to think that what we think of as the status quo in the Middle East... these nations—Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Iraq, Jordan—like, all of them are 20th century developments. And prior to it, there were no... there was no sort of <u>sense</u> of this region as we sense it now.
00:22:53	Ben	Host	It's right next to, you know, Northern and East Africa, which is another part of the world that is full of international boundaries that are just, like, arrow-straight lines. And— <i>[laughs]</i> and it's like, got a lot of the same kinds of problems.

00:23:10	John	Host	Yeah, but you know, the—it—but it isn't just this—the problems here are not just that—that, um, they're straight borders, right? Because a lot of those are borders that are just drawn in the middle of... of completely desert regions. They're not—it's not quite the same as like, "Here's a border and half the Kurds are on one side and half the Kurds are on the other."
00:23:29	Ben	Host	It's not like the border between Somalia and Kenya, which is, like, just a divide-and-conquer border.
00:23:36	John	Host	Right. No, it's a—it's a state of affairs where what we think of as the Saudi family—you know, Ibn Saud at this point was—I mean, they—he had—he was consolidating power, and for a while after World War I, King Feisal was like, King of Iraq and Syria, but Ibn Saud was, you know, over here in Mecca and Madīnah—or Medina—consolidating power, and pretty soon—you know, any one of these princes could have laid claim to being the sort of King of the Arabs, leader of the Arabs.
00:24:22	Ben	Host	Right.
00:24:23	John	Host	They didn't discover oil in Arabia until the mid-thirties. So there was no sense—I think the British had a sense that there was <u>maybe</u> oil or mineral wealth in Arabia, but there wasn't any <u>money</u> there yet. So it was all... it was all this kind of great game of strategy. But you know, like the—like, Aqaba is in <u>Jordan</u> now.
00:24:47	Ben	Host	Was it just—like, if they could control Aqaba, the British could supply arms to the Arabs? Is that the whole idea of taking it?
00:24:57	John	Host	Yeah, it's another front. If you're imagining Damascus or Jerusalem being the—being like the prize, and you can get to it through that Gulf of Aqaba, and you can supply that—it's like the rear action, right? If you're attacking Damascus from the sea, straight from the Mediterranean, but the Ottomans can re-supply from your rear, that's a vulnerability. But if you have Aqaba, you know, then you can execute a pincer on all of the Levant.
00:25:33	Ben	Host	So that the Ottomans would have—they would have a split. Their attention would be split on two different things that they're trying to defend.
00:25:40	John	Host	Right. And then the whole second act of the film where Lawrence is just, like, basically... just waging a war of chaos in their rear, where they can't—you know, they're just trying to figure out like—they can't seem to move a train across the desert without getting it blown up.
00:25:56	Ben	Host	Adam knows about chaos in his rear. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:25:59	Adam	Host	That's a—those are great scenes! All the train explosions? I was not expecting to see as much train chaos as we got in this movie.
00:26:07	Ben	Host	Yeah. Train combat is like the primary thing that happens in the second half of this film.
00:26:12	Adam	Host	Yeah.
00:26:13	John	Host	Do you have a train pedant? Did train pedants enter in here, Ben?
00:26:16	Ben	Host	I don't have a train pedant, <i>[stifles laughter]</i> but I do have a good Moment of Pedantry for this film. I mean, it doesn't fit anywhere naturally, so I could throw it in here.
00:26:23	Adam	Host	I've got a train thing to say that <u>does</u> fit in naturally here, if that would

be better.

00:26:27 John Host Oh, okay!

00:26:28 Ben Host Okay, do it!

00:26:29 Adam Host When they were scouting for locations of where to shoot these train scenes, they actually came upon an old blown-up train.

00:26:37 John Host Really?!

00:26:38 Ben Host Whooooa.

00:26:39 Adam Host And they found it half-buried in the sand, and it was like perfectly desert-preserved. The way old airplanes are preserved in the desert. Like, not an inch of rust on it. Just... out there, in the desert.

00:26:50 John Host Blown up from... the time?

00:26:52 Adam Host Yeah. From the Lawrence raids.

00:26:53 John Host Wow.

00:26:54 Adam Host Yeah.

00:26:55 Ben Host Wow! *[Laughs.]*

00:26:56 John Host *[Chuckling]* Cool!

00:26:57 Adam Host Yeah, how—like, that's how you know you're a successful film scout crew.

[John laughs, Adam stifles laughter.]

Is when you actually find the location.

00:27:03 John Host That's so great.

00:27:04 Ben Host Yeah!

00:27:05 Adam Host Not just an approximation. That's great.

00:27:06 Ben Host When David Lean told them to comb the desert, they, uh, they took their combs out and they actually found something!

00:27:13 Adam Host Yeah!

00:27:14 John Host And did they use it in the film?

00:27:16 Adam Host Why not? Why wouldn't you?

00:27:17 John Host Right.

00:27:18 Adam Host Just scoop out those rails.

00:27:20 Ben Host Scoop them rails.

[Adam laughs quietly.]

Yeah, the—I mean like, he has to do the trains, right? Because he doesn't have any big guns. He doesn't have artillery, so he's forced—it's sort of like guerrilla war stuff that he's able to accomplish, given the way he's been armed.

00:27:39 John Host Right. And the Ottomans are being attacked, like, in a lot of different places. The attempted invasion at Gallipoli being just one, but their empire at this point—although it had already sort of decayed quite a bit...

[Ben laughs quietly.]

Like, it still encompassed so much of what we think of as the modern—or what we think of as Arabia, or Asia Minor, or whatever. You know? Like...

00:28:13 Ben Host

Yeah.

00:28:14 John Host

They—all of Syria, Lebanon...

00:28:16 Ben Host

Yeah. They've got Gallipoli and Aqaba over on this side, and then on the other side the Armenians are just betraying them left and right to the Russians.

00:28:26 John Host

[Laughs.] Oh, I know. I know.

[Ben laughs.]

00:28:28 Clip Clip

Speaker: The Kremlin's got a hell of a sense of humor.

00:28:29 Adam Host

That Aqaba raid was so beautifully shot, in a film that is full of beautiful shots. That slow, wide-angle pan. That territorial pan of all the horses flowing through the city like... like a flood.

00:28:42 Ben Host

Yeah.

00:28:43 Adam Host

Like floodwater going through. Really, really amazing. And to finish the sequence on the gun aimed the wrong way was... perfect.

[Ben laughs.]

00:28:54 John Host

I mean—well, that—that's an—that is an example of one of these, like, continuous shots that I hear you guys talk about all the time. But truly one. Right?

00:29:03 Adam Host

Yeah.

00:29:04 John Host

It's like an—almost an entire film canister.

00:29:06 Adam Host

Yeah.

00:29:07 John Host

Where you couldn't—how are you gonna reset that?

00:29:09 Crosstalk Crosstalk

John: "Okay, like... all 900 horsemen, like—"

Ben: Right. *[Laughing]* "Everybody go back to one."

Adam: Yeah.

[All three laugh.]

00:29:15 Ben Host

It's amazing! It's like—you just never see this scale in filmmaking.

00:29:22 John Host

How could you?

00:29:23 Ben Host

And... yeah.

00:29:24 Adam Host

Yeah.

00:29:25 John Host

How could you do this now without CGI? You wouldn't. You wouldn't be able to afford it.

00:29:28 Ben Host

It would be insane to do this without CGI now. But it's insane to do it with CGI. 'Cause this looks so incredible.

I don't know how you guys watched this film, but the version I watched was a 4K restoration of the film. It was a print that was

restored in the eighties, in the late eighties, and then it's been scanned in 4K, and it is just... breathtakingly beautiful.

00:29:56 John Host

I watched it on my phone in the bathtub, as you do.

[Ben laughs.]

When you're watching one of the great films. Because you know, if you turn your phone sideways, it is kind of a letterbox shape.

00:30:04 Ben Host

Oh, yeah. Get—

00:30:05 Adam Host

Ohh!

00:30:06 John Host

You don't have to watch it—you know, for a long time I was watching it with the phone up and down.

00:30:10 Adam Host

Right.

[Ben laughs.]

00:30:11 John Host

And then I was like "Wait, wait, wait, if I turn it sideways I get like twice the picture!"

00:30:14 Adam Host

Mm-hm.

00:30:15 Ben Host

Yeah. *[Laughs.]*

00:30:16 John Host

[Stifling laughter] But in fact, I saw it about a month and a half ago also, at Cinerama.

00:30:20 Crosstalk Crosstalk

John: Here in Seattle.

Ben: Yeah!

Adam: That's the place.

00:30:21 John Host

Which was a nice big—nice big picture.

00:30:24 Adam Host

Are you a mix popcorn man?

00:30:26 John Host

I don't like it! I don't want that—I don't want that chocolate popcorn.

00:30:29 Adam Host

You want regular-ass popcorn.

00:30:30 John Host

I want popcorn.

00:30:31 Adam Host

They do a great popcorn there.

00:30:33 John Host

I like their popcorn. Chocolate popcorn, it's like—it's like give me one handful of chocolate popcorn, I'm done.

00:30:39 Adam Host

I used to be Raisinets Man. And, uh, and now I am—

00:30:42 John Host

What?! How old—are you 95 years old?!

[Ben laughs.]

00:30:44 Adam Host

Well now—I'm about to get even older to you! Now I am scalding hot coffee at a movie theater guy.

00:30:49 John Host

Oh, I've been doing that for a long time.

00:30:50 Adam Host

And popcorn!

00:30:51 John Host

Coffee and a hotdog. *[Laughs.]*

00:30:52 Ben Host

Wow.

00:30:53 Adam Host

Lemme tell ya, coffee and popcorn really gets things moving.

Because by the time you get home...

[Adam or John whistles.]

[Adam laughs.]

00:30:58 Ben Host I would have a lot of chaos in the rear if I had a hot coffee at the beginning of a movie.

[John laughs.]

00:31:03 Adam Host It's great. I love it. I love it now. And I'm the old man that takes the lid off and puts the coffee in the cupholder.

00:31:10 John Host Wow.

00:31:11 Adam Host Very dangerous man in a movie theater.

00:31:13 John Host You're like a cross-country trucker.

00:31:14 Adam Host Yeah.

[Ben laughs.]

00:31:15 John Host Raisinets, coffee, and a hot dog...

00:31:17 Clip Clip **Murdock (*Rambo: First Blood Part II*):** That's a hell of a combination.

00:31:19 John Host Settle in!

00:31:20 Adam Host I've never eaten a movie theater hot dog.

[John laughs.]

That's definitely not me.

00:31:23 John Host You pay the traffic tickets, I'll getcha in the saddle.

[Adam laughs.]

00:31:26 Ben Host Cinerama down here has a great hot dog, actually.

00:31:28 John Host It was surprising, the print that I saw at Cinerama, how damaged it was. You know, I—

00:31:34 Ben Host Really?

00:31:35 John Host 'Cause we're watching it—we're not watching a 4K restoration there. We're watching a—like, film go through the projector.

00:31:38 Ben Host Yeah.

00:31:39 Adam Host Yeah.

00:31:40 Ben Host It was probably a 70 millimeter print, right?

00:31:43 John Host It was, yeah. But it was—but it had some visible damage.

00:31:46 Adam Host I've often found that to be the case going to the big 70 millimeter re-release films that places like the Cinerama will often have! Like, I'm expecting perfection, where what you're getting is like, this is the rugged-ass film—

00:32:00 John Host Yeah.

00:32:01 Adam Host —that has been just kept in cans for decades.

00:32:04	John	Host	It's been in cans. This was the one that showed here in '62.
00:32:07	Adam	Host	Yeah. Yeah.
00:32:08	Ben	Host	That probably gets projected a few times a year, and it's been getting projected a few times a year since—for like 30 years, you know?
00:32:15	John	Host	Mm-hm.
00:32:16	Ben	Host	It's a physical object that is going to sustain wear and tear.
00:32:20	Music	Transition	Brief clip of "War."
			<i>War!</i>
			<i>[Music stops.]</i>
00:32:22	Promo	Clip	Music: Rhythmic percussion and bass.
			Speaker 1: I listen to <i>Bullseye</i> because Jesse always has really good questions.
			Jesse Thorn: What did John Malkovich wear when he was 20?
			Bullseye Guest: <i>[Laughs.]</i> I don't know how to describe it!
			Speaker 2: There's always that moment where Jesse asks a question that the person he's interviewing has not thought of before?
			Daveed Diggs: I don't think anyone's ever said that to me or acknowledged that to me and that is so real!
			Jesse Thorn: <i>Bullseye!</i> Interviews with creators you love and creators you need to know. From MaximumFun.org and NPR.
			<i>[Music fades out.]</i>
00:32:54	Promo	Clip	Music: Upbeat, fun music.
			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?
			<i>[Lisa laughs.]</i>
			I'm Emily.
			Lisa: I'm Lisa.
			Emily: Our show's called <i>Baby Geniuses!</i>
			Lisa: And its hosts are horny adult idiots. We discover weird Wikipedia pages every episode.
			Emily: We discuss institutional misogyny!
			Lisa: We ask each other the dumbest questions, and our listeners

won't stop sending us pictures of their butts.

Emily: We haven't asked them to stop! But they also aren't stopping.

Lisa: Join us on *Baby Geniuses*.

Emily: Every other week on MaximumFun.org.

[Music ends.]

00:33:32 Music Transition Brief clip of "War."

Huh!
Yeah!

[Music stops.]

00:33:34 John Host The score just introduces us to the scope of the desert with like, "Bum-BAHHH!"

00:33:40 Music Music "Overture" from *Lawrence of Arabia*. A dramatic orchestral swell.

00:33:41 John Host Just, like... hits us!

[Ben and Adam laugh.]

00:33:44 Adam Host Yeah.

00:33:45 John Host It's such an incredible moment of filmmaking. Where you're just like, I am not—this is not a thing where I'm being shown the desert.

[Music fades out.]

It is a thing where I am... like, being invited to apprehend the desert. Like, you cannot but fail to be awed.

00:34:01 Ben Host Yeah.

00:34:02 Adam Host That moment where he tests the acoustics of the canyon is another moment. Like, you just get a sense of the size of the place. Not by—also by how it looks, but in addition to how it sounds. And the score and the echoes are a big part of that.

00:34:17 John Host Yeah.

00:34:18 Ben Host It's a movie that really takes its time, and I think, like, lets you marinate in those moments, too. Like, you're kind of learning the rules of the desert, if you don't already know them. But also just kind of like, settling into the mindset of the desert.

00:34:33 Adam Host It seems impossible to be surprised in the desert by anyone. But there are compositions and scenes where the camera pans to the right, and there's Anthony Quinn!

00:34:44 John Host Yeah!

00:34:45 Adam Host Where the hell did he come from?

[All three laugh.]

00:34:47 John Host Yeah! Where he's just like "What are you doing?"

00:34:48 Adam Host *[Laughing]* Yeah.

00:34:49 John Host "What are you doing, Englishman?" And he's—it's like, "How did he

get there?!"

00:34:52 Adam Host That scene where Lawrence is out there testing out his robes is another.

00:34:54 John Host Yeah.

00:34:55 Adam Host Like, "AUGH!"

[Adam and Ben laugh.]

Like, how do you get snuck up upon in the desert?

00:34:59 John Host Well, you don't—and the thing is those aren't unbelievable!

00:35:02 Adam Host Yeah.

00:35:03 John Host Because we do—we are—*[sighs]*. We're never given a sense in this movie that there's magic afoot. There's no magical realism here. But you absolutely do—as you just said, Ben, are introduced to the rules of the desert.

00:35:16 Adam Host Yeah.

00:35:17 John Host And understand them to be... very, very different from the rules other places.

00:35:22 Ben Host Yeah.

00:35:23 John Host And part of that is this ability that—*[laughs]* people have to kind of materialize, 'cause they just—they know how it works. That whole scene where Orence is like, *[laughs]* doing his extremely dramatic Englishman-in-the-desert, like, trying to solve this problem—

[Ben laughs quietly.]

—but his two little, uh... attendants, like, creep up on him and then gradually they're sitting there and all three of them are sitting, and Lawrence is not conscious of them because he's so deep in his mind? But that—you know, that whole sequence takes five minutes to unfold!

00:35:55 Adam Host Yeah.

00:35:57 John Host And... I mean for me at least, this movie is, as you say, almost four hours long. And I do not see a single bit of fat in it. There's nothing I would cut. You learn how big the desert is because the movie often will show you three minutes of a man walking toward you.

00:36:14 Adam Host Mm-hm.

[Ben laughs.]

00:36:15 John Host And you're like... "Still not here! He's—there he is, still!" And yet to take even ten seconds out would be to have lost something. And I don't—I don't—

00:36:28 Ben Host Right.

00:36:29 John Host There aren't four-hour movies anymore, thank god, or the ones that do attempt to be four hours long are ones where they kitchen-sink it. Right? Like, I don't—it's always a director that's like "My true vision is four hours long!" and it's just like "No... you could've cut—"

[Ben laughs.]

Like, you know, *Apocalypse Now Redux* is a garbage fire. *Apocalypse Now* is a great movie... almost. But what would you cut out of this? You just—I mean, you could! You could make this an hour and a half long.

00:37:01	Ben	Host	Yeah.
00:37:02	John	Host	If you just did the action.
00:37:03	Ben	Host	It's like using the length for, you know, the thing—like the Gasim rescue. When they realize that they've gotten off of the Sun's Anvil and Gasim didn't make it, and Lawrence goes back for him. Like, you <u>know</u> that this guy has like, moments left in his life unless somebody comes and gets him. And that just raises—like, you're tense through that whole scene! And it's a super slow-moving scene.
00:37:34	Adam	Host	If we just cut to the "Hey guys, where's Gasim?" to Lawrence going and getting him, you never feel the danger of Gasim being stranded in the desert the way you <u>must</u> when that sequence lasts 15 minutes.
00:37:47	John	Host	And you—and the camera keeps panning back to the <u>baking sun</u> .
00:37:51	Adam	Host	Yeah.
00:37:52	John	Host	And each shot, the sun is larger on the screen until it like...
00:37:56	Ben	Host	Yeah.
00:37:57	John	Host	Until it's <u>so bright</u> that it turns <u>blue</u> .
00:37:59	Adam	Host	That was one of those shots that—Ben, did you read this? Like, there are lenses in this movie that were <u>only</u> used for some scenes and then never used again. They're like, in film museums.
00:38:10	Ben	Host	Wow.
00:38:11	John	Host	'Cause they were torched?
00:38:12	Adam	Host	A 450 millimeter lens was used for the "Gasim in the desert" scene, and—
00:38:17	Ben	Host	Wow.
			<i>[John laughs.]</i>
00:38:18	Adam	Host	—that was it! It's the <i>Lawrence of Arabia</i> lens. And now it's under glass somewhere.
00:38:23	John	Host	What would you use it for if you could take it out?
00:38:26	Adam	Host	I mean a 450 are like the bazooka-length sports lenses that you see on the sidelines of games shooting still photography. That's like—to give you a sense of its size.
00:38:36	John	Host	Right.
00:38:37	Ben	Host	But they're exposing 65 millimeter film on this film—on this, right?
00:38:43	Adam	Host	Yeah.
00:38:44	Ben	Host	That's what's running through the camera?
00:38:45	Adam	Host	Yeah.
00:38:46	Ben	Host	So like, the focal length is—that's less significant than a 450 millimeter lens on a 35 millimeter shoot.

00:38:54	Adam	Host	That's fair. Yeah.
00:38:55	Ben	Host	But—
00:38:56	Adam	Host	It's still a big-ass fucking thing.
00:38:58	Ben	Host	But still just like... yeah. Like, probably a \$50,000 piece of equipment.
00:39:02	Adam	Host	Yeah. Used it one time.
00:39:04	Ben	Host	And—
00:39:05	John	Host	Wow.
00:39:06	Ben	Host	Speaking of money, I was reading that José Ferrer, the Turkish officer, was paid <u>the most</u> of anyone in this movie. He was paid \$25,000 and... a Porsche? <i>[Laughs.]</i> That was the—he was the most well-compensated actor in the film.
00:39:25	Adam	Host	<u>And</u> he got to grab Peter O'Toole's nipple? <u>Awesome</u> .
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
00:39:28	John	Host	Well, and do you know why?
00:39:31	Ben	Host	He was in a position of power. Like, he was a—he was like a big name, and they really wanted him for the part, and he was like "Eh..." He gave—he—that was like his "Eff you" number. Like, "I'm not gonna say no without a number."
00:39:46	Adam	Host	That's José Ferrer's Gulfstream right there.
00:39:49	Ben	Host	Yeah. Peter O'Toole was quoted saying that he learned more about screen acting from Ferrer than he could have in any acting class.
00:39:57	Adam	Host	Wow.
00:39:58	John	Host	Interesting!
00:39:59	Ben	Host	Yeah.
00:40:00	John	Host	I mean, given that this movie also has Anthony Quinn, <u>Alec Guinness</u> ...
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
			...and Omar Sharif.
00:40:06	Adam	Host	Yeah, is that shade? On them?
00:40:08	Ben	Host	Yeah!
			<i>[All three laugh.]</i>
00:40:09	John	Host	That's pretty amazing! It's—it's, uh...
00:40:11	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	Ben: And like, I wondered if—
			Adam: "You guys could learn a thing or two from José over there, guys!"
			<i>[John laughs.]</i>
00:40:16	Ben	Host	And like, did they shoot that stuff <u>first</u> or something? Like, I don't understand how like, Peter O'Toole, a guy who'd been in like <u>one</u> other movie before this, and—has like a five-minute scene with one

guy and is like "That's the guy that I learned the most from."

00:40:31 John Host Hard to fathom this era of filmmaking, and I think there's—1962, there are a lot of epic movies getting made about classical themes. This is the era of the gladiator movie, and the Cleopatra movie, and whatnot. But... like, to try and situation yourself in the making of this movie? I just can't—I can't imagine the spectacle. I can't imag—I mean it's not like they went back to their trailer and sat and looked at their phone in between shots. Like, they're on location. They're—what are they—they're living in tents?

00:41:03 Adam Host I would love to see the *Heart of Darkness* about *Lawrence of Arabia*.

[Ben laughs.]

I read that the King of Jordan was like "Come, enjoy! Shoot your movie in Jordan, it'll be great!" and he opened up a ton of doors for the production. Like, made a ton of it happen. When the movie came out he's like "No one is watching this movie in Jordan."

[John laughs, Adam stifles laughter.]

"This is super fucked, the way they make Arabs look."

[Ben laughs.]

And for a long time you couldn't watch *Lawrence of Arabia* there!

00:41:28 John Host Well, yeah, I imagine.

00:41:30 Ben Host Wow.

00:41:31 John Host I mean I imagine this would be—it's not just "it's messed up how they made Arabs look," but... you know, it really... [Sighs.] A lot of the mythology that supports royal families, a lot of the—I mean it requires that you believe that there's some continuum that supports their claim to rule somewhere.

00:41:55 Ben Host Right.

00:41:56 John Host Right? And so they're the 18th great-grandson of Muhammad, or—and to picture, or to be shown this kind of... the origin story of some of these nation states, and some of these royal families, could really be de-stabilizing I think, if this was widely shown.

00:42:14 Ben Host Kind of breaks the spell.

00:42:15 John Host It does, right! Because it's just like "Oh, yeah, it could—" You know. "Our king who rules over us with total authoritarianism..."

00:42:21 Adam Host Yeah.

00:42:22 Ben Host Yeah.

00:42:23 John Host "Also he was just some son—he was like the 14th son of some guy."

00:42:27 Adam Host "Is this why we can't have lights and water, because this is what—this is what our government looks like behind closed doors?"

00:42:34 John Host No lights and water.

[Unintelligible off-mic background noise.]

00:42:35 Adam Host Like, that kind of dysfunction?

00:42:37	Ben	Host	I think it's... it's—this movie is like in such an interesting place, because like, when Lawrence is talking to the Arabs—like, he's very like, condescending about their like, sectarian or inter-tribal conflicts. But then like, the way that those conflicts are irrelevant to him is exactly the same way that like, the larger... you know, like the war between France and Germany is to the Arabs? Like, it kind of like, shines a light on the irrelevancy of both disagreements.
00:43:09	John	Host	Right.
00:43:10	Clip	Clip	Speaker: There is no gold in Aqaba.
00:43:12	John	Host	This movie came out in '62. Right? There was—the King of Saudi Arabia, King Saud, who was the son of Abdulaziz, who was the founder of the House of Saud. He—his reign ended in October of '62. And his son, the new Feisal, took over from him that same year.
			So this movie comes out <u>right</u> at the transition between the son of Ibn Saud and the—and his grandson. Like, this—the same—so imagine <u>that</u> . I mean, your—the legitimacy of your royal family of the of the nation of Saudi Arabia is in—still in this really, like, maybe not <u>fragile</u> state, but certainly I don't think that there—I mean, there is <u>living</u> memory operating in those places that dates back to <u>before</u> there was any kind of unified Arab control.
			So that's gotta—this movie has to come out like a bomb! Right? I mean, Israel is still in its first 20 years.
00:44:24	Ben	Host	Yeah.
00:44:25	John	Host	This is a movie that—that... must have been incredibly politically charged, <u>there</u> , than it would have been in the West.
00:44:33	Adam	Host	Right.
00:44:34	John	Host	You know, for—in the West it reads as a re-evaluation of our own duplicity. Or rather, British duplicity.
00:44:42	Ben	Host	The duplicity element of it is really fascinating. 'Cause it really does show like, what a jam-up some of this stuff was for the Arabs.
00:44:53	Adam	Host	A jam-up that many of them <u>helped</u> with? That had to feel bad.
00:44:58	John	Host	I think a lot—an awful lot of Arabs, during World War I, naturally sided with the Ottomans. The Ottomans had ruled there for many, many—I mean, for centuries. And there was a sense of them all as Muslim brothers. There <u>wasn't</u> a sense—if you were gonna be—if you were an Arab <u>nationalist</u> , I think a lot of that just meant that you wanted more Arab autonomy <u>within</u> the Ottoman Empire. There wasn't really a very clear picture that there was gonna be total liberation. It was—some of that liberation ideology was <u>invented</u> by the British and French in order to inspire the tribes to <u>fight</u> the Ottomans!
			It wasn't—like, the idea of Arab nationalism was certainly real, but I don't think self-governance happened completely naturally. I think that might have been—or absolutely <u>was</u> —part of the—part of a British strategy! To go in and say "No, no, no. You're gonna—we're gonna give this—everybody gets freedom!" That was the World War I story! Right? That was the whole—that was the whole Wilson Doctrine.

00:46:14	Ben	Host	Hm.
00:46:15	John	Host	"All the peoples of the world will become self-governing after the war. This is the end." And then it turned out that he couldn't deliver on that promise, and the British and the French divided up the world. I think he was an idealist, but the British and the French <u>used</u> that <u>carrot</u> as a way of getting people into the fight.
00:46:37	Ben	Host	It almost seems analogous to like, arming people that you don't necessarily have, uh, ideological agreement with, but just a common enemy?
00:46:48	John	Host	Right, except you're arming them with the idea of their own... nationhood.
00:46:55	Ben	Host	Yeah.
00:46:56	Adam	Host	I always thought the mind was the best weapon.
00:46:58	Ben	Host	<i>[Laughs.]</i> Wow.
00:47:03	Adam	Host	There's just a little bit of that dosed into a couple of characters here, right? By pitting Omar Sharif's, uh, "doing it for the cause"-ness against Anthony Quinn's "doing it for the money"-ness? Is that a way that this film attempts to tell that part of the story?
00:47:23	John	Host	Well, and also the numerous times that <u>Lawrence</u> is asked "Why are <u>you</u> doing this?"
00:47:30	Adam	Host	Yeah.
00:47:31	John	Host	And Feisal kinda rips him a new one a couple of times. Where he's like "You're just another British guy who's in love with the desolation." That's a—I think a pretty damning evaluation of Lawrence's motivations, and he definitely—both the British and the Arabs recognize that Lawrence does <u>not</u> have clear or pure motives. He's just "boys outing."
00:47:59	Adam	Host	In general, are you rooting for Lawrence in this movie? I think the film is constructed in a really interesting way, because there are checkpoints to it, and those checkpoints occur every time he goes back to base. Those moments are so different from each other, and he comes out of them either more emboldened or beaten down and ready to quit, or whatever. And I felt very different about Lawrence almost every time he goes home. Like, I felt sorry for him when he's in Jerusalem and like, no one knows him or cares, and he tries to be pals.

Like, all of those check-ins are so instructive about Lawrence's motivations afterwards. And I feel like that's a constantly changing thing throughout the movie. And by changing his motivations, it makes it hard to either always root for him or always root against him in the way that you often feel about a main character or a hero character in a war film. You know?

And I—and that kept me off balance in a fun way. It kept me interested in what his deal was, because his methods and his circumstances were often surprising. Like, I was very surprised when—I think we come out of the intermission, and he's standing on top of that train, and that guy's shooting at him, and he's like—he's godlike! He's like Christ in that moment. He can't be killed.

And Omar Sharif is like "What happened to you, man?"

[Adam and Ben laugh.]

"You were just the guy who took Farraj into a base 40 minutes ago for lemonade! You're not that guy now! I'm not sure how to feel about you." And me, watching the movie, wasn't sure about how to feel about him in those moments either.

00:49:45 Ben Host In the best tradition of character studies, it's not trying to—the film is not putting its thumb on the scale one way or another in terms of like, the likability of the main character. It's more about an inquiry into this... character. And I think that it's sort of unfortunate that some of the historical stuff is so inaccurate, because—like, this is probably how most people know this guy. And I was reading that like, his biographer was like, *[stifles laughter]* "This... this is not—this is not the dude. This ain't it." *[Laughs.]*

Like it may be a good movie, but like from a historical standpoint it is pretty wide of the mark, and not a great way of thinking about like, what motivated Lawrence.

00:50:33 John Host *[Sighs.]* The scale is so epic.

00:50:35 Ben Host Yeah.

00:50:36 John Host What we see in that moment of him standing on the train is something we see in a lot of war movies. Which is that one charismatic leader suddenly becomes superhuman in the eyes of the soldiers. We're watching it in the theater and going, you know, "Wow. Look at this golden boy." And so many war movies have a character at their center that becomes this galvanizing, inspirational, "I'll follow you anywhere" kind of leader.

I mean, gradually we see Feisal start to employ Lawrence, and Lawrence's legend. Like, Feisal's no dummy.

00:51:20 Adam Host Yeah.

00:51:21 John Host And so we see that he's no longer—he never was—

00:51:23 Adam Host Lawrence is great for Feisal's business.

00:51:25 John Host Right. He never—

[Ben laughs.]

Feisal was never under his spell.

00:51:28 Ben Host Right.

00:51:29 John Host But the fact that so many Arabs are under his spell serves Feisal.

00:51:33 Adam Host Yeah.

00:51:34 John Host And at that point there's a real switch in your understanding of like... "How—am I rooting for Lawrence?" When you see Lawrence is a pawn—

00:51:42 Adam Host Yeah!

00:51:43 John Host —and starts to be employed a lot more as a pawn by other players with bigger pictures... and you realize like "Oh, he's just a—he's just like a charismatic raider." You know, he's just like a—he's a pirate,

basically.

00:51:58 Ben Host Yeah! When he says like "I'm gonna give these guys their freedom" it's like, naïve at that point.

00:52:03 John Host Yeah, you don't have that power, my friend.

00:52:05 Adam Host I think it's a little bit of both, Ben! Like, I totally get with your character study-ness that the film deploys at Lawrence, but he really does grow and change in interesting ways throughout. I guess I kept on waiting for him to be the hero that I'd sort of promised, or expected, from an epic story about one person.

00:52:27 Ben Host I mean, I think that that scene right at the beginning when they're—you know, they're all leaving the funeral and like, he's impossible to sum up in a couple of lines for all these people—

00:52:40 Adam Host God. Did you get total Alexander vibes from that moment? In the way that at the end of *Alexander*—

[Ben chuckles.]

—the historian's like "You know, I guess we'll never really know the true story, because no one really knew him." Like, that's that moment at the beginning of *Lawrence of Arabia*! At—that's what the funeral scene does!

00:52:58 Ben Host Yeah.

00:52:59 Adam Host "No one really knows him, but maybe the film you're about to watch could be..."

[John laughs.]

"...sort of an idea. Or something."

00:53:05 Ben Host I watched the beginning bit again at the end, because I felt like—

00:53:09 John Host You wanted to know who those guys were?

00:53:12 Ben Host Yeah! Like the—like all—their suits are not the same as their uniforms, and their facial hair has changed a little bit. Like, you get the one general from the beginning in Cairo, but like he's not the main general that we interact with for the majority of the movie. Like, the—it was—I like needed to remind myself who it was that was speaking and in what way.

00:53:37 Adam Host That was an aspect of this film that felt very dated, because I think if this film were made now there is no way that we wouldn't have gotten a bookend to that where we're back at the funeral, or we're over his motorcycle crash, like, pulling up into the sky or whatever.

00:53:53 Ben Host Is that because he's still a very famous person at the time that this film is released? Like...

00:53:57 John Host Yes. But I thought it was really telling, the cultural difference between then and now. Because every one of those commanders or former political people that were British all sort of disavowed knowing him or knowing him closely. As they're standing on the steps they're like,

[posh British accent] "Well, I didn't really know the man. *[Dismissive grumbling.]*"

[Back to regular voice.]

And then the American, Lowell Thomas, is like "I knew him well! He was amazing! A very close friend!"

[Ben laughs.]

00:54:29 Adam Host

Which is the most American thing for an American to do.

00:54:31 John Host

Yeah. And now I don't know if there's anyone in the world—we're—everybody has been so touched by American... Americanism now that I think even in England, the inclination would be like—

[posh British accent] "Oh, yes. We were quite close. Yes, I knew him, ah—oh yes—"

[Ben and Adam laugh and John devolves into inarticulate British mumbling.]

[Back to regular voice.]

And that's like—that reticence, or that... you know, that sort of careful, like, "I would never claim to be a close friend of someone that I didn't consider a friend" is *[inaudible]*.

00:54:59 Ben Host

Yeah. Well, they have different libel laws over there, you know.

00:55:02 John Host

That's right. That's true.

00:55:03 Ben Host

A, uh—an Internet pedant noticed something that was wrong with this scene. Would you guys like to hear a goof from the IMDb Goofs section?

00:55:10 John Host

Yes.

00:55:11 Ben Host

"Following Lawrence's memorial service, the view of the front of Saint Paul's Cathedral shows that the left-hand clock face—the North—is missing."

00:55:19 John Host

Oh!

00:55:20 Ben Host

"This was actually destroyed during the Second World War."

00:55:22 John Host

Oh!!

00:55:23 Sound Effect Sound Effect

[Beeping as Ben speaks.]

00:55:24 Ben Host

"Which did not begin until four years after T.E. Lawrence died."

00:55:26 John Host

Busteed!

[Beeping stops.]

[Ben laughs.]

Should have gotten up on Saint Paul's and put that clock back.

00:55:31 Crosstalk Crosstalk

Ben: Yeah. *[Laughs.]*

Adam: You know, there's a little bit of Left Clock in all of us, I think.

00:55:34 John Host

[Laughs.] My hope in watching movies like this over the course of the time that we've been making this show, and on behalf of the audience, is that when you say like... "Am I rooting for Lawrence?"

This—the events of this movie are situated right at the crossroads of one of the most fundamentally, like, key and broken foreign policy and, you know, like... this is the heart of a question that plagues us today. This is the heart of a region that was not exactly shaped and formed by the events depicted, but certainly powerfully... shaped. And we're living in the world of consequences!

00:56:31 Ben Host

[In a professorial tone] Much like that desert canyon, the echoes of Lawrence are still with us.

00:56:37 John Host

Wow. Wow. He was just sitting on that egg this whole time. This giant ostrich egg.

[Ben laughs.]

But to come into this movie, I think we all are—you know. I think you would come into this movie naturally thinking the European powers and their colonial instincts are the bad guys, ultimately, and that Arab nationalism is... are the good guys, until it gets turned by the bad guys—until it gets turned by colonialism into something bad. And you know, you wanna go in with a clear picture, and certainly depending on where you are on the Israel/Palestine question, you know, there—you walk into a movie like this so laden with your own, like, presuppositions about what the—what—who—what sides there are, even!

And I think the primary value of a movie like this is to come out of it more confused. Not less.

00:57:40 Ben Host

[Laughs.] Right.

00:57:42 John Host

Because if you walk into this movie thinking that you know, based on what we—based on the world we're living in now—

00:57:48 Adam Host

I'm gonna call that the Stallone Defense.

[John laughs.]

And I'm gonna put that in my back pocket. *[Chuckles.]* For future episodes of *Friendly Fire*.

00:57:55 John Host

But there—there's a lot that's inaccurate, but there's also a lot that's pretty accurately depicted. Or at least there are worlds explored here that don't get explored in conversations about the Middle East. So to dismiss it as... inaccurate, or to come into this movie, watch it, and come out the other side with the exact same opinions you had about it—about this region and what needed to happen... I think you're not—you couldn't be paying attention.

Because at this moment in time, during this war, with the sides—with the lines drawn where they were, and the lack of lines other places... what is the best possible outcome? What could have happened in this moment that would have—that you would prefer?

00:58:42 Ben Host

Right. Like, leaving it to the Ottoman Empire isn't great for these people.

00:58:48 John Host

Nope.

00:58:49 Ben Host

The Sykes-Picot Agreement is not a great outcome. Like, in the scene where they're trying to set up like a deliberative body at the

end, about how much, like, growing up and like having a civics class in high school prepares you to think about something like that, and if you're like—if your experience of life up until the time you're in a room in a deliberative body is, like, blowing up trains and stealing things off of it because that's the only way you're going to be paid for your participation in war, like, how ill-prepared you would be for that? Like—

00:59:26 John Host Yeah! I mean, if you're coming from a standpoint where you are a—you're a leader of a tribe and that is a... and that's a thing you inherited from your father and his father before you, and you have a—you have clearly delineated territory, and clearly understood enemies and competitors within your own region—

00:59:45 Ben Host And like a well-defined right to just shoot somebody if they're like, taking some water out of a well that you have a claim to. Like—
[laughs].

00:59:53 John Host Right. And this is a time when you could be a powerful leader and not read or write. Or have had any education outside of, you know, the—outside of a guy sitting in your tent and reading the Quran to you.

01:00:05 Adam Host I love that scene with Ali where—was it Anthony Quinn's character? Is like "What's this children's book doing here, Ali? What the hell?"

And Ali's like "I'm just trying to like—I'm just trying to read, man."

01:00:18 John Host Yeah.

01:00:19 Adam Host "You don't have to shame me." *[Laughs quietly.]*

01:00:20 John Host Yeah. "I'm learning to read. What—"

Well, that whole scene where Anthony Quinn—they invade the Turks. He finds that chest that's full of what appear to be either stock certificates—

01:00:33 Adam Host Yeah.

01:00:34 John Host —or gold certificates? I mean like, it's clearly—

[Ben laughs.]

It's clearly full of money.

01:00:38 Adam Host Yeah.

01:00:39 John Host And he's just throwing it in the—"There's no gold here!"

01:00:42 Adam Host Yeah.

01:00:43 John Host And all of a sudden all these guys are on the world stage. And all of a—and come out the other side of it, at Treaty of Versailles or whatever, all of a sudden there are nations here. And you're the King of Jordan. You're the King of Iraq. That's heavy st—it's heavy!

[Ben chuckles.]

And it's very hard to look back and armchair-quarterback it unless you're coming at it—you know, unless you have been taught like a strictly anti-colonialist viewpoint and you never waver from it. So the bad guys are always clear to you. It's always England. And the good

guys are anyone who's allied against England. But even in that case, who's that in this movie?! You know? So...

01:01:27 Ben Host I watched this movie on my Apple TV, and there are like a series of screensavers that come up. And I was just like sitting in my living room thinking about the movie after it was over, and the screensaver that comes up is aerial video of Dubai just glittering at night.

[John and Ben laugh.]

And I was like "What the fuck?! Why this, of all the things?"

[John laughs.]

Like, it could have been—it could have been porpoises frolicking in the water, and it's glittering footage of Dubai. Like, it's such a head-fuck to think about like... like, that—like, Dubai was built within 100 years of stuff that happens in this movie.

01:02:07 John Host Yeah.

01:02:08 Ben Host I mean, not built, but like, that version of Dubai was built.

01:02:10 John Host We're... 25 years, in this movie—25 years before we introduce the idea that there is also gonna be a Jewish homeland in this same place. And the British are playing a central role in that, too. And so looking at this, you know, the notion that there... you know, that this was a stable region full of like, long-settled and peaceful people, and then you're introducing the Jews... there's just a lot to unpack. And there's a lot that you cannot fully unpack, I guess, is the thing. Uh... at least I can't.

01:02:48 Ben Host *[Chuckles.]* In a way the introduction of the Jews was like a great—uh, you know, like really aligned a lot of the people in this region.

[Ben and John laugh.]

01:02:55 John Host It was a galvanizer, wasn't it? Yeah.

01:02:56 Ben Host *[Laughing]* Yeah.

01:03:00 John Host And if you, uh—if you have a lot of thoughts on these matters, please write us...

[Ben and John laugh.]

01:03:07 Ben Host Wouldn't be an episode of *Friendly Fire* without giving out the *Friendly Fire* email address! Somebody tried to go around this email address by sending something to Robs? Don't do that. Robs doesn't police what we say.

01:03:19 John Host Send it to GoFuckYourself@maximumfunkenstein.sex.

01:03:24 Adam Host I could see that would be confusing to some people, because Robs's email address is GoFuckYourself@robschulte.net.

[John laughs.]

So...

01:03:33 Ben Host Oh, yeah.

01:03:34 Adam Host That like, autocorrects in the email.

01:03:36	Clip	Clip	<p>Music: Whimsical background music, slightly muted under the dialogue and somewhat crackly audio.</p> <p>Child: So tell us! What does "download" mean?</p> <p><i>[Clip audio ends.]</i></p>
01:03:38	Ben	Host	<p>There's some stuff in this movie that is very condescending toward the Arabs in the film. Like, the deliberative body scene is—like, feels very... very much like a scold on their inability to build some kind of consensus in that room.</p> <p>But you also get scenes like where the Anthony Quinn character is like, talked out of killing all the guys that just walked across the desert for taking some water. And like, really sees some reason in a moment where, you know, it—like, when you've like, pulled your gun out and announced that you're gonna kill everybody... it can be hard to back down from a position like that.</p> <p>So I—like, I feel like <u>that</u> is something that the movie did really nicely. I mean, obviously like, it's a Western actor in brownface that's being depicted doing it, but... like, these people aren't <u>caricatures</u>, I guess is what I'm trying to say.</p>
01:04:38	John	Host	That's hard to do, but I—I'm convinced that you come out of this movie feeling like every single person was... <u>either</u> corrupt or naive.
01:04:49	Ben	Host	Right.
01:04:50	John	Host	And that—and often corrupt <u>and naive</u> . Like, I don't think there's anyone that you come out the other side feeling like "Oh, well that was—they were great." And I—
01:05:00	Ben	Host	"That was a plain-dealing good dude."
01:05:03	John	Host	Right. And I feel like Anthony Quinn, for instance, is a character that is always—he's... he is always <u>consistent</u> . Right? He never betrays <u>himself</u> . He never falters. But he's also not ready for—not ready to be negotiating with London and New York. He just doesn't understand the terms. He doesn't understand the <u>game</u> .
01:05:30	Ben	Host	Yeah.
01:05:31	John	Host	He's <u>always</u> gonna be operating at a kind of... tribal leader level.
01:05:38	Adam	Host	One of my favorite low-key shots in this movie is after that scene where they've stayed up all night trying to figure out how to run a city. Anthony Quinn and Omar Sharif's character go down into the plaza, and Anthony Quinn just <u>disappears</u> into the black. He's just gone. Love that moment.
01:05:56	John	Host	Yeah.
			And the—you know, the only reason the British have this authority is that this is—these are the waning years of the whole British <u>Empire</u> machine! There's no <u>British</u> guy in this movie that's <u>smart</u> , except for the <u>real</u> politician who runs the Arab League.
01:06:17	Adam	Host	I don't wanna give away who I might think your guy is, but god, Mr. Dryden is just... the guy you wanna be in this movie is just the—the guy behind the guy behind the guy, who's got his own chair in every meeting. He gets a <u>drink</u> in every meeting. He's just there to quip.

01:06:35	John	Host	Dryden is <u>so</u> slick. You never pin him down on anything; he always sort of deflects. He always goes like— <i>[mild-mannered posh British voice]</i> "Well, it's up to you, old boy..." <i>[Back to regular voice.]</i>
01:06:44	Ben	Host	He's wearing a three-piece suit in Cairo, and yet he always seems quite cool.
01:06:48	John	Host	<i>[Delighted]</i> Oh, his hair is perfect throughout!
01:06:50	Adam	Host	Yeah. <i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
01:06:52	John	Host	Oh, he's so wonderful... But also, he's the one! Right?
01:06:55	Adam	Host	Yeah.
01:06:56	John	Host	That is, he's the one that has the big-picture plan.
01:06:58	Adam	Host	He's the puppet master.
01:06:59	John	Host	He has the bigger map.
01:07:00	Ben	Host	He kind of feels like CIA.
01:07:02	Adam	Host	Yeah.
01:07:03	John	Host	He talks to Q.
01:07:05	Ben	Host	<i>[Laughs.]</i> Yeah. And if you're curious about Q, uh, just research it on Reddit! <i>[John laughs.]</i> They'll tell you what Q is!
01:07:16	Clip	Clip	Speaker: I'll settle for Al Lawrence.
01:07:18	Ben	Host	I would say that like the—maybe the one character that isn't corrupt or naive is Jackson Bentley, the reporter? And he, like, <u>will</u> tell you if you ask him what he's there for. Like, to like make the case to the American public to get into the war by finding, like, cool heroes to depict having fun adventures.
01:07:40	Adam	Host	<i>[Laughs.]</i> That moment where he's like "God, I've never seen anyone killed with a sword before! Really missed that shot!" <i>[All three laugh.]</i> Like, that's—I think in a lot of actors' hands, uh, that's a hate-able moment.
01:07:56	Ben	Host	Yeah.
01:07:57	Adam	Host	It would make you hate that character for expressing that feeling. But it's so true to his character in that moment, I—I really loved him in that scene. That is <u>exactly</u> what he's there to do. <i>[Ben chuckles.]</i>

He's true to himself, and to everyone else.

01:08:11	John	Host	And I guess that's the other crazy thing about this, is that, although I am the truly middle-aged person on this show, these are—events here are within—
01:08:20	Adam	Host	I wouldn't say that; Ben and I could die <u>very</u> young.
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
01:08:24	John	Host	That's true, you could be in middle age.
01:08:26	Adam	Host	Yeah.
01:08:27	John	Host	Yeah. Ben could get colitis or something.
01:08:28	Adam	Host	Yeah.
01:08:29	Ben	Host	I almost died on an airplane recently, you know? I'm, uh—I'm constantly on death's door one way or another.
01:08:36	John	Host	So, and by that— <i>[laughs]</i> .
01:08:37	Adam	Host	<i>[Stifling laughter]</i> You'll outlive us all, John, that's what we're trying to say.
01:08:40	John	Host	By that standard— <i>[laughs]</i> maybe I'm the youngest of the group, but we're living in the <u>time</u> of this movie! In a way. Even though it feels like it happened a million years ago, or we're watching and it just seems like—
01:08:52	Ben	Host	Right.
01:08:53	John	Host	—this is something from a sepia-toned past.
01:08:57	Clip	Clip	Speaker: Did Ali break confidence to tell me?
01:09:00	Ben	Host	Feisal was the King of Syria <u>and</u> Iraq. Were like—were those considered one country back then?
01:09:07	John	Host	In the immediate aftermath of World War I, the Ottoman Empire dissolved. And you had all these places that had been governed by an Ottoman framework, and now it was gone. And so the British actually had to figure out who was going to run the different parts of Arabia as sort of client states of the colonial government. And you know, all these different tribes or—you know—so a lot of these guys are Hashemites, which are a kind of, you know—and we meet a <u>lot</u> of different tribes in this movie, and we see that they're all sort of—they have pre-existing relationships with each other, a lot of them antagonistic.
			And so the British were kind of <u>installing</u> kings, or rather, guys with a natural claim to it would sorta step forward and say "I am the ruler of this." And if the British felt like they could work with them, or you know, if it served their interest, they would say "Alright, well, you're King of the Syrians, and you're King of Iraq" and so forth, and you know, it was all very much being decided super ad hoc and kind of... there were a lot of people that could lay <u>claim</u> .
			You know, like, Ibn Saud had—I don't know, <u>40</u> children?
01:10:33	Adam	Host	Wow. One of the great stick men, then, in the game!

[John and Ben laugh.]

01:10:35	John	Host	I'm not sure what the number is, but like, an <u>astonishing</u> number of children.
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
			And they're—and within the—you know, within the Arab world, like, they're all recognized as princes and princesses! It's not like it's only the top two. Right? That like, everybody's... <u>in play</u> somehow. And so then you get one more generation out of that, and you're talking about hundreds and hundreds of people. Big wheel.
01:10:59	Adam	Host	How many wives, do you think, for 40?
01:11:01	John	Host	Beats me. Boy, beats me.
01:11:02	Adam	Host	To make 40.
01:11:03	John	Host	I mean, you gotta have... a lot of wives.
01:11:04	Adam	Host	We're talking at <u>least</u> ten.
01:11:06	John	Host	Yeah. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
			But so, I mean, so it's very—and it's confusing for me to... explain, because I don't understand it fully, and a lot of— <i>[laughs]</i> a lot of—
01:11:14	Ben	Host	Yeah.
01:11:15	John	Host	A lot of them have different—or a lot of them have similar names?
01:11:18	Ben	Host	I'm looking at the Wikipedia article here and it says that the British were deciding—were like taking a step back from direct administration in Iraq and just like, put it to the people like "Hey, what if this guy—this Prince Feisal guy would be your king?" and they ran a plebiscite with 96% in favor. <i>[Laughing]</i> And so—there's—
01:11:41	John	Host	Right! But like super—super rigged. Right? <i>[Laughs.]</i>
01:11:43	Ben	Host	Yeah. Right. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
01:11:45	John	Host	But you know! Like the—
01:11:46	Ben	Host	96% is a very hard number to swallow credulously.
01:11:49	John	Host	<i>[Laughs.]</i> But all of that Shia and Sunni stuff is—that now we're all pretty well-acquainted with—like, that is in play here too. And the Shia are feeling like... you know, <u>already</u> disenfranchised by some of these moves. You know, there's so many levels to the—to that tribal internecine conflict with one another that would be absolutely impenetrable to Western eyes. And so, you know, if there's a power vacuum, <u>somebody</u> steps into it. And if they plant a flag and say "Actually, my people have <u>always</u> ruled this and I have <u>always</u> been king..."
			If you're dealing also with a pre-literate society that most people aren't gonna say like "Well, in <u>this</u> book it says something different," you know, you're just—you can establish control and then make that control seem—and seem to <u>us</u> , even!—like it's been there forever.
01:12:53	Ben	Host	Yeah, like it's a historical inevitability.
01:12:55	John	Host	Right.
01:12:56	Ben	Host	"Like it is written."
01:12:57	John	Host	"Like it is written!"

01:12:58	Adam	Host	Oooh.
01:12:59	John	Host	Kapow.
01:13:01	Adam	Host	Good job!
01:13:02	Music	Transition	Brief clip of "War."
			<i>War!</i>
			<i>Huh!</i>
			<i>Yeah!</i>
			<i>[Music stops.]</i>
01:13:05	Ben	Host	I think we've, uh, done this high-wire act long enough.
			<i>[John laughs.]</i>
			The discussion of the history of the Middle East. They said it shouldn't be done!
01:13:13	John	Host	Oh no...
01:13:14	Ben	Host	And yet. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
01:13:16	John	Host	Oh no...
01:13:17	Ben	Host	<i>[Laughs.]</i> Do you get—
01:13:18	Adam	Host	Hey guys, I stepped out for coffee, and just—uh, just came back! What are you guys talking about?
			<i>[Ben and John laugh.]</i>
01:13:24	Ben	Host	I think, uh—I think we need a rating systems. It's a sunk cost issue at this point. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
01:13:29	John	Host	Well, I hope the rating system is one out of five "Israel's rights to exist."
01:13:34	Adam	Host	Hm. Yeah.
			<i>[John laughs, Ben cracks up.]</i>
			The rating system and the ratings for <i>Friendly Fire</i> films are always the least controversial part of any episode.
			<i>[John laughs quietly.]</i>
			It's not gonna be any different for <i>Lawrence of Arabia</i> . I looked forward to giving <u>my</u> rating to a film like this.
01:13:52	John	Host	Mm-hm! Mm-hm!
01:13:54	Adam	Host	You know, so many of the—
01:13:55	Ben	Host	Speaking of Israel's right to exist, Feisal is the one that signed the agreement that, uh—that—with the British!
01:14:01	John	Host	For Israel's right to exist! Yeah.
01:14:03	Ben	Host	Yeah. Obi-Wan Kenobi, <i>[laughs]</i> after this movie, turned around and signed into law Israel's right to exist.
01:14:13	John	Host	You know, <u>that</u> whole thing was very curious. Because in the very end of World War II, the negotiations with the British and the

Americans started to happen. Like, FDR actually went to Arabia and met with I think Feisal... but Churchill met with him, and spent the entire meeting trying to negotiate Palestine.

01:14:40 Adam Host

Would you say that this is a circumstance where... Feisal went West? (*Fievel Goes West*)

[John(?) laughs a long raspberry as Ben and/or Adam laugh quietly.]

01:14:47 John Host

Good god. I can't believe what this show purports to be.

[Ben laughs.]

Anyway, Churchill and he sat there and negotiated—and spent the whole time arguing about Palestine, or trying to work out Palestine. FDR spent the whole time kutzeling up to him about oil.

01:15:04 Adam Host

Mm.

01:15:05 John Host

And saying like "Hey, you know what—"

[Mid-Atlantic accent] "Hello, what we'll do is we'll help you get the oil out of the desert! What do you say? *[Wordless, cheerful vocalization].*"

[Ben laughs.]

[Back to regular voice.]

And Churchill and the British felt incredibly betrayed, because it turned—and I don't—I don't think this actually was Feisal; I think this was... it's so—it's such a jumble in my mind. But the Saudis ended up granting the—granting Standard Oil of Ohio the rights to exploit the oil in the desert, cutting the British out. And the British—honestly, their attitude was like "We've done so much for you! What are you talking about?! We were the ones the whole time!"

01:15:47 Adam Host

It's always about the oil, isn't it?

01:15:49 John Host

And then it was about the oil.

[Mimicking The Humungus from Mad Max 2: The Road Warrior]
"Give us the oil!"

01:15:50 Adam Host

That's great.

01:15:52 John Host

[Humungus voice continues] "Just walk away!"

01:15:54 Adam Host

Classic America.

01:15:55 John Host

[Back to regular voice.]

God bless America.

[Adam and Ben laugh quietly.]

01:16:01 Adam Host

We don't get real bookends to this film, but there is an object that could represent such a thing. It's that motorcycle. In the beginning it's the conveyance that T.E. Lawrence dies upon. He's actually thrown from it, right? This—you run into this problem all the time in Seattle; it's the bikers! Sharing the road!

01:16:21 John Host Mm. Gotta share the road, Adam.

01:16:23 Adam Host You gotta share the road. And T.E. Lawrence is going so fast on his motorcycle that he cannot—he does swerve out of the way in time. He ends up going ass-over-teakettle into that tree that ends up killing him.

But at the end of the film—sometimes you'll get into a Lyft, and the driver just wants to talk. It's unfortunate sometimes, when this happens. And Lawrence is in the Jeep on the way home, and he's fantasizing about being alone. You can tell, because when this motorcycle cruises by at top speed, he's like "God. Really wish I was on a motorcycle around now. So this Jeep driver—"

[Ben laughs.]

"—wouldn't chirp in my fucking ear for the rest of this eight-hour trip through the desert." I think for me it's gonna be a scale of one to five motorcycles, for that reason. Motorcycle, uh, can also be a ton of fun to ride. It can also be a deathtrap. Like, there's a lot of ambiguities about a motorcycle as a vehicle, that I think, uh, represent what the *Lawrence of Arabia* film could be.

But... *[Sighs.]* I was—I was nervous to watch this film, in a way that I'm nervous to watch a lot of the great films of cinema history. Because you're like "God. Is what was great... great still?"

How could I possibly be the person of today watching Hollywood greatness and be like "Yeah, it's just too long"? Or "I didn't really get it!"

01:17:55 John Host *[Stifling laughter]* Mm-hm.

01:17:57 Adam Host "It didn't teach me about the war like I would prefer!"

[Ben or John laughs.]

You can't be that with *Lawrence of Arabia*! Can you?

01:18:03 John Host There was no sex in this movie.

01:18:06 Ben Host There was like one little shot of the women that live among the—you know, the desert guys.

01:18:14 Adam Host A failure of the Bechdel Test right there.

01:18:16 John Host Oh, no, they—they were ululating! That whole scene was... pretty intense.

01:18:21 Adam Host There were many of them massacred, right? It's—you see a lot of massacred women.

01:18:25 Ben Host Yeah.

01:18:26 John Host Yes.

01:18:27 Ben Host Yes, you do.

01:18:28 Adam Host Pretty gruesome.

How can you not give *Lawrence of Arabia* anything less than a perfect score? I don't think I have the strength to do it. Even though I

feel like this film takes liberties with the telling of Lawrence's story in a way that I should feel emboldened to give any kind of rating I want to this.

01:18:48 John Host Hm! Mm-hm! Mm-hm!

01:18:49 Adam Host Right?

01:18:50 John Host Yeah, you could just—you can say what you want, Adam! On this show. This is a safe space!

01:18:53 Adam Host While I found a lot of the politics a little confusing, the conversation with you guys illuminated quite a bit of that. But I think your normal viewer isn't gonna have access to the great minds of John Roderick and Benjamin Ahr Harrison to get them through.

[Ben laughs.]

That's why I feel like this show is a great accompaniment to a movie like this. I think maybe before the conversation, I would have given *Lawrence of Arabia*... four motorcycles! But you filled in a lot of the blanks. You two.

01:19:26 John Host Hm.

01:19:27 Ben Host Aw.

01:19:28 Adam Host You affected my score.

01:19:29 Ben Host You filled blanks in for me, Adam! ...John, you didn't. *[Laughs.]*

01:19:34 John Host Yeah, I know. I'm just—I know when I talk both your ears close. You start playing *Mario Kart*.

[Ben cackles.]

01:19:39 Adam Host What makes this film so unique for me, and the way I am choosing to review it, is that I think its greatness comes less from its story and its characters but more about the miracle of its construction and how it looks and feels. It is so big and beautiful. It sounds so great. It sustains the action for so long, and by action I don't even mean swords cutting people in two.

I mean, like, there is something action-packed about a man's wandering through the desert. There's something very tension-filled about whether or not an entire army will live or die as they go day and night through—through Satan's Anvil, or whatever. It's—

[Ben laughs.]

It was incredible! The way that this film was made is what makes it deserving of five motorcycles. The attention to detail! Like, I love how Peter O'Toole walked in every scene after being beaten. The little streaks of blood in the back of his uniform in every scene afterward. Like, we're not—we're showing and we're not telling. And we're showing for four hours.

I thought it was just great! And it might be a five-motorcycle film to me in these ways. It may be five or four for someone else for completely different ways. And I—

01:21:10 John Host TurkFan69 is gonna give this a one-motorcycle rating.

01:21:13	Adam	Host	TurkFan69 doesn't even know what this film is! It doesn't exist to him.
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
			But it exists big-time to me. And it's something that I hope to re-watch over the years the way you have, John. I never wanna miss another screening of it at the Cinerama. I think that's the way to go if you can.
			I really enjoyed watching this film. There is a ton to like. Those areas were the ones that I liked especially, and that's why I'm giving it five motorcycles.
01:21:44	Ben	Host	John, when you saw it at Cinerama, how did they handle the intermission? Is it like—do you get ten minutes to get up and go pee and buy more popcorn?
01:21:53	John	Host	Oh, yeah, the lights come up. That interstitial music plays, the—you know, the theme plays.
01:21:58	Ben	Host	Yeah.
01:21:59	John	Host	And everybody goes down and gets a hot dog and another cup of coffee. I mean, any time you get a chance to see a classic movie—one that was filmed in CinemaScope?
01:22:07	Adam	Host	Yeah.
01:22:08	John	Host	On a... 70 millimeter screen like that—or a—am I getting those terms right?
01:22:12	Adam	Host	Sure.
01:22:13	John	Host	<i>[Laughs.]</i> It's really—it's wor—it's, you know—it's a date night.
01:22:18	Adam	Host	Ben, how would you review the film based on our five-motorcycles rating system?
01:22:25	Ben	Host	I would review it with five motorcycles. Um... you know—I— <i>[laughs]</i> . There's part of me that doesn't want to like, think that the great movies are great. Like, I want to be contrarian somehow, and find something wrong with them. And I guess I've done that a couple of times when I've found something major wrong with them. And you know, like, this is a product of its time... in a lot of ways. But it's, like, almost a <u>perfect</u> product of its time in that way. And—
01:22:56	Adam	Host	You wanna put Ben into a corner on his rating, you make the rating system five prosthetic noses.
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
			See where he takes that one!
01:23:03	John	Host	Five brownfaces, Ben.
			<i>[Ben and Adam laugh.]</i>
01:23:05	Adam	Host	Yeah!
01:23:06	Ben	Host	Five—
01:23:07	John	Host	What are you gonna do now?

[Ben and John laugh.]

01:23:09	Adam	Host	Yeah! What's your score, Ben? <i>[Laughs.]</i>
01:23:10	Ben	Host	I loved it. I loved almost everything about it, and I agree that this is gonna be something that I return to a lot in the future. And I really wanna see it projected in 70 millimeters, 'cause... holy fuck, what a great-looking movie.
01:23:26	Adam	Host	Yeah.
01:23:27	John	Host	Yeah, even a rough print is still just astonishing. Those scenes in the desert, where the desert <u>really</u> fills the screen, and it's clear that it was meant—those shots—I mean that's <u>why</u> it's in 70 millimeter. Because the desire to just show that <u>scope</u> ... those environments. And those battles!
			And we didn't talk a lot in this episode about the <u>battles</u> . The actual fighting. And partly it is that it's... it's strange fighting! Right? There're all these— <i>[stifles laughter]</i> these train raids; in a way it's like <i>Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid</i> , a lot of it. But the—you know, some of these battle scenes with <u>hundreds</u> of extras—and they're not just hundreds of extras like in some Mel Gibson movie where they're all...
01:24:21	Ben	Host	Yeah, you can see their tennis shoes under their battle armor?
			<i>[Ben and John laugh.]</i>
01:24:24	John	Host	Right! They went down to the unemployment office and were like "We'll give you all five pounds if you run around in the mud."
01:24:29	Adam	Host	I mean, that cuts both ways. I was reading the Moroccan Army was used in some of these battle scenes, and... sometimes you don't make your day, when you're shooting with the <u>real</u> Moroccan Army and they just don't want to... act anymore?
01:24:43	John	Host	Yeah.
01:24:44	Adam	Host	They don't wanna go back to one sometimes.
01:24:46	John	Host	No.
01:24:47	Adam	Host	And there were moments when David Lean just got what he got.
01:24:50	John	Host	Got what he got! I mean, just the question of where you find 900 horses...
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
			...900 horses that can all be ridden, and 900 men who can <u>ride</u> 900 horses, in order to film some of these spectacles. I—
01:25:08	Adam	Host	And <u>camels</u> !
01:25:10	John	Host	And—yeah! And then in the <u>middle</u> of 900 horses, 50 camels. Also running at full gallop.
01:25:17	Adam	Host	Ben, I've got a question for you about the camel. Like, I feel like this film teaches you how to ride a camel by crossing your legs. Were you taught to cross your legs?
01:25:25	Ben	Host	The way they ride a camel is quite different from the way I rode. Like, I can't imagine you would be able to ride for days and days the way I was. I think it was—that was like probably safer for a neophyte camel rider, when you ride it like a horse. Just 'cause you have—

01:25:43	Adam	Host	Did we all read that Peter O'Toole story about him going into town and getting a piece of foam to put under his butt? Did you read that?
01:25:49	John	Host	Hm-mm.
01:25:50	Ben	Host	<i>[Laughing]</i> No!
01:25:51	Adam	Host	He invented a camel-riding technology wherein, like—he got—his butt was just <u>wrecked</u> from a day of camel-riding.
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
			And he's like "Eff <u>this</u> . I'm going to go put down some padding," and he <u>did</u> . And it—and <u>everyone</u> was inspired by it. Like, for the rest of the production everyone was going into town buying scraps of foam, putting it under their butts, and were far more comfortable after!
01:26:16	Ben	Host	Wow.
01:26:17	Adam	Host	He—they called him like the King of the Sponge.
01:26:19	John	Host	Yeah, King of the Sponge!
01:26:21	Ben	Host	<i>[Laughs.]</i> I mean, I think that the camel performances in this movie are low-key one of the great parts of it. Like, they <u>mug</u> for the camera. They make little belches and like, show their teeth at like the <u>funniest</u> times. I have no idea how—like, they can't be directing the camels to do that! But they punctuate the scenes so beautifully.
01:26:43	John	Host	They do.
01:26:44	Adam	Host	There are scenes with 50 camels in it, and it sounds like the "Gentlemen, start your engines" part of the Daytona 500.
01:26:49	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	John: <i>[Imitating a camel and/or an engine]</i> MAAA! MAAA!! MAAA!!!
			<i>[Ben cracks up.]</i>
			Adam: Like, the sound of 50 camels making <u>that</u> sound—was like, <u>scary</u> in parts!
01:26:56	John	Host	The best one of them was when they were heading out—headed out across the desert and Omar Sharif said "You know, in 20 days, the camels are gonna start dying."
01:27:05	Adam	Host	Yeah.
01:27:06	John	Host	And his camel goes "MAAAAAA."
			<i>[All three laugh.]</i>
			It was like—
01:27:12	Adam	Host	Right on cue.
01:27:13	John	Host	It was such a dramatic moment, but like—
01:27:15	Adam	Host	Camel doesn't know he's in a movie!
01:27:16	John	Host	Yeah! But the camel knew—
01:27:18	Ben	Host	I know! <i>[Laughs.]</i>
01:27:19	John	Host	Camel knew what <u>that</u> guy was saying!
01:27:20	Adam	Host	Yeah! Yeah.

01:27:21 John Host Well, I mean, I think you know that I think this is a five, uh, motorcycle movie. And just undeniable. I mean we've only seen a couple of four-hour movies. This has an intermission; it takes you... a little bit out. But then the second act is very different than the first.

But it's just so gorgeous, and it's so much food for thought. You know. If you walk into this movie with a 2020 idea of the world—and you can absolutely bring that idea of the world to bear within the—within your experience of watching the movie. You can also let your guard down and come out of the movie with more questions than answers.

And if you—and you can go in with your 2020 viewpoint and come out with it intact, and still have more questions than answers. So in terms of like, watching this movie as a way to read the newspaper better? Watching this movie as a way to know what side you're on, or not know what side you're on, better? Because we're living in a time when you feel like you pick a side and then you just fight bitterly for your side, whatever it is!

And you know, to sit on Twitter and to have an opinion about the Middle East—to be Jared Kushner, and feel like you can walk in and solve these problems with some contracts... and particularly to armchair-quarterback the Middle East with a lot of—you know, with a... with a sociology degree from Antioch is—

[Ben laughs, John stifles laughter.]

01:29:01 John Host It really, um... behooves us to watch *Lawrence of Arabia*, and know that it was made in 1962 by an American/British filmmaking crew, and know that it is lionizing a—you know, a British officer during a period of very complex, um, collision of a colonializing Ottoman Empire, a colonial British and French, uh—those nations also in competition with each other! For rule in this world. And all of the Arab inhabitants, and all of their complexities.

Knowing it all, you still can't watch a movie like this and... and feel very confident that you—that you know, really, anything. How it would be different. What we should do now.

So in that sense alone—leave aside the Cinerama filmmaking experience! And, frankly, the incredible performance by Peter O'Toole. A young actor. Like you say, he'd only been in one movie. And it's just astonishing that we spent four hours just—with him never offscreen. And you never see a crack in it.

01:30:18 Adam Host Yeah.

01:30:19 John Host So, yeah. Five motorcycles... with a bullet! *[Makes a "pkew" gun sound.]*

01:30:25 Adam Host Five motorcycles and the tree Lawrence dies on.

01:30:29 John Host Great war movie.

01:30:30 Adam Host But do we have great guys? I guess we're about to find out. Ben, who's your guy?

01:30:37 Ben Host My guy is one that I only discovered when I went back to re-watch the scene on the steps of the cathedral. It's Hugh Miller, the—I guess

it's—he's like Royal Army Medical Corps, uh, colonel? He like, punches Lawrence when he's there at the hospital in his Arab garb. You know, when he—this colonel comes in and sees that like the—you know, the situation in the hospital in Damascus for Turkish soldiers is deplorable, and like, punches Lawrence. But then like, the next day meets Lawrence and knows him to be Lawrence and shakes his hand, and doesn't realize that he's just recently punched him.

[Laughs.] And then he—like in that opening scene, he says like "I got—I once, like, uh, you know, had the honor of shaking his hand" while he's like, criticizing the American reporter for having a frank take on Lawrence's being a complicated person. *[Laughs.]*

So just for—like, I think this movie maybe at its best makes you realize that you are a bit, uh, a bit of that guy. Like, a lot of the world happens in a way that is impossible for you to understand because you just don't have enough context. And he didn't have enough context, but you know, took the gravest possible exception to—*[laughs]* to what the reporter said.

So he's my guy.

01:32:10 Adam Host

Good guy. Interesting reason.

01:32:13 John Host

Mm-hm. Mm-hm! Yeah. Smart.

01:32:15 Adam Host

My guy's Gasim! When Lawrence goes into the desert to save him, that's the moment that Lawrence becomes a god. I think. Like, he becomes truly a god later when he's standing on that train, but that's the suggestion that he's special. And he needs that moment for the Omar Sharif character to fully come around on whether or not this guy's a threat or someone that he can partner with in any way. Like, that meant a lot. That was a huge turning point.

Gasim himself, though, is interesting in a couple ways. He's so normal. He's sort of a proxy for everyone on every side. Because he represents the random guy thrown into an army to fight a war that he doesn't really understand. He gets tired, like a normal person does, and falls off his horse in the desert. He gets saved, as I said.

01:33:16 John Host

Camel.

01:33:17 Adam Host

By Lawrence. And then later on when the Howeitats and Ali's tribe are commingled, in an effort to fight again, he's the guy that can't help himself! Like, he can't get with this... with this peace that's been brokered in order to fight another enemy. He has to be himself, and he has to kill someone from that other tribe! And the look of disappointment in his own face when like—he's more disappointed than Lawrence is in that moment!

When Lawrence is able to identify him, and he's like "Oh, god, not Gasim. Really?" Like, you feel pain in a couple of ways. You feel the pain of a guy who went through the effort to save a guy's life only to be let down. But also Gasim knows he fucked up. And he is so sad about letting Lawrence down there. But Gasim can only be Gasim. Like, it was in his nature to fall asleep. It was in his nature to kill that other guy, ahead of a crucial mission.

And when Lawrence executes him, it hurts. It sucks. But it's also another turning point for Lawrence. That's the moment where Lawrence realizes that he enjoys killing, and it changes his character forever. So Gasim gives the Lawrence character two gifts in a really interesting way, and I think you could easily dismiss Gasim as just like... one of the many randoms in this movie, but he's not. He's really important.

So... he's my guy.

01:35:04 John Host

So in that officers' club in Cairo... there are an awful lot of guys that could be my guy. Because they're standing around playing billiards and drinking hard lemonade.

[Posh British accent] "Well, old boy... He's in Cairo! Drinking lemonade."

[Laughs.]

01:35:21 Adam Host

Bottomless lemonade. All you can drink!

01:35:23 John Host

[Continuing accent] "It's quite good, actually. I was making maps. Mmmeps."

[Adam and Ben laugh.]

[Back to regular voice.]

So a lot of those guys, with the handlebar mustaches, in those beautiful khaki—cotton khaki uniforms that they always had high and tight, were—could be my guy. But it has to be Dryden. Because he's the perfect emblem of the power behind the power. Soft power, in all those rooms, right? He never asserts anything. He always says...

[Mild-mannered posh British voice] "Yes, well, I suppose..."

[Back to regular voice.]

Which is the ultimate British way of saying "Unload all remaining ordnance on my coordinates."

01:36:08 Adam Host

That's—is that British for "Bless your heart"?

[All three laugh.]

01:36:10 John Host

It is, a little! You know, the way he did—the way he motions to Lawrence a few times, where he's like—

[softly menacing posh British voice] "Down, boy."

[Back to regular voice.]

You know, like, any time a general turns around and shows his back, Dryden is like, working some angle behind him. Like, he had common cause with Lawrence from the beginning. Like, we know the military guys are dumb. You just cool your jets and let me work here.

He does that several times in the movie. And he does it even without

moving, you know? He does it sometimes where he's just like...
[beat] anyway, and he's perfectly coiffed. Perfectly attired. Perfectly composed in all things. You get the feeling that any room he was in could be on fire.

[Ben laughs.]

Men could rush in at any time and shoot everyone else in the room, and they wouldn't shoot Dryden because... he just looks like he belongs there? Like, he just seems like—yeah. He's probably—

01:37:03 Adam Host

He seems like he would be un-flapped during, too.

01:37:04 John Host

Seems like he'd—he's everybody's friend. He'd offer them a cigarette or... yeah.

01:37:09 Adam Host

Yeah.

01:37:10 John Host

So he's really the only person of his kind in the movie, and he stands in for Balfour, he stands in for the Treaty of Versailles, he stands in for Sykes-Picot. He stands in for everything. In a way he's the thing, more than anything else, that shapes the 20th century. He's the agent. And we don't—you know. I'd like to watch a movie about him. Although it would be a—it'd be this movie, just shot from a different angle.

01:37:38 Adam Host

Wow.

01:37:39 Music Transition

Brief clip of "War."

War!

Huh!

Yeah!

[Music stops.]

01:37:42 Ben Host

What a fun episode. Do you guys want to get the die out and see what the next one's gonna be?

01:37:50 John Host

[Starting far away from the mic and getting back into normal range.]

Get that die! Here we go! What's it gonna be? Ready? Here we go.

[Die rolls for several seconds, interrupted abruptly by some glass or ceramic clanking.]

[Ben laughs.]

01:38:08 Adam Host

Aw, now it's covered in coffee!

01:38:10 John Host

Whoa, 95! That's a tough number to represent on a die. Ninety-five!

01:38:17 Ben Host

Oh! Uh, 95 is a 1970 film set during the Napoleonic Wars.

01:38:21 Sound Effect Sound Effect

[Tinny, dramatic music fades in.]

01:38:24 Ben Host

Directed by Jerzy Skolimowski.

01:38:28 John Host

That gets me excited.

01:38:29 Ben Host

It's called *The Adventures of Gerard*.

(JAIR-ard.)

			Or Gerard. (<i>Jer-ARD.</i>)
01:38:32	John	Host	<i>The Adventures of Gerard!</i>
			<i>[Music fades out.]</i>
			Well! This story has a lot of antecedents.
			<i>[Adam and Ben chuckle.]</i>
			In the world of littérature. I've never seen <u>this</u> movie, though.
01:38:44	Ben	Host	"A French brigadier serving during the Napoleonic Wars."
01:38:49	Music	Music	"War" starts fading in.
01:38:50	Ben	Host	Looks like an English cast, so... <i>[laughs]</i> that should be fun.
01:38:53	Adam	Host	Is it the <i>Lawrence of Arabia</i> of the Napoleonic War films?
01:38:56	Ben	Host	Uhhh, I'm... guessing not.
01:39:00	Adam	Host	Mm.
01:39:01	Ben	Host	It's quite short, compared to <i>Lawrence of Arabia</i> .
01:39:02	Adam	Host	Oh, boy.
01:39:04	Ben	Host	Clocking in at an hour and 32 minutes.
01:39:06	Adam	Host	Alright!
01:39:07	Ben	Host	So, uh... yeah!
01:39:09	Adam	Host	It's gonna feel brisk.
01:39:10	Ben	Host	Looking forward to it! That will be next week on <i>Friendly Fire</i> . And we're gonna leave it with RobsRobsRobsRobs from here. For John Roderick and Adam Pranica, I've been Ben Harrison. To the victor go the spoiler alerts.
01:39:24	Music	Music	"War" continues at full volume.
			<i>Absolutely— —nothing!</i>
			<i>Listen to me!</i>
			<i>War!</i>
			<i>It ain't nothing but a heartbreaker—</i>
			<i>[Music drops to play quietly as Rob speaks.]</i>
01:39:29	Rob Schulte	Producer	<i>Friendly Fire</i> is a Maximum Fun podcast hosted by Ben Harrison, Adam Pranica, and John Roderick. The show is produced and edited by me, Rob Schulte. Our theme music is "War" by Edwin Starr, and it's courtesy of Stone Agate Music. And our logo art is by Nick Ditmore.
			<i>Friendly Fire</i> is a podcast that's made possible by the support of our listeners like you! To make sure that <i>Friendly Fire</i> continues, visit MaximumFun.org/join and pledge your support. By doing so you'll gain access to our monthly pork chop episodes, as well as all the other MaxFun bonus content.

If you wanna chat about our podcast on various forms of social media, just search for our discussion groups. Or use the hashtag [#FriendlyFire](#). You can find Ben on Twitter at [@BenjaminAhr](#). Adam is found at [@CutForTime](#). John is [@johnroderick](#), and you can find me at [@robkschulte](#). Thanks!

01:40:28 John Host

"War" continues at full volume.

*They say we must fight to keep our freedom
But Lord knows there's got to be a better way
Ohhh!*

*War!
Huh!*

God, y'all!

What is it good for?!

You tell me!

Nothing!

Say it, say it, say it! Saaay it!

*War!
Huh!*

Good god, y'all!

[Music fades out.]

01:40:47 Music Transition

A cheerful guitar chord.

01:40:48 Speaker 1 Guest

[MaximumFun.org](#).

01:40:50 Speaker 2 Guest

Comedy and culture.

01:40:51 Speaker 3 Guest

Artist owned—

01:40:52 Speaker 4 Guest

—audience supported.