

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.

00:00:01 Rob Schulte Producer You've heard us talk about it all through the MaxFunDrive. And we mention it on the end of the show every week. But if you've never heard one of our Pork Chop episodes? You're about to. We decided to put this in the main feed to give you a taste. First one's free, as they say. But you can get this exact same episode right now without pledge breaks if you set up a membership at MaximumFun.org/join. We really appreciate the amazing support we've already gotten in the Drive. Enjoy the episode!

00:00:29 Music Music Groovy, upbeat seventies intro music heavy on the brass and drums.

00:00:43 Music Music "Festers Theme" by Kholebeats plays in the background. Staccato music, heavy on electronics and synth.

00:00:48 John Roderick Host For the whole run of this program, we've danced around the question of whether the Cold War was a war. Was it? It wasn't... I guess. But for me, at least, growing up in its midst, there aren't many comparables by which to describe it to people who weren't there. It wasn't peacetime, exactly. Not when there were no fewer than 57 card-carrying Communists in the State Department!

Was it an uneasy peace? I'm not sure "uneasy" is quite the right adjective to describe the effect of being told throughout your childhood that you might—on any given afternoon—have 20 minutes to live. No, the Cold War was something different. And as it fades into the shadows of some implausible prehistory, I find myself clutching at its pants cuffs, begging it to show itself. Did I dream the whole thing? Is this the Snuffleupagus we were warned—again and again—would seem real to us but would leave no trunk prints on the tablecloth? Is the Cold War just a melody from a dream that you wake up to record on your nightstand tape recorder, only to find in the morning sounds like the bass line from the theme from *Kojak*?

The Cold War is our three feet of snow that we waded through every day to school and back. Yet—despite it being in a handful of books on the four pages covering everything from Hitler to Obama that you cover in the last week of school before summer—I'm horrified to find it already sounds not quite true.

00:02:22 John Host It's not like the Cold War was the only time in history that an apocalypse was pending. It's been on tomorrow's weather forecast for Jerusalem for 2500 years. It's a big part of the enticing sales pitch of certain religions that the end of the world is nigh! I imagine being a devout member of an apocalyptic cult is very much like being a kid in the 1970s. Grownups are describing in whispers how we're all going to die in fire tornadoes for something we didn't do and it doesn't matter what we say or how sorry we are; there's nothing that can be done.

At least religions offer you door #2, where you get the wings and the virgins and the unlimited chewing tobacco or whatever else you want. Whereas the best the Cold War could ever offer us was that it didn't happen today... but it might happen tonight while you're sleeping. It's astonishing, the number of people I recall who said things like, "I hope the bomb just lands right on top of me because I don't wanna live in the aftermath!" That was some wise-sounding shit to say in 1982, but it always sounded like horseshit to me.

You're telling me that you combed your hair every day and never spat on the ground and tithed properly and punched your time card and drove an Oldsmobile even though you could afford a Lincoln, and now you're just a compliant moo-cow when *Time Magazine* tells you the Soviets have missiles in your Strawberry Quik? You don't—at any time in your life—wanna stand up and scream, "I want to live!" You see how complicated this was for a child to understand?

00:03:50 John Host

The Born-Againists told me all about the Rapture, but the newspaper told me about the more likely rapture—where instead of abandoning their cars and flying directly to heaven, the elect were also going to be charred, rotting, and radioactive corpses. And those of us left behind would have to shovel them and their Oldsmobiles out of the way as we hunted through the rubble for canned ravioli and uncontaminated baby food. Well anyway, I embrace all faiths.

The point is that maybe the most profoundly disheartening aspect of the Cold War was the lingering whiff throughout that the death clock counting down the seconds was just the product of an unwinnable argument between personally unlikeable 19th-century British and German economists, emboldened by the American and French Revolutions to imagine a world without flatulent kings and czars, in favor of conflicting visions of rational governments and a free exchange of goods and services between noble and principled comrades, able to subjugate their naked self-interest and animal violence to the betterment of their fellows and all the world's children.

Huzzah to whichever of these theories proved correct ultimately and ushered in the philosopher's gardens where we all raised the vegetables of fellowship and dined upon the century-and-a-half of enlightened self-rule that presaged us here, now, in 2020. The ripe banana at the fat end of the horn of Utopia.

00:05:17 John Host

Anyway, this movie makes the whole thing seem like a movie. By which I mean that these days, every movie—including rom-coms and the great steppes of Disney Princess-stan and the cold vacuum of the Elmo-verse—they all have the central premise that the world is about to detonate; everyone will cartoon die; the blood wave will sweep away the unrighteous and demons will have sex with you in your dreams... unless two plucky teens and their computer, Joshua, can save an unwitting world from radioactive Rapture ravioli and make it home in Dad's Oldsmobile without even getting to second base before military agents impose curfew on your town.

Honestly, it's occurred to me that maybe the Cold War wasn't actually real. My dad never mentioned it. No one ever sat me down and said, "John, here's the plan. We all meet in our own basement next to the 50 days' worth of water we're stockpiling." Like, my mom has 500 Band-Aids, but never once explained what we'd do if the world caught on fire. They just went to work every day. And stressed about my grades. And whether my sister was smoking pot. And how was I gonna get into law school with grades like that? Maybe the whole thing was a prank, a gaslight. To play on 12-year-olds so we couldn't imagine a future and would end up wallowing in

grunge instead of questioning the deregulation of banks. Is it a game? Or is it real? Today on *Friendly Fire*—*WarGames*.

[Music ceases.]

00:06:47 Clip
00:06:53 Music

[Computer voice] Shall we play a game?

“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.]

00:07:07 Ben
Harrison
00:07:16 Adam
Pranica
00:07:18 John

Host
Host
Host

Welcome to *Friendly Fire*, the trillion-dollar war movie podcast that’s at the mercy of three men with little brass keys. I’m Ben Harrison. I’m Adam Pranica.

Turn your key, sir!

[Ben laughs.]

00:07:24 Adam

Host

I’m John Roderick.
Why wasn’t it three men with keys? That brings up a great point, Ben! Why is it just two? It should be the three-man rule! You want an odd number, right?

00:07:33 John
00:07:36 Ben

Host
Host

No, you gotta pay that extra guy.
This is the first time I’ve seen the keys spaced far enough apart that one person couldn’t do ‘em. Y’know, just by putting both keys in either hand?

00:07:45 John
00:07:47 Ben

Host
Host

That’s the point of it.
But like on the—when you see ‘em on submarine movies, it’s like two guys that are standing directly next to each other going, like, “One, two, three, turn!”

00:07:54 John

Host

There’s no place on a submarine that two guys can be further apart than arm’s length.

[Adam laughs.]

00:07:59 Ben
00:08:01 John

Host
Host

Yeah. That’s probably the issue. [Laughs.]

That’s the thing about that scene, right? If Michael Madsen does actually shoot his commanding officer—

[Ben laughs.]

00:08:20	Adam	Host	—then the missiles still won't launch. So the gun is really an empty threat in that situation. "Turn your key, sir!" It's like, "What are you gonna do? Shoot me? Then you're locked down here with a dead guy and you still didn't launch your missiles." He's got like a pool cue in his other hand and he's like trying to like—
			<i>[John laughs.]</i>
00:08:24	John	Host	—hit the key.
00:08:26	Adam	Host	<i>[Through laughter]</i> Yeah, exactly. Was this a regular watch for you guys? In the eighties and nineties? I feel like I saw this movie all the time and yet that opening scene surprised me, watching it this time. I had sort of forgotten that it existed. That it was sort of the reason for the movie!
00:08:42	John	Host	Mm-hm.
00:08:43	Ben	Host	Yeah. I've seen this movie one other time, but I didn't remember it at all. And I definitely didn't remember that scene. And it really surprised me how serious in tone this movie is, the way it kicks off. 'Cause it's kind of... I think that its rep is that it's a kid movie for kids. But it's pretty— <i>[Laughs.]</i> It's got some pretty, like, pretty grim ideas in it.
00:09:05	John	Host	Yeah. It's not a kid movie at all. That scene—so I saw this movie in the theater. It was the... spring of my 9 th -grade year.
00:09:15	Adam	Host	That's just perfect timing.
00:09:17	John	Host	I was a 9 th grader and this—1983 it was like, peak Reagan, Cold War—I was living in Alaska. I had just stopped regularly going to Civil Air Patrol meetings. But they still sounded the air raid sirens every Friday at noon. You could still hear the jets take off from Elmendorf at full afterburner when they were going up to intercept those Bear Bombers. And so it was... this movie was <u>extremely</u> palpable. And that opening scene absolutely hit me like a lightning bolt.
00:09:51	Clip	Clip	Ginsburg (WarGames): Another 20 minutes, we were gonna start looking for you guys!
00:09:55	John	Host	Cpt. Lawson: God, it's really something out there. I routinely think about that opening scene and have ever since 1983. It's one of the images in my head that pops up. And I will say, "Turn your key, sir"—
			<i>[Multiple people laugh.]</i>
00:10:12	Ben	Host	—any time it seems like I need somebody to do something and they're not acting fast enough? I remember you yelling that a lot, like, sound checking for live shows.
00:10:16	John	Host	<i>[Through laughter]</i> Yeah, right! "Turn your key, sir!"
00:10:20	Ben	Host	That opening scene is like based on real events, right? Like there are examples in history of, like, a guy in a bunker that made the right call, having no information to base his decision on, that prevented the bombs from going off.
00:10:39	John	Host	Well even more, I think, there are—they did run tests where they did precisely that. Like, put their crews to the test. Like, would they

00:10:55	Adam	Host	turn their key or not? And I think they've discovered that a quarter of the people didn't. Even when that was their only job. That was a really neat scene in the movie, when they post-game that at the—in their boardroom. And they're kicking around the idea, like— <i>[Laughs.]</i> Like, statistically, the improbability of all of the guys doing what they're ordered to do!
00:11:10	John	Host	The argument that that scene is making—the whole plot of the movie—is that this subset of military planners and bureaucrats believes that the fact that there are human beings in the chain of command only makes us <u>weak</u> . That was an argument that was being made on the editorial page of the <i>New York Times</i> ! Y'know, it's the—that's the premise behind <i>Dr. Strangelove</i> . So... our whole—my whole life, the idea of being vulnerable to a surprise attack from the Russians and not being able to get those missiles off in time to completely annihilate them before we were completely annihilated—it was in the water we drank!
00:11:56	Adam	Host	It's so interesting how elegant the tic-tac-toe analogy is to this film's story. Where, y'know, a film like <i>Crimson Tide</i> uses von Clausewitz to make its arguments. Like, this film cuts in exactly the opposite direction and still makes an almost equally strong case for itself. And its argument. That like—what a perfect analogy for a 9 th -grader to grasp in order to understand these issues!
00:12:29	John	Host	The 9 th -grader in me did not see the big plot holes. Because the movie... the movie <u>is</u> very serious. And it somehow manages to be fun, and, like, an adventurous romp. Kind of like a teen sex comedy, almost?
<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>			
00:12:58	Ben	Host	Whilst also, like... <u>really</u> , like, savagely indicting the whole military-industrial cult. I kinda wish we had watched this right on the heels of <i>Dr. Strangelove</i> for that reason. Because I feel like they are coming from a very similar place and go about telling their story in such radically different ways. It's like—it's kind of amazing that you can do that.
00:13:14	Adam	Host	I thought it was a total reversal of expectations to have <u>not</u> the Barry Corbin character as the nihilist willing to destroy the earth, but instead making the thinking scientist person that character. Like, that it's Professor Falken that is willing to sit in his leather recliner three miles away from a nuclear target, y'know—almost <u>relishing</u> the idea of nature turning humanity back into the soil and starting all over again.
<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>			
00:14:06	John	Host	It seems like a <u>really</u> edgy thing to— <i>[Laughs.]</i> To give to an eighties audience, right? That's kind of a reversal of character type that I wasn't expecting. When you think of <i>Dr. Strangelove</i> as being, like, such a biting satire, it's often—and I think we talked about it in our <i>Dr. Strangelove</i> episode—it's kind of hard to watch it now and remember that a Cold War audience was as sophisticated as they were. And this is an—for exactly the reasons you described, Adam, like a—it's not a satire. It's a really heavy indictment of not <u>just</u> the

			military-industrial complex, but the nihilism that comes into a world where it feels like nuclear war is inevitable.
00:14:44	Adam	Host	Yeah.
00:14:46	John	Host	And so how can you be a smart, thinking person and—and there are—it's analogous, somewhat, to the way people talk about climate change now. When I was in high school I remember my high school girlfriend said that she didn't wanna have kids because why would you bring kids into a world where they were just gonna have to live in a post-nuclear apocalypse?
00:15:08	Adam	Host	Well, girls were saying anything to get out of having sex with you, John.
			<i>[Multiple people laugh.]</i>
00:15:11	John	Host	Well, I know. I know. And it worked! It worked as I started to cry.
00:15:15	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	John: And then the date was over. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
			Ben: You just went off and ruminated about that? <i>[Laughs.]</i> The post-nuclear apocalypse?
00:15:21	John	Host	I ruminated about it until I finally lost my virginity at 29.
00:15:25	Clip	Clip	Jennifer (WarGames): You want a ride home?
			David: Yeah!
00:15:28	John	Host	Y'know, there's a lot of that talk now. The smart, thinking people saying, like, "Well, the jig is up." Right? "There's no point. There's no point anymore." And that kind of "there's no point" aspect to Professor Falken—it's like that's the thing that galvanizes our heroes, finally! It's not even... <i>[through laughter]</i> it's not even trying to stop the war. It's just being so frustrated with his Boomer reticence.
00:15:58	Adam	Host	It sure seems like David and Jennifer's meeting with Professor Falken fails to convince him. But then he does end up coming around.
00:16:08	John	Host	When she evokes—or rather, when she <u>invokes</u> —Joshua, I think it causes him to realize that his fatalism— <u>largely</u> because he—because his kid died. And if his kid was still alive maybe he wouldn't be so cavalier about the human race. And when he comes back down the stairs and kind of watches them leave, I feel like that... that's what he's thinking about.
00:16:36	Adam	Host	Yeah. I was obsessed with that pterodactyl R.C. plane that he had for a long time. That thing looked great.
00:16:45	Ben	Host	When he's revealed with the remote controller for that thing, I turned to my wife and said, "Look! It's old Adam Pranica!"
			<i>[Multiple people laugh.]</i>
			And I got a big laugh! <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:16:57	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	Adam: God. If only.
			John: <i>[Through laughter]</i> It really is! It really is.
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
00:17:00	John	Host	And then when he says, "You're on my property and you weren't invited. Please leave."
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>

00:17:08	Adam	Host	I was like...
00:17:09	John	Host	Yeah. “Old Adam!” The geography in this movie is pretty good, although a lot of the things that are supposed to be Seattle are really filmed in L.A.
00:17:19	Ben	Host	I was a little caught up on the fact that they seemingly took him to Colorado without, like, telling his parents. <i>[Laughs.]</i> Or giving him the option of having, like, a counsel present.
00:17:31	John	Host	There’s some of that that’s a little flaky, but geographically the flakiest thing is that Dr. Falken is on the Oregon coast somewhere? But there’s no place on the Oregon coast that looks anything like that and they have to take a ferry boat out to see him and there are no ferry boats on the Oregon coast or any geography that looks even remotely like that. No islands, really.
00:17:51	Ben	Host	I have an adjacent goof to this—your pedantic quibble, John. Another internet pedant noticed something else wrong about that. When David is in the phone booth in the middle of nowhere in Colorado, he pronounces the name of “Oregon” two different ways in less than a minute.
 <i>[Sound clip of telegraph noise begins playing in the background.]</i>			
00:18:21	John	Host	To the directory assistance operator, he says, “Goose Island, Oregon”—the correct pronunciation. However, when he calls Jennifer, he says, “Salem, Ore- <u>gone</u> .” That clanged in my ears when I was 13. “Ore-gone?!”
 <i>[Adam laughs.]</i>			
00:18:30	Ben	Host	How old were you, Ben, when you first saw this movie, do you think? I’m guessing I saw it in college on DVD. It’s one of those movies like <i>The Goonies</i> that I just didn’t see as a kid. Like, this came out the year I was born. And I did not see it when I was a kid, so I think I’d rented it in college just to quiet all the people who were like, <i>[mocking, outraged voice]</i> “What?! You never saw <i>WarGames</i> ?!”
00:18:52	Adam	Host	It seems like the sort of movie that <u>you</u> parents would’ve shown you, because in many ways David is like the precocious Berkeley kid. Too smart for his own good, y’know?
00:19:02	Ben	Host	My dad just wanted to watch, like, <i>Ocean’s 11</i> and <i>Dr. Strangelove</i> and stuff. Like, they weren’t, like, they weren’t seeking out contemporary culture to expose me to because they kind of checked out of it when—
 <i>[John laughs.]</i>			
00:19:15	John	Host	—when they had me. <i>[Laughs.]</i> When Nixon got impeached? And Adam, you saw it in the nineties, I’m guessing? Or did you see it in the eighties?
00:19:22	Adam	Host	I remember watching this movie all the time on TV. It was a frequent watch for me.
00:19:27	John	Host	But is that eighties or nineties frequent watch?
00:19:30	Adam	Host	I mean, it would have to be early nineties. I don’t think you’re showing this movie to a 10-year-old, are you?
00:19:36	Ben	Host	When you were watching it, did it feel like a scary war film to you? Or was it like, this is a scary thing that could still happen?

00:19:44	Adam	Host	Well, here's what it was. It was like so many other eighties movies where, like, the—the smart, precocious kid character is smarter than the adults in the room and needs to convince them of that.
00:19:58	Ben	Host	Right.
00:19:59	Adam	Host	Using whatever means necessary. Like, that was—that was the genre. This was not a genre war film for me at that age. This was just a type of movie that I watched all the time.
00:20:11	John	Host	This was the first time I ever heard of computer hacking. It was the first time I ever saw a modem. It was the first time I ever heard of the idea that you could go change your grades—
<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>			
00:20:27	Ben	Host	—through hacking into a computer.
00:20:29	John	Host	When you saw Ally Sheedy, you became aware of sex. I mean, Ally Sheedy was the <u>impossible</u> —y'know, there—we now have the manic pixie dream girl meme to kind of indict the whole idea that you have a—that you have an exciting and dynamic short-haired girl that comes into your world and makes the middle-aged male protagonist turn on his head. But this—Ally Sheedy was the first sort of strong female lead of my moviegoing childhood who came into the film. She never was—she was not a computer hacker. She wasn't, like, a fellow nerd. She kind of was not even that into it, what he was doing? But she also was... like, the most captivating kind of co-conspirator with him.
00:21:23	Adam	Host	Yeah.
00:21:24	John	Host	I just fell head-over-heels with—not just with her, but with, like, the idea of her. After I walked out of <i>WarGames</i> , I felt the ghost of Ally Sheedy <u>not</u> being in my life.
<i>[All laugh.]</i>			
00:21:34	Ben	Host	Yeah. I think that I grew up watching a lot of movies like this where the boy character was, like, doing a thing that was interesting and technical while the girl looked over his shoulder. And I would always go, like, "I do, like, dorky technical shit all the time! There's no beautiful girl—"
<i>[John laughs.]</i>			
"—looking over my shoulder! What—what gives?"			
<i>[John laughs.]</i>			
00:22:02	John	Host	But there's very much a sense in this movie that Ally Sheedy is—like, outranks him. In the sense of like, she's the get. Right? He's not the—
00:22:11	Ben	Host	Oh, yeah.
00:22:12	John	Host	We hadn't yet invented the idea that he was gonna be a billionaire yet.
<i>[Adam laughs.]</i>			
00:22:18	Adam	Host	I really like that there was no seduction to them. The thing about Jennifer and David is that they're just together doing a thing. And neither one of them is trying to seduce the other. And this was—this felt like a unique quality, especially in an eighties movie, where—whether or not you're a dork of a main character—you're like, <u>trying</u> to <u>win over</u> someone else. You're—you're—"God! If I could just

			make her like me or notice me at all!" And David doesn't do <u>anything</u> . Like, Jennifer jogs up into his bedroom. He doesn't make that happen at all.
00:22:53	John	Host	And not just because he was preventing a war.
00:22:56	Adam	Host	Maybe the best part of that is that you're sort of dropped into, like, <i>in medias res</i> of their relationship. Like, that—you get that first scene in the classroom where they're both making fun of the teacher. They're, like, sharing in that joy when you really take a teacher down. Like, publicly. There's nothing better than that. But like, you just get a sense that they've been tight for a long time. And it's—again—like, completely absent that... that chase-and-withdraw component. It was great! And it felt real!
00:23:27	Ben	Host	Yeah. They have bigger fish to fry than <i>cherchez la femme</i> , I guess.
00:23:32	Music	Music	Short reprise of "War" theme song.
00:23:34	Music	Transition	"Alexander Hamilton" from <i>Hamilton: An American Musical</i> plays in background. Hip-hop show tune featuring military-style drum and horn, followed by orchestral transition.
00:23:37	Ben	Promo	<i>[To the tune of "Alexander Hamilton" from Hamilton. Slowly, with forced rhythm.]</i> <i>How does an expendable, veteran, son of a German and a Cherokee dropped in the middle of a forgotten part of Vietnam by Murdoch to photograph the Vietcong oh wanna turn an arrow to a bomb?</i> <i>[Laughs.]</i> <i>[Regular cadence, although background music continues to play.]</i>
00:23:55	John	Promo	It's the MaxFunDrive. And we've gone <i>Hamilton</i> -crazy, gentlemen!
00:23:57	Ben	Promo	Was that <u>your</u> <i>Hamilton</i> rapped intro?
			Yeah, that was <i>Rambo: First Blood Part II</i> in the style of <i>Hamilton</i> . But you're gonna do a rapped intro, John, to a <i>Hamilton</i> donors-only bonus episode! If we hit a stretch goal.
00:24:11	Adam	Promo	That sounds cool and everything? But can you, instead, do a fully produced musical about <i>Rambo: First Blood Part II</i> ?
			<i>[All laugh.]</i>
00:24:19	John	Promo	Oh, I think that's a stretch goal for next year!
00:24:24	Ben	Promo	And we will take it to Broadway. That's our commitment. We're making that commitment right now.
00:24:27	John	Promo	Well, now, look, I have already started work on this. Y'know, I read some interviews with Lin-Manuel Miranda and he described his writing process and how long it took him to compose some of those raps and how... y'know, they had subtexts where he would rap in the style of <u>early</u> hip-hop to communicate that a character was at a early stage of their emotional arc? And I was like, "Right on! Like, double-, triple-, y'know, "seven-layer-dip here!" So I started working on my rhymes already. I'm not gonna give you a taste of 'em right now.
00:25:03	Adam	Promo	You don't want anyone to bite them, right?
00:25:05	John	Promo	No, I'm dang— <i>[through laughter]</i> I'm dangling these rhymes out in front of everybody. But if we reach 3500 new or upgrading donors, we're not only gonna review <i>Hamilton</i> but I'm gonna give you a fully

produced rap intro. That's not just, like, one of my signature five-minute ones. *[Laughs.]*

[Multiple people laugh.]

00:25:30	Adam	Promo	It's going to be... 15 straight minutes of rap.
00:25:32	John	Promo	Wow. That's a helluva promise!
			And the question is—can our 51-year-old host credibly rap?

[Ben laughs.]

00:25:45	Ben	Promo	And, y'know, I am a professional musician. I have never rapped on any recording of any kind. So crucially, this is a bonus episode only. So if you wanna hear this, you have to join <i>Friendly Fire</i> by going to MaximumFun.org/join and setting up monthly support. And crucially—we've also renewed the Pork Chop feed.
00:26:03	John	Promo	Yayyy!
00:26:04	Ben	Promo	So there will be... there'll be another bonus episode every single month and that's really exciting. So thank you to everyone that has supported. We'll be back in a second to talk about other great reasons to support us in the MaxFunDrive!

[John whistles.]

00:26:24	Music	Music	This is the last week. And really, the last day of the Drive. So do it right now. MaximumFun.org/join .
00:26:27	John	Host	Short reprise of "War" theme song. The movie does feel real. But at <u>no</u> point does David ever ask Joshua if he can just... stop playing the game. When he realizes Joshua is playing the game still, he never says, "Cancel."
00:26:44	Ben	Host	<i>[Through laughter]</i> Right. "Save and quit."
00:26:48	John	Host	<i>[Through laughter]</i> And so in the absence of ever having—when Joshua says—when he says, "Are you still playing the game" and Joshua goes, <i>[in computer voice]</i> "Yes of course"—

[Ben laughs.]

00:27:09	Ben	Host	He has a look on his face where he's like, "Oh no!" But he never says, "Quit." If there had just been that scene and the computer had said <i>[computer voice]</i> "I cannot because of... prime directive." Yeah. And then you zap the PRAM. That's the next step. You gotta—
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[John laughs.]

00:27:15	Adam	Host	—there's, like, a sequence of things you try! I wonder if that's a contemporary viewer seeing this with modern eyes. Because this is a film that introduced all of those technologies that you described earlier, John. Like, no one had ever seen what a modem looked like before this movie. And what it's like to use a computer to dial 10,000 phone numbers. Like, this is all brand-new stuff! And I don't know if you're watching this movie if you see him hand up the phone the way he does. Like, he takes it off of the modem cradle. Hangs it up. If you don't assume that that's the
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			same thing as what we would consider quitting the game. Or turning off a computer.
00:27:50	John	Host	I think you're very right. The idea that the computer—once it was running would—was unstoppable? I think that probably—I accepted that idea hook, line, and sinker! I didn't need to be told that. So you're right. I think you just answered my own question for me.
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
00:28:09	Adam	Host	We were talking about the reality of the characters? One pair of characters I wanna talk about before moving on is David's parents. Who are <i>[through laughter]</i> maybe the most lived-in, most fully-realized minor characters in a movie that we've seen in a long time. I feel like I've known them for 20 years! They have <u>two</u> scenes!
			<i>[Multiple people laugh.]</i>
00:28:35	Adam	Host	They are <u>incredible</u> ! And they're incredible <u>together</u> ! Mr. Lightman (WarGames) This corn is raw!
00:28:39	John	Host	Mrs. Lightman: I know. Isn't it wonderful? When the dad steps out on the porch in his wide-wale corduroys with his cardigan sweater? I was just like, "It's Ben Harrison's fantasy outfit!"
			<i>[All laugh.]</i>
00:28:47	Ben	Host	I was taking notes, to be sure. And then I noticed that David had a very similar pair of pants on when Jennifer went upstairs!
			<i>[Adam laughs.]</i>
00:28:59	Adam	Host	They're that progressive-leaning, like, "It's okay that a girl goes up to David's room. It's not gonna be a big deal." Like, they're cool like that!
00:29:07	John	Host	Mom is a career woman who clearly is actually bringing home the bacon in the house.
00:29:12	Adam	Host	And his dad had that technology of buttering the corn. I think that—that set a trend for the next 20 years! I think you talk about introducing modern technology to the world?
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
00:29:29	John	Host	This introduced corn-buttering technology to the world! In a way that it's never been seen before! I love that corn-buttering scene. His line, "Why don't we take vitamin pills and cook the corn?"
			<i>[Multiple people laugh.]</i>
00:29:38	Adam	Host	Funniest line in the movie! So great. Yeah.
00:29:39	Ben	Host	I like a nice raw corn. I disagree with the dad in that moment.
00:29:44	Adam	Host	Wow. That—you can go sit in the corner with your raw corn.
00:29:48	Ben	Host	Both parents have to work because David has so much expensive gear in his teenager bedroom, right? Like—
00:29:54	Adam	Host	You get the feeling that Christmas is very generous.
00:29:57	Ben	Host	They're giving him, like, \$25,000 worth of computer crap every Christmas!

00:30:01	Adam	Host	Yeah. If he's getting allowances based on good grades— <i>[Ben laughs.]</i> <i>[Through laughter]</i> Where he's definitely not being rewarded for his scholastic achievements, right?
00:30:13	John	Host	There's an eighties film suburban white kid that is just a little bit richer than you would expect. David in this movie has his own bathroom. Ferris Bueller had that incredible stereo system. Cameron's dad owned a vintage Ferrari.
00:30:35	Ben	Host	Ferris Bueller changed his absence record on a computer in a very similar hacking scene.
00:30:40	John	Host	He did.
00:30:41	Adam	Host	Yeah, but John, did you ever grow up with a friend who was a RadioShack kid? Because I knew RadioShack kids and I think one of the best parts of being one is that you knew that the parts that you bought there were cheap! And I feel like part of the believability to David's bedroom is that, like, I don't know. How expensive could that shit have been at RadioShack?
00:31:03	John	Host	It was \$25,000 worth of computer equipment in 1981 dollars.
00:31:07	Adam	Host	You think? Yeah.
00:31:09	John	Host	But it's just the size and scale of the houses. These are really rich kids. And I thought about it, watching it. In the eighties I don't think we interrogated that. And today, I think if you made any of those movies and set the protagonists just <u>incidentally</u> in really rich neighborhoods? Like, their richness is not part of the plot. 'Cause there's zero class conflict in this movie. Everybody is living in the same world. It's just a world where teens can buy airplane tickets for their friends. Y'know. He's like, "Buy me a plane ticket!" And she's like, "No problem!"
00:31:47	Ben	Host	The ticket to Paris was 1100 bucks and I was like, that's kind of... what I would expect a ticket to Paris from Seattle to be in 2019! Y'know?
00:31:57	John	Host	I don't know—no internet pedants seemed to pick up on this. But the ticket itself was from <u>Chicago</u> to Paris.
00:32:04	Adam	Host	Yeah. Why did he do it that way? <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:32:06	John	Host	I don't know. It made me feel briefly like that was some kind of goof? Because Ferris Bueller lived in Chicago. Or maybe it was foreshadowing!
00:32:18	Adam	Host	<i>[Ben laughs.]</i> It felt to me like this is something he never intended on going through with. By setting the departure airport as a city that's not his own, he's not actually gonna have to go through with flying to Paris with her. He just wanted to prove his skills. His elite haxx0r skills.
00:32:36	Ben	Host	He is pretty elite.
00:32:38	Adam	Host	The thing that Ally Sheedy does that is unforgiveable is touch his monitor. <i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
00:32:48	John	Host	She does this early on. And you just can't do that, Jennifer. Come on. None of us have even heard of hacking at this point. Of <u>course</u> she's gonna touch the monitor! That's something we didn't learn until the 2000s.
00:32:56	Ben	Host	And now we're unlearning it because everything's a touchscreen.

00:32:58	Adam	Host	<p>I have to admit. I fell just a little bit out of love with her in that moment. Like—</p> <p><i>[John laughs.]</i></p> <p>Still very in love with her.</p>
00:33:09	John	Host	<p><i>[Ben laughs.]</i></p> <p>Y'know, I lost a lot of respect for David when he missed that one spaceship in the challenging stage of <i>Galaga</i>.</p> <p><i>[Multiple people laugh.]</i></p> <p>I was like, "Come on! You're all set up there! You got your— y'know—like, I know you're distracted, but... you gotta get all those little red dudes in the challenging stage. They're the <u>easy</u> ones! They're not shooting back at you yet!"</p> <p><i>[Ben laughs.]</i></p> <p>Also, he left, like, <u>three</u> players when he bailed out of that game that time.</p>
00:33:37	Ben	Host	That little kid owes him big time.
00:33:38	Clip	Clip	Col. Thomas (<i>WarGames</i>) Why are we DEFCON 4 as we are right now?
00:33:40	John	Host	This movie presumes that everyone going to watch it is <u>soaking</u> in fear. What's incredible about it is that you can watch it today, <u>not</u> soaked in that particular kind of fear.
00:33:55	Ben	Host	Oh, we got our own brand of fear in <i>[through laughter]</i> 2020!
00:33:59	John	Host	Yeah. You got your own fears now. That's right. But you can watch this movie and it's not—it's not a requirement! The fear of all of the stuff that's in this movie has dissipated to the point of it feeling like... sort of—I don't know what—I honestly can't tell. If you're 24 and watching this movie, does it feel <u>super</u> vintage? Old-fashioned... what are they talking about? Or does it feel just like a teen movie that instead of—instead of trying to put on a dance and deal with a neighborhood bully, they're trying to prevent global annihilation? I can't situate myself anywhere other than where I am with it.
00:34:43	Ben	Host	<p>The documentary I've been working on for a few years, my subject talks a lot about this time. And living, y'know, right near nuclear submarine bases. And, y'know, Joint Base Lewis-McChord in the Pacific Northwest. And being, like, pretty sure that if it went down, they would be in the blast radius of the first ICMBs. And how, like, his—like, the thing that he did with his friends at lunch was, like, draw your fantasy bunker. Y'know. Like, what are the defenses? How do you prevent you and your buddies from annihilation?</p> <p>And, like, the headspace of that is very dark, but like the combined, like, creeping fascism/also the global warming/the global pandemic of today feels like a coequal but different existential threat. And I can't imagine a movie that is this optimistic in tone being made about contemporary concerns.</p>
00:35:57	John	Host	Interesting.
00:35:58	Ben	Host	It would feel condescending or something. I don't know.

00:36:01	John	Host	The optimism <u>is</u> based on the idea that the problems we were facing in the Cold War were a product of a collective insanity. And that that collective insanity was bad decisions—small bad decisions piling one on top of the other until we believed something crazy, but that everybody had good intentions. If you think about everyone in this movie—
00:36:30	Ben	Host	Yeah. Yeah! And they'll listen to reason when they hear it. Like, it takes letting the first missiles drop to see if they were, in fact, real for them to see it in this movie. And that's, like, dramatic peak. But all of the technocrats that built this command and control apparatus are willing to reevaluate their beliefs at the end of this movie.
00:36:57	John	Host	Because they all—even the worst person in this movie wants to survive and have a good life for their kids and picket fence and... there's no one in this movie—even—there's not even a Buck Turgidson or whatever. There's nobody in the movie that just wants to have war for fun. Except for Falken, right, there's no one in the movie that wants to have war for weird philosophical reasons! Everybody else just feels like they're just doing their job and it's a crazy world.
			You've heard the stories, right? That Reagan watched this movie <u>in</u> the White House. He screened it, y'know, on Saturday night. He and Nancy sat down in their comfy chairs and were like, "Let's watch <i>WarGames</i> !"
00:37:46	Ben	Host	With their TV trays and their microwave dinners? <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:37:49	John	Host	And they watched it and it blew his mind. And he called a meeting of the defense establishment and said, "Is this possible?! Could this—could this happen this way?" And I mean—
00:38:02	Ben	Host	"Uhh... uh... uh..."
			<i>[All laugh.]</i>
00:38:05	John	Host	Unfortunately, it was Reagan, so he didn't do the thing where he was like, "Let's dismantle this crazy nuclear armament and live together in peace." He was like, "I know! <i>[through laughter]</i> We need to—we need Star Wars!"
			<i>[Adam laughs.]</i>
			But it was a question of this collective insanity actually <u>being</u> a matter that you could imagine... that we would all wake up. That we would shake our heads and say, like, "What have we been <u>thinking?</u> "
00:38:36	Ben	Host	I had a conversation with my father recently about how much less optimism it seems possible to feel about the world when you're my age or at my age than it did when he was my age. And... y'know, my father lately has been extremely fixated on bad news. Like, whenever I talk to him he wants to talk about murder hornets and fascism and pandemics, and I sometimes have to say, like, "Dad, like, can you lighten up? Like, I—I can't focus on all of the reasons that I, like, don't feel like I have a future all the time!" Y'know? And like to him it's like all he wants to think about and talk about and... I think maybe there's some reassurance watching <i>WarGames</i> that, like, over the course of, y'know, the time he's been on Earth, problems as big as this have kind of come and seemingly gone.
00:39:34	Adam	Host	But the problems that remain have become more entrenched? Like, I wonder if having seen time move the way he has for as long as he

			has... that's a reason for his fixation. Like, some things have been able to be fixed during his life but others remain and have gotten worse.
00:39:54	Ben	Host	I don't feel like there are fingers hovering over the button though, now. And like, this movie came out where it's like—it could be gone like <i>[snaps fingers]</i> <u>that</u> , y'know? Like, everything gone before you ever know that it's about to be gone.
00:40:07	Adam	Host	And it's such a different quality to existential dread to think that... that in a movie like this, it's smart people and a smart piece of technology that fuck it up somehow. But like, existential dread today is stupid people doing a stupid thing that kills us all.
00:40:26	Ben	Host	Right.
00:40:27	John	Host	The saddest moment in the movie when I watched it as a teen and when I watch it now is the scene when they're sitting on the beach in Goose Island, and he says, "I wish I was just a regular person. I wish I didn't know."
00:40:41	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	Ben and Adam: Yeah.
00:40:42	John	Host	"And so I wouldn't have to sit here and feel regret for everything that I'm losing." And when she's yelling at Falken and she says, "I'm only 17! I haven't done anything yet!" I mean, watching that at the age of 13... I felt my heart burst. It was inconceivable in 1983 that at <u>some</u> point in the near future, we wouldn't have to live through an apocalypse. And maybe it was because I was a teenager, but the idea that my life wasn't going to be interrupted—either by burning alive or by living in a world where everyone I knew and loved had burned alive and I somehow was limping through the wreckage—like, those just seemed like two <u>very</u> , very viable futures.
00:41:31	Ben	Host	I think you would be Mad Maxing it, John.
00:41:33	John	Host	Oh, dude. I totally would've. But let's—we'll save that for another show.

[Ben laughs.]

And the thing is, I think a contemporary audience now, listening to that—it's very hard to imagine what that—how that ever could've actually been reality. Like, now we think about, like, "Oh, climate change and Trump's fascism" and all these things and they all seem like insurmountable and terrible and inevitable. But there's nothing really to compare to... with no notice at all, there's a bright flash in the sky and the entire world is burning. And it—that was as real to us as anything. I mean, it was absolutely real.

So the thing about, like, older people now being obsessed with the news or whatever, one of the things I've learned growing up and watching the Boomers before me is that when you're young you expect that as people age they will become wiser, and they will collect wisdom unto themselves throughout their lives. And what I have learned from watching the Boomers is that being old does not confer wisdom.

[Ben laughs.]

			And it—the Boomers, as a generation, have become <u>less</u> wise as they've gotten older.
00:42:47	Ben	Host	Well this is great for my dad 'cause he's not a Boomer!

00:42:49	John	Host	Right! No, no, they—the Silent Generation just gets wiser. But I’m talking about like—
			<i>[Adam laughs.]</i>
			Like, who is QAnon? QAnon are the same exact people that protested Vietnam in 1971, right? It’s the same generation. Somehow they have become stupider as they’ve gotten older. I don’t know how. We’re all drinking the same water. I don’t feel stupider. Maybe we’re not drinking the same water. Maybe because I have—I’ve been using Brita filters since the nineties. Maybe—yeah.
00:43:19	Ben	Host	Your brain isn’t quite so rotten as theirs.
00:43:21	John	Host	It’s really interesting, Ben, what you say. Because what the Cold War did was focus us. All of the other problems: classism, racism, global inequality... uh... feminism, feminesium—
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
			—disco music, saxophone, reckless folly—all of it was subsumed under the big problem, which was: are we gonna survive as a race of people? Or, y’know, as a species.
00:43:55	Ben	Host	Right.
00:43:57	John	Host	And taking away that common pressure, y’know, the sort of Balkanization of concerns... it <u>did</u> in some ways make the eighties a simpler time.
00:44:11	Ben	Host	Thinking back on the, like, contemporaneous films of this era that we’ve watched, like, I’m looking at our list. <i>First Blood? Come and See?</i> Like, other early- to mid-eighties movies that we’ve seen are so far away from this thing that I can’t imagine being anything but, like, everyone’s <i>[through laughter]</i> primary concern. Like, when your thoughts wander you start to think about The Bomb. And like... it doesn’t seem that way. It seems like we—it seems like, y’know, people got on. Kept doing things. Going to church. Making movies.
00:44:49	John	Host	But you know, those movies that you reference, like... The Bomb is very present in <i>Rambo</i> . It’s very present in <i>Come and See</i> , obviously.
00:45:01	Ben	Host	How about <i>Conan the Barbarian</i> ?
00:45:03	John	Host	It’s <u>there</u> , right?
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
			If you wanna look at those movies and put a filter on it that says, “Look for the anxiety of a people who believe the world might come to an end,” like, all those movies are—that anxiousness is there. And I think the turn to fantasy in films. Y’know. The hard-right swing to, like, swords & sorcery and science fiction. A lot of what propelled us in that direction was that was a need for some kind of escapism. And a belief that the world could come to an end, but maybe—like, does <i>Conan</i> take place in the future?
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
00:45:51	Ben	Host	Like— Right.

00:45:52	John	Host	<i>Star</i> —like <i>Battlestar Galactica</i> takes place in the past? All that stuff—the suggestion is, “Oh wait a minute. <i>Battlestar Galactica</i> took place in the past, and so did <i>Star Wars</i> . Which means that maybe civilizations blow up.”
00:46:10	Music	Music	“Confidence Is High” from <i>WarGames</i> OST by Arthur B. Rubinstein. Tense, quiet horn music with military-style drumming.
00:46:14	Ben	Host	The music in this movie—it’s very centered in the soundtrack. Like, every emotion is attended by some music cue. But it’s also, like... the score is living in the <i>Star Wars</i> universe. Is the way it’s orchestrated. I mean, it’s just the era, I guess. But it helped me enjoy this movie because it doesn’t feel, like, entirely real.
00:46:43	Adam	Host	So you’re saying that the score helped distance the scary realities from it? And placed it into more of a science fiction realm for you?
00:46:54	Ben	Host	Didn’t place it in science fiction but it placed it in this era where, like, all of my other film—like, the films that I grew up with all sounded like this and were fun... movies. <i>[Through laughter]</i> You know? And it’s not a huge outlier in terms of its orchestration. It’s very—I felt very cozy and of its time.
00:47:16	John	Host	Yeah. It’s funny. The movie does not locate itself in 1983 by playing Devo and Blondie, or whatever. Y’know. It doesn’t try to soundtrack you into some—into, like, a cool youth culture.
00:47:32	Adam	Host	I wonder how much damage characters and situations like this did to the public school system industrial complex?

[Ben laughs.]

Because, like, the thing about David that makes him so aspirational to a kid watching this movie is that, like... the lie of the letter grade doesn’t apply to him. Like, David is smart. Or if he’s not smart, he is skilled. And those skills are given an equal weight to the skills of the adults that are around him, y’know?

And so like the idea that, y’know, it’s so unjust that David would get an ‘F’ in science or whatever when clearly he’s so smart. I wonder to what extent that, like, that inspired a bunch of kids to reject the grade system in some way? Like, it’s not like that actually happened. It’s not like kids rejected the grade system. But I wonder like... to a student like you, John! Like, how much easier was it for you to reject that system when you had models like this in the movies that you saw that actually showed you a path to success and love by going your own way? If you just only had a telephone and a modem cradle in your bedroom? Like, that you were just as good.

00:48:56	John	Host	You know, my mom was a computer programmer and she bought me an IBM PC with 64K. And two smaller disk drives than—this guy had 8” disk drives. It was just like, what the—what are you dude?
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[Ben laughs.]

Are you some kind of DJ? We had 5-1/2” disks. I was that kid! Right? We were, like, prosperous middle-class people. My parents were divorced. But I had a computer in my house. I was programming in CPM before we even had DOS. Computers Per Minute?

00:49:31	Adam	Host
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[Ben laughs.]

00:49:33	John	Host	<p>Yeah. In Computers Per Minute. That's what it was. And the thing was that I was in the same—I mean, I was the same character! I was a failure in school. Teachers tried to humiliate me to get me to behave. When I sat down in the chair outside the principal's office and the principal came out, the principal sighed and slumped their shoulders and said, "Mr. Roderick."</p> <p><i>[Ben laughs.]</i></p> <p>"What a surprise." So when I watched this movie, it was like... I was being handed a absolute, like, plate of M&Ms. Like, everything about this guy is what I either thought I was or dreamed I was. The only difference was, he was a little bit older, his house was a little bit nicer, and he had a girl. Who liked him. Oh, and also—he actually made it into, like, NORAD headquarters in Colorado Springs and changed the future of the world.</p> <p><i>[Ben laughs.]</i></p> <p>Which is what I imagined was gonna happen my junior year. Y'know?</p> <p><i>[Ben laughs.]</i></p>
00:50:48	Ben	Host	<p>Like, that was the difference between being a freshman and a junior to me, it was just that somehow, by the time I get to be a junior, I will be on the geopolitical stage.</p> <p>You'll be crawling around in the ductwork of the Cheyenne Mountain Complex?</p>
00:50:51	John	Host	<p><i>[Multiple people laugh.]</i></p> <p>Yeah! And the thing was, by the time I was a junior I <u>did</u> have a smart girlfriend. I just never learned to program computers!</p>
00:51:02	Adam	Host	<p><i>[Ben laughs.]</i></p> <p>It's fucking crazy how at all times, there's always a Principal Strickland on your ass. Y'know? This guy always got cast as that role.</p>
00:51:12	John	Host	<p>It's really weird that—honestly—the only thing when I was a teenager that told me I was okay was this movie. And to a lesser extent, Ferris Bueller. These movies, like, teen loser that actually has a heart of gold—they did a better job than any adult in my life of saying, like, "It's okay. You're gonna be fine."</p>
00:51:37	Ben	Host	<p>Well, this is something I've wondered if it has changed about, like, American childhood? Is that like when I was growing up, I also felt that if I didn't, like, perfectly do school and fit in and do all the things the adults told me, that I was going to have a life of despair and misery when I became an adult. And I think that, like... the adults in my life were highly motivated to really make me believe that. And then, like, there were movies in my life like <i>Ferris Bueller</i> and later this that said... not that. <i>[Laughs.]</i> And I wonder if, like, I don't know! Like, I think that I probably wasn't cut out for a square job as like an engineer at the Rand Corporation and therefore... nobody should've been, like, trying to prepare me for that life? <i>[Laughs.]</i></p> <p>Like, I wish they could've seen earlier that like my—starting a bunch</p>

			of nonsense projects would be the thing I did as an adult and became my job?
00:52:45	John	Host	That's the thing. They didn't. Right? And I think these days—when I look at my daughter, and she says something bonkers—she walks out in the street and she says, "All of the pill bugs in this neighborhood need to get on the program!"
			<i>[Multiple people laugh.]</i>
			"And curl up into balls at the same time!" And I—y'know, I go, "Huh, that sounds crazy." But what I say to her is like, "Maybe one day you'll be Director of Pill Bugs!"
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
			And she kinda looks over at me and, like, shrugs and scowls at me and is like, "That's the stupidest thing anybody's ever said," and skateboards off. And I go, "Oh, wow." But y'know, like, my dad would've looked at me and said, "Go to law school!"
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
00:53:26	Clip	Clip	NORAD Airman (WarGames): Radar reports two unknown tracks, sir, penetrating the Alaskan Air Defense Zone.
00:53:30	Adam	Host	How subversive do you think this film was in that respect? Or do you think it was just accidentally subversive? Because, like, one of the interesting parts of this film is that it's—it does not just isolate David as his own unique person with his own unique qualities. Like, there is a track for him in life. When he goes and meets the Maury Chaykin character, like... those are adult people! Who have adult jobs that he works with. Like, there's a professional track for him to follow that seems hopeful.
00:54:05	John	Host	You can just see the beginning of it. Those two guys at the University of Washington, who are working in the computer lab who—who the movie <u>clearly</u> is making fun of—
00:54:18	Adam	Host	That's cruel if that's the case, but, like, I feel like those are two of the most lovable characters in the whole thing!
00:54:24	John	Host	Well, they are. But if you think about those two <u>and</u> the guy that works on WOPR directly?
00:54:29	Adam	Host	Yeah. This movie is unkind to those.
00:54:32	John	Host	Well, the thing is, the three of them, like, are the—in some ways—the first time you ever see on film a computer nerd. And somehow they establish the three kinds of computer nerd they are that we continue to use to this day! Right? I mean—
00:54:48	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	Adam: That's the trinity.
00:54:50	John	Host	John: —all we needed was— —one of those guys to be in a Punisher T-shirt.
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
00:54:55	Ben	Host	And we would— A Punisher T-shirt, and, like, yellow glasses?
00:54:57	John	Host	Yeah.
00:54:59	Adam	Host	They don't even give him a chair! He's in the WOPR room his entire shift? He never sits down?

00:55:05	John	Host	All he ever does is come in—is like come into the room and go, “The computer is out of control!” But I don’t think—when David goes to see the computer lab guys and he says, like, “Hey, can you hang out over here for a second?” These guys are a little skittish. They are establishing these characters for all time. And David clearly does not want to be—to go down this road. He’s, like, there; he wants their advice, but he’s a new generation: somebody that’s going to be into computers that <u>also</u> is not in a Punisher T-shirt. He’s Ken Griffey Jr., wearing his hat backwards playing baseball! Like, all of the <u>old</u> nerds don’t know what to do when a girl walks in! Yeah. It’s a whole different thing, and it’s such a brief moment in this movie but it really established—because in 1983, there were computer labs in my schools. And the kids that were there <u>all</u> the time? Were nerds. And you knew—and this was before “nerd” even was a thing, but you knew that they were nerds. And the idea of there being a cool dude who also knew computers? <u>Was</u> in the air. And I don’t think anybody knew one yet.
00:55:43	Adam	Host	
00:55:51	John	Host	

[Ben laughs.]

But the idea was there, that one day there might be a cool dude that also knew computers. And the power of it! Right? The nascent... tempting power. What would it be like to be both cool and to know computers? I think we still wonder to this day.

[Adam laughs.]

00:56:47	Adam	Host	We may never know! It’s a bit what the Robert Downey Jr. Iron Man is trying to be also, right? Like, also a billionaire. But like the idea that he’s like, he’s a guy’s guy.
00:56:49	Ben	Host	
00:57:01	Adam	Host	One thing we know for sure is there will never be a cool billionaire. That’s true. That’s just a fucking fantasy. Yeah. <i>[Laughs.]</i> I wonder—I mean, thinking back on that movie, I wonder if you could—in 2020—start the MCU off with a, “Hey! Check out this cool billionaire who builds a war suit and saves the world!”
00:57:04	Ben	Host	
00:57:05	Adam	Host	
00:57:06	Ben	Host	

[Multiple people laugh.]

00:57:20	Adam	Host	One of the things I read about this movie is that the technology inside Cheyenne Mountain—with the screens—was created for the film. Like, rear-projection technology—like, vector-based, specifically, rear-projection technology was not of the quality that it was as depicted in this film. And this was—in saying that, all of the effects work that happens inside the room with how bright the flashes are, with what they’re looking at on the screen? That’s all practical! It’s happening in the room! And it’s that bright, and it’s that sharp! Wow. I thought that was amazing! That’s super cool. Yeah. Ben: Yeah. I mean, that—that—
00:57:57	Ben	Host	
00:57:58	Adam	Host	
00:58:00	Ben	Host	
00:58:01	Adam	Host	
00:58:02	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	

John: It was a cool-looking movie.

00:58:05	Ben	Host	That room looks amazing. My wife spends one day of work every week in a control room for the city, and I— <i>[Laughs.]</i> When this stuff came up on the screen, I was like, “Is this just like work?” And she’s like, “Boy, I wish.” <i>[Laughs.]</i> This looked very cool to her.
00:58:19	Adam	Host	One aspect to the climax of the film that I really liked when WOPR is playing the game at hyper-speed is that you still get the quality of the blinding white flash.
00:58:31	Ben	Host	Yeah. Those circles appearing over American cities as the simulated bombs drop are...
00:58:38	Adam	Host	Right.
00:58:39	Ben	Host	Like, that scene is extremely scary.
00:58:41	Adam	Host	It really is. It’s <u>so</u> effective.
00:58:44	Ben	Host	Like, a testament to how well told this story is, that you’re sitting feeling that fear with them as they—y’know, like you know for a fact watching it that this is a simulation run amok, and you’re feeling it just as much as they are who are <u>not</u> sure about that. Y’know?
00:59:03	John	Host	Here’s where I take us on a little journey down through John’s photo album.

[Ben laughs.]

But in 1981, I was still pretty active in the Alaska wing of the Civil Air Patrol Cadet Program. And the summer of ’81, the cadets of my wing—the Elmendorf Wing—we went on an encampment where we spent two weeks living in the barracks—like, the old, rotten, World War II-era barracks—at Eielson Air Force Base in Fairbanks. And during that two weeks we lived as soldiers. We—y’know, we wore uniforms. We were awoken in the morning—awakened—by reveille. We ran downstairs and got into formation and got yelled at by our drill sergeants and the whole thing. It was like a—

[Ben laughs.]

—it was like boot camp LARPing.

[Adam laughs.]

01:00:02	Ben	Host	Did anyone unscrew your head and shit down your neck?
01:00:06	John	Host	No, but all kinds of fucked-up pranks and whatnot. It was like summer camp but it wasn’t—it was summer camp but it wasn’t fun, y’know? Because there were people yelling at you all the time.

[Ben laughs.]

This was what—y’know, this was what my parents thought would be good for me. I enjoyed it. But every day they would take us around Eielson and show us different aspects of what it was like to be in the Air Force. So one day we spent with the fire department putting out simulated airplane crashes and then they took us out to Fort Wainwright and we fired Howitzers one day.

01:00:42	Ben	Host	Wow.
01:00:43	John	Host	They took us up in airplanes and a couple of lucky kids got to ride in a T-33. But y’know, that was the time when I went up in a KC-135 and they put me down—y’know, there were four of us or something and we got down in the bay and actually controlled the refueling boom. It was absolutely summer camp for military nerds. But the highlight for us was they took us—at the time, Eielson was a

Strategic Air Command base. Like, a forward—not a forward base, but they had a Strategic Air Command command center that was kind of a duplicate of what was at Cheyenne Mountain. And we had to go through the whole thing. You walk up. There's a camera. The speaker says, like, "Are you under duress?"

01:01:38 Adam Host

Whoa.

01:01:39 John Host

Someone had to explain to us what the word "duress" meant. They let us in one at a time into a tiny little box—

01:01:45 Ben Host

"No, sir! I'm wearing shirt and pants!"

01:01:47 John Host

"Yeah, whaddya mean 'a dress'?"

[Ben laughs.]

Uh, you went through this thing where you went into a room and the door behind you locked, then the door here unlocked. You went in, somebody was looking at you through bulletproof glass and then that door had to lock and you went in a third. All this different stuff, y'know. Crazy stuff! And then we were in the big room where the two-story-tall, lit-up map of Alaska was, where there was a little dot with numbers under it for every single aircraft in the sky. Over the entirety of Alaska and Bering Sea and they had every little plane identified and were tracking it. And being in that space—and I—and this was before *WarGames* came out. So I had no—and I had never seen *Dr. Strangelove*. So I had no visual sense of this before being ushered into this room. And sitting there—the lights all dim—watching this map and not even believing that it was possible that you could see every airplane in the sky from one place? And they all had little numbers?

[Ben laughs.]

And the guy would say, like, "If you see a plane that doesn't have a number, it's—we haven't—y'know, that's like an unidentified aircraft. The transponder isn't squawking or whatever." And then at night—every night—we would go to the mess hall. We would eat dinner. And then we would have like a half an hour at our own discretion. And in the lobby out in front of the mess hall, there was a Missile Command game.

[Adam laughs.]

And we would line up and play Missile Command. And, y'know, take turns. And while one person was playing Missile Command, all the other cadets would crowd around and watch.

01:03:40 Ben Host

And that Missile Command game... was the highest-concentration of quarters—

[John laughs.]

—per square foot in the Western Hemisphere.

[John laughs.]

01:03:50 John Host

And honestly, looking back at it? I've thought about this a lot over the years. I don't think any of us appreciated the irony. Or even appreciated the... the kismet! Playing Missile Command outside of

			the Strategic Air Command Headquarters for Alaska. None of us made the connection that that was at all weird or appropriate.
01:04:14	Adam	Host	I betcha every adult in that room did, though.
01:04:16	John	Host	I mean, Missile Command was a new game! It was a—it was like cool that they had it!
01:04:22	Ben	Host	The arcade version of that is, like, vector graphics, too, right? Like, they kind of look like what they had in—up on the big board in <i>WarGames</i> ?
01:04:30	John	Host	Looked exactly like it. So when you see those missiles coming in and the white flash of the cities blowing up—it looks just like Missile Command. And Missile Command was... <i>[sighs]</i> <u>seemed</u> like a really new game to us at the time. Y'know, this is like a pre-Defender universe, when you're playing Space—you're playing, like, Space Invaders, basically. So seeing all the represented in <i>WarGames</i> and having <u>been</u> there already—in my own life—I felt like those special effects were—I mean, I thought that that's exactly what it looked like and it felt <u>so</u> much realer, y'know, just like, chills-up-the-back-of-your-neck real.
01:05:14	Clip	Clip	1980s video game noises: fast, rhythmic beeps and then an explosion.
01:05:19	John	Host	That opening scene! Where the guys drive up in the Jeep in front of some little house on the prairie and they walk in—
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
			—and there's a secret door?
01:05:29	Ben	Host	Yeah. A secret mirror that they present their credentials to?
01:05:32	John	Host	Like, none of that needed explaining to us.
01:05:35	Adam	Host	I love that there's degrees of secrecy that all lead to the same source. Right? Like, people are aware that Cheyenne Mountain exists. People are aware of what goes on there. People are aware of how you go in through the gates, even! But that there are also... other tentacular options for entry and they could be hiding in plain sight, like a snowy cabin, I think is just great. It's magical thinking.
01:06:03	Ben	Host	I tried to go to NORAD one time.
01:06:05	John	Host	What happened?
01:06:06	Ben	Host	When I was the—when I was the showrunner for the <i>Engadget</i> show. And they just took us to the air base in Colorado Springs, not the—not the Cheyenne Mountain complex. And I was very disappointed.
01:06:18	John	Host	Booo!
01:06:20	Adam	Host	What do you make of the ending to this film? It ends <u>pretty</u> abruptly, right in the room! That's it! This was another aspect of the film that I didn't remember. I didn't quite remember how the film started with that cold open, but I also didn't remember pretty much smash to credits. Once the threat is over.
01:06:41	Ben	Host	It's got that false peak of when they're like, y'know, when they're all celebrating and they think the threat is gone and then it's not. But also, like, the end feels very hopeful?
01:06:54	Adam	Host	Right! Surprisingly. Like, maybe they learned something here!
01:06:58	Ben	Host	Yeah! Like, I think everybody learned something at the end of this movie.
01:07:01	Adam	Host	The premature celebration part made me think, like, "What was WOPR doing with all of its time if it needed to run <u>these</u> simulations—"

[John laughs.]

[Through laughter] “—to figure out a nuclear war strategy? What was it doing?”

[Ben laughs.]

01:07:20	Ben	Host	Like, it finally learned the lesson of tic-tac-toe by doing this in public, basically.
01:07:22	John	Host	Yeah. Very embarrassing. This time watching it I was very much struck by the fact that when they all got done clapping themselves on the back, someone was gonna turn to David Lightman and say, “Your little prank cost the United States \$750 million.”

[All laugh.]

01:07:38	Adam	Host	Yeah.
01:07:39	Ben	Host	“Are you gonna pay that in installments, or...?”
01:07:42	John	Host	Yeah. “You’re going to Juvenile Hall until you’re 21.”
01:07:45	Clip	Clip	Sound of rhythmic percussion and coordinated shout.
01:07:48	John	Host	Never allowed to own a computer again. Like, the—some of those early hackers <u>did</u> get, basically, like, press-ganged into service of the United States! Where it was like, “You can either go to prison or you can work for us now. Or both.” It didn’t end happily for him, I don’t think.

[Ben laughs.]

01:08:07	Ben	Host	He was in trouble and wasn’t allowed to have a computer for a few years. But then he moved to New York with his mom and was allowed to get computers again and met Angelina Jolie and hacked the planet.
01:08:19	John	Host	Huh.
01:08:20	Adam	Host	This is a very interesting <i>Animal House</i> —

[Ben laughs.]

—post-movie sequence here.

[Ben laughs.]

You know what? Except in *Animal House*, they actually had a legible typeface for the credits. I thought the *WarGames* font was insane. How did anyone—

[Ben laughs.]

—ever sign off on red, unreadable font—

[John laughs.]

01:08:44	Ben	Host	—over a dark background?
01:08:46	Adam	Host	But it’s so <u>computer</u> -y, Adam!
01:08:47	John	Host	Yeah. It’s pretty fun.
01:08:48	Music	Music	[In computer voice] Com-put-ers. Short reprise of “War” theme song.

01:08:49	Adam	Promo	It's the final day. The final house. Of MaxFunDrive 2020. Has it been chill? <i>[Ben laughs.]</i> Has it been relaxed? <i>[John laughs.]</i>
01:09:10	John	Promo	I don't think so, because we're right up against it, guys! If we don't get 3500 new and upgrading supporters of <i>Friendly Fire</i> , <u>no</u> one will hear John's rap intro to the <i>Hamilton</i> bonus episode. Hello, our friend, who is with us every week! It's me—your—your friend, John! 1/3 of your friends! <i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
01:09:19	Adam	Promo	It's us! <i>Friendly Fire</i> !
01:09:22	John	Promo	If you haven't donated to the show, I know there are a lot of reasons that you might have. But there are a awful lot of reasons why you <u>should</u> support the thing that you love so much. This incredible show, <i>Friendly Fire</i> .
01:09:36	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	Ben: It's, uh—
01:09:38	John	Promo	John: Your contribution— —helps so much. Ben is trying to interrupt me here, but I'm talking directly to you now. <i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
01:09:42	Ben	Promo	Well, I was gonna talk about some of the other things that they get.
01:09:44	John	Promo	Well, I know.
01:09:45	Ben	Promo	Like, they get the bonus feed, obviously.
01:09:47	John	Promo	Hey, hey, hey! Ben! Always be closing. Alright?
01:09:49	Ben	Promo	Okay.
01:09:51	John	Promo	Alright. We're just talking right—I'm talking—I'm looking 'em right in the eye now. Just—just—just sign up! <i>[Ben laughs.]</i> Just sign up at MaxFunkenstein.sex —
01:10:01	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	<i>[Ben laughs.]</i> Ben: A link that really works! By the way. John: And donate to the show.
01:10:05	John	Promo	<i>[Adam laughs.]</i> It does. <i>[Through laughter]</i> Really work. We did that for you, our friend! Okay, Ben, tell 'em what they win.
01:10:10	Ben	Promo	<i>[Adam laughs.]</i> Okay. Five bucks? You get the bonus feed. Ten bucks a month? You get the bonus feed, plus a membership card and the enameled pin. It says "Hell of a Combination." Got an image of an aeroplane.
01:10:21	John	Promo	That's hot.

01:10:22	Ben	Promo	Very exciting. \$20, you get the game pack, right? That's playing cards. Bag of dice. Fuzzy dice! It's not fuzzy dice, it's a fuzzy bag for regular dice!
01:10:30	Adam	Promo	Right. Let's not get that confused. I think a lot of people would be expecting fuzzy dice—
			<i>[John laughs.]</i>
01:10:38	John	Promo	—and a smooth bag? The bag is fuzzy. The dice are smooth.
01:10:42	Adam	Promo	Wait a minute! Why don't we do fuzzy dice next year?
			What if it's hook and loop? The bag is loop. The dice—
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
01:10:47	Ben	Promo	—are hook.
01:10:50	Adam	Promo	Oh, yeah. They stick right to it!
01:10:52	Ben	Promo	Good luck pouring those dice out!
			But it's a fun game pack. It's got lots of Maximum Fun in-jokes in the design of the playing cards and there's the MaxFun rocket on the dice. At the 35 bucks, you get all of that stuff plus the Rocket Camp mug. The \$50 level you get all that stuff plus a metal membership card in Maximum Fun. You can be a card-carrying member! And that card will get you into any airline club in the continental United States.
01:11:21	John	Promo	Mm-hm. And you can use it as a passport, but only for land or water crossings.
01:11:26	Ben	Promo	<i>[Through laughter]</i> Yeah.
01:11:28	Adam	Promo	I had heard that the card would only get you into the Spirit Airlines airline club.
			<i>[Multiple people laugh.]</i>
01:11:33	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	Adam: It's the only one!
			Ben: It's just a mop closet?
01:11:37	Ben	Promo	And there isn't a buffet. But—
01:11:39	Adam	Promo	There's a janitor sink that you can wash yourself in.
01:11:42	Ben	Promo	<i>[Through laughter]</i> Yeah.
01:11:44	Adam	Promo	That's it.
01:11:46	Ben	Promo	Y'know, like, I think that if you sign up at a level that is painless for you, it might not seem like much. But it makes a big difference for us 'cause we're going for volume here! We want you and <u>all</u> of the listeners to support. And that will enable us to hit that goal of 3500 new and upgrading supporters. And it will enable John to create his magnum hip-hop musical opus.
01:12:12	John	Promo	Yup. This is gonna be amazing. It's already been amazing. And honestly, we do—we do really appreciate those of you who have supported us. And I know there are a lot of you that feel like, "Yeah, I wanna support them, but, y'know, it's kind of a pain in the neck" or "maybe I'll get around to it." Blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. <i>[Deep breath.]</i> I understand all that, too.
			<i>[Multiple people laugh.]</i>
			But this is your chance to get up off of that thing, and do it <u>now</u> . We don't ask you all year long. We don't do this all the time. This is just once a year and we had to put it off this year for—what?—five

			months. Because there just wasn't an opportunity for us to do this Drive. So.
01:12:54	Adam	Promo	It wouldn't have been chill five months ago!
01:12:56	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	John: No. It wouldn't have been as chill as this.
			Adam: Now look at us!
01:12:59	John	Promo	This is as chill as it gets!
01:13:00	Ben	Promo	Head to MaximumFun.org/join right now! Do it!
01:13:04	John	Promo	Or, MaxFunkenstein.sex . A URL that we actually got and redirected.
01:13:09	Adam	Promo	It's more fun at the MaxFunkenstein.sex account.
01:13:12	John	Promo	It is, yeah.
01:13:13	Music	Music	Short reprise of "War" theme song.
01:13:15	Adam	Host	It's rate and review time on <i>Friendly Fire</i> . It's the one and only time we get to construct a rating system about the movie we've discussed for the last hour. And among the many really great visuals in this film is one that just continues to impress. Does it matter how old I am? I just can't get over the size of the blast doors at Cheyenne Mountain! We get a couple of scenes of them opening and closing, and every time I am blown away by them.

Here's a couple of facts about these blast doors that I looked up. They're 25 tons apiece. They protect the facility inside, which is also entirely on springs. Making possible that—in the event of an earthquake or a nuclear attack—no part of the facility moves more than an inch. Cheyenne Mountain also has 4.5 million gallons of water inside and a massive diesel fuel and battery banks to act as their fuel supply in the event of an attack. It's amazing what they have inside this thing. But those doors—those doors are incredible to me. And I think they also represent something interesting about the movie, which is, like, the secrets that our military keeps inside, protected from the outside world. And I think to rate the film, we'll have to consider how well a film like this reveals those secrets to us! For judgment! So on a scale of one to five blast doors, we will be rating and reviewing *WarGames*.

I was getting at this earlier. I really like that David is smart, but not the sort of genius that we get in so many movies, where... like, one part of his life is great, but the other part of his life—like, socially—is a total horror show. Like, he's pretty normal and adjusted! And I think that's good. He just knows how a certain type of technology works. It doesn't make him weird or an outcast. It makes him interesting. He's got friends at school. He's got a friend in Jennifer, who is, like, curious about him as much as she may be infatuated with him.

But unlike so many other eighties films, she's not like—she's not like the Boof from *Teen Wolf*. Y'know? Like, she's not someone to defend against or... or pursue? She's just there in almost equal partnership. And I thought, like—in addition to, what I believe is not controversial to say that Ally Sheedy is extremely beautiful in this movie... she is also, like, crucial to David's plan. Because consider if she does not buy the plane ticket? Or does not believe what David's telling her over the phone? The human race is exterminated 30 minutes later.

01:16:15	Adam	Host	<p><i>[Multiple people laugh.]</i></p> <p>It all comes down to her! That is a <u>pivotal</u> moment! When she picks up the phone, she's doing her dance stretches. So, pick up the phone at all is one thing. To believe David is the second thing. And then to be able to buy the plane ticket is the third thing! She saves the world! She's also great about, like, going along with the thing. When she meets up at the airport, that was a nice scene. She continues on—like, the back third of the movie is her and David as a team.</p> <p>I like stories where ingenuity wins the day. It's like, very MacGyver-y. Like, the way that David escapes from that hospital room inside Cheyenne Mountain? I like scenes like that where you get to see spycraft deployed. I like that he's not smart <u>at</u> the adults, either. He's—he's, like, smart... in a different way that's not making them... like, I don't think you should come away from a movie like this thinking that the nuclear defense of our country is run by idiots and buffoons and that is the problem.</p> <p>Like, I like that the main takeaway of this film is that we should be thinking about how we defend ourselves and the technologies we use to do so. So I think there's, like, <u>low</u> entertainment to enjoy, and then there's, like, thinking entertainment to enjoy here. And in a film that is paced like it is? It's like, <u>so</u> breathless and fast and fun throughout. There's really not any dull spot in it! It's <u>all</u> problems and triage. All the way until the end. And then bam! We're into the credits. Like, it doesn't even give you a moment to breathe before the credits start! I think it's a great movie. I think it's one of my favorite movies I've seen on <i>Friendly Fire</i>. I'm gonna give it the full five blast door treatment.</p> <p><i>[John whistles the sound of a missile landing—starting out at a high pitch, then slowly falling in pitch until he makes an explosion sound. Ben laughs.]</i></p>
01:18:14	Ben	Host	<p>I think it does what it sets out to do! Perfectly.</p> <p>Wow. It is really good. I think that, um... the comparisons to <i>Dr. Strangelove</i> are actually pretty favorable. Like, they—they do kind of try and tackle similar, y'know, the mutually-assured destruction topic. And I think both add a lot to the conversation! And I think that the thing... that I really took away from <i>WarGames</i> this time is that tough situations aren't hopeless and the—like, hopelessness is a choice that you make. Like, they never stop trying to solve the problem in this movie. And it's got great performances. Fun story. A couple little, y'know, hand-wave-y plot holes here and there. But overall pretty rad movie. So I'm gonna give it four-and-a-half Cheyenne Mountain doors!</p>
01:19:07	Adam	Host	Alright!
01:19:08	Ben	Host	<p>I also wanna say that when we were watching the movie and the dad wrapped the piece of Wonder Bread around his corn, my wife said, "There's your rating system."</p> <p><i>[Multiple people laugh.]</i></p> <p>So I just don't understand this world we live in. At all.</p>

			<i>[John laughs.]</i>
01:19:26	Adam	Host	I mean, what do you call that, Ben?
01:19:28	John	Host	What do you call it?
01:19:29	Ben	Host	I think I just called it “the Wonder Bread wrapped around the corn.”
			<i>[Laughs.]</i>
01:19:33	Adam	Host	That’s too much of a mouthful. It could never be the rating system.
01:19:36	Ben	Host	We’ve had mouths-full-y-er rating systems for sure.
			<i>[Adam laughs.]</i>
01:19:41	Adam	Host	I feel like the new <i>Friendly Fire</i> T-shirt should be a buttered slice of bread and a couple of—and, like, a pair of headphones. And you’re, like, rolling the headphones in the butter.
01:19:52	Ben	Host	Yeah. Yeah.
01:19:53	Adam	Host	Then <i>Friendly Fire</i> logo at the bottom.
01:19:56	Ben	Host	How about, like, a Che Guevara T-shirt, but it’s Ally Sheedy instead of Che?
			<i>[Adam laughs.]</i>
01:20:01	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	Is that a good idea? Adam: Let’s keep trying that idea—
01:20:04	Adam	Host	John: Hey! That’s a <u>really</u> good idea! <i>[Laughs.]</i> How about a Che Guevara shirt, and instead of Che Guevara’s face it’s a piece of buttered bread?
			<i>[All laugh.]</i>
			With a corn cob in it?
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
01:20:18	Ben	Host	That’s an idea that won’t offend <u>anyone</u> . No. That—people would love that. No cab driver would <u>ever</u> yell at us for that.
			<i>[Adam laughs.]</i>
01:20:25	John	Host	Well, it’s impossible for me to watch this movie as a—like, a reviewer or a podcaster. I can only watch this movie as a 9 th -grader. Um, there’s several moments in the film where—like, a tear came to my eye or my heart got stuck in my throat, because the movie transported me to a time when I felt those—I felt those feelings. I wasn’t feeling—it doesn’t make me <u>sentimental</u> . It actually can put me back into a place where I felt that kind of excitement. My only real beef is when the Bear Bomber comes over the—up on the RADAR screen and the general says that he wants to scramble some F-16s out of Galina? I’m so—I was so mad at the time. And I’m so mad now. Because they didn’t have F-16s at Galina.
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
			Those were F-15s. They were F-15s. I was there when the F-15s—when the first F-15s arrived in Alaska to replace the F-4 Phantoms. And—
01:21:38	Ben	Host	Is it possible that just being off one digit was an honest mistake?
01:21:42	John	Host	No. No. It’s an—

[Ben laughs.]

—absolute unforgiveable mistake. Also, when the jets are scrambling to intercept the Russian bombers, they're not—like—Galina is way kind of up on the Yukon, and those jets looked like they're coming from Talkeetna? Which is not the same as Galina. Anyway. That really *[through laughter]* made me mad in 1983 and I guess I'm still mad about it. But that is a very small thing to be mad at. I just feel like it holds up across the board. It feels as personal, almost, as any movie to me. More than... y'know, more than—even ones that I saw younger. Like *Bugsy Malone* or movies that are, like, deeply threaded into who I became. This is a movie that happened right at the moment that I was, like, choosing a path. And it influenced me. So... it is—absolutely a six blast door movie for me. All six.

01:22:49	Ben	Host	The rare—you've given—I think you've given more than five things, like, one other time.
01:22:58	Adam	Host	I'm just so happy.
01:23:00	John	Host	<i>[Laughs.]</i> Why are you happy?
01:23:01	Adam	Host	That's great. Well, I mean, it's—it's—again, destroying a very specific thing I've created. This one-to-five scale.

[Multiple people laugh.]

01:23:16	Ben	Host	But I also like seeing perfect scores! Well, do you like seeing guys on screen, Adam? Who's your guy?
01:23:22	Adam	Host	<i>[Laughs.]</i> I, uh— <i>[Laughs.]</i> Few laugh-out-loud moments in this movie got me as much as the scene with the tour group going through. And I love a well practiced bit as much as anyone. And when they sit poor Mrs. Nealy down at the station, and have her hit a button, and then it's the button that turns on the alarm—that is just a delight. And I—I mean, Mrs. Nealy is feeling true fear at this moment. The fear that anyone else would. There's something so honest <i>[through laughter]</i> about that performance.

[Ben laughs.]

01:24:15	Ben	Host	I don't know if it—I don't remember if it's wordless or not? But she does a ton in that little moment to make it <u>totally</u> believable, what's happening. And that—I don't know. I really liked her quite a bit for that moment. So Mrs. Nealy is gonna be my guy.
01:24:18	John	Host	Good guy! John, did you have a guy?
01:24:21	Ben	Host	My guy is the Jeep driver right at the end. Fuck!

[Multiple people laugh.]

That's a great pick!

[John laughs.]

01:24:27	John	Host	Goddammit!
01:24:29	Ben	Host	Was that your guy? <i>[Through laughter]</i> That's what I had written—"Jeep driver at end"—

[John laughs.]

01:24:33	Adam	Host	—is literally what I have written down on my—
01:24:34	Ben	Host	Wow.
01:24:35	John	Host	I'll come up with something else.
			I'm sorry. That Jeep driver. Man! You don't often see a scene where... like, the car is gonna blast through the—the chain-link fence? And see, like, it realistically depicted as harder to blast through a chain-link fence than you might think.
01:24:56	Ben	Host	Yeah. Did you know that that was an accident? That they wrote into the movie?
01:25:00	John	Host	You couldn't have possibly have done that on purpose.
01:25:02	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	John: It's—it feels <u>so</u> dangerous and wild!

Adam: Yeah. I looked it up.

			Ben: Yeah.
01:25:06	Adam	Host	Yeah.
01:25:07	John	Host	When that Jeep gets caught in that fence. And then—but that Jeep driver—after they get out and they're running into the door—the blast door—

[Ben laughs.]

			—he is <u>really</u> running for his life! And somehow—and this is the crazy thing—like, the protagonists of this movie have such a hard time convincing anyone that what they're saying is true. But they clearly have convinced that Jeep driver. Because he's going for it. The quality of that running is unique. Like, this is the reason why you see running in movies often portrayed as not running as fast as possible. Because you need to shoot multiple takes. It's one of the things that makes Tom Cruise running so unique and special. Is 'cause he's running flat-out, every time. This Jeep driver is running in the same way! He's Tom Cruise running!
01:25:36	Adam	Host	
01:25:56	Ben	Host	Also, after an entire movie of not being able to convince anybody to take them seriously, they do get to crash the gate and then run past the security door at Cheyenne Mountain!

[Multiple people laugh.]

			Without anyone asking them any further questions.
01:26:11	John	Host	<i>[Through laughter]</i> I know.
01:26:12	Adam	Host	Like, a lady whisks them in, though. She's the reason! Pat!
01:26:16	John	Host	She's waiting at the door, but Ben is right. They're—that's, like, a mile-long run past 25 dudes with M-16s!

[Ben laughs.]

01:26:26	Ben	Host	They also never explain the Jeep driver, right? Like, they don't explain how old Adam Pranica had a helicopter. And presumably he flew them to Colorado in it. But then... there's like an ellipsis wherein he lands the helicopter, talks this Jeep driver into tear-assing up Cheyenne Mountain with them in his Jeep.
01:26:48	John	Host	There's a lot sketchy there because you can't drive—you can't fly a helicopter from Goose Island, Oregon—a place that doesn't exist—

[Ben laughs.]

01:26:58	Ben	Host	—to Cheyenne Mountain, Colorado on like one tank of gas.
01:26:59	John	Host	Yeah.
01:27:01	Ben	Host	In an hour and a half.
01:27:03	John	Host	It's the <i>Outbreak</i> problem. Y'know?
01:27:05	Ben	Host	[Through laughter] They had to get on an airplane at some point.
			Well, [through laughter] in lieu of the Jeep driver, I'm gonna go with the dude in that scene where they're all celebrating 'cause they think it's all over, but little do they know it's just beginning. That guy that tells the general, "Sir, you better get on your headset"?
01:27:22	Adam	Host	Mm.
01:27:23	Ben	Host	Is my guy.
01:27:24	Adam	Host	Bad News Guy.
01:27:25	Ben	Host	Yeah. Bad News Guy. You don't wanna be that guy, but somebody has to be that guy.
01:27:29	John	Host	"Sir. Turn your key, sir."
01:27:31	Ben	Host	Yeah. [Laughs.]
01:27:33	Music	Music	Short reprise of "War" theme song.
01:27:36	Ben	Promo	Okay. We made it. This is the last pledge break we will ever record for 2020's MaxFunDrive.
01:27:43	Adam	Promo	I can't believe it! I can't believe how chill I'm feeling!
01:27:46	John	Promo	You feeling pretty chill? I'm not. I'm feeling really, really jazzed, Adam!
01:27:50	Adam	Promo	The pressure's on you, John. That's what this is about on the last day.
01:27:54	John	Promo	The thing is, I want to do this rap. I started out writing it and I was like, this is—this is gonna be funny. But then I got into it. I got into writing rap!
01:28:05	Adam	Promo	Wow!
01:28:06	John	Promo	And now I just feel like—why don't I get a chance to do this? I mean, I really hope that the listeners of <i>Friendly Fire</i> provide me the opportunity to go public with my new love... rapping.
01:28:16	Ben	Promo	I really hope they do, as well. Our stretch goal is 3500 new and upgrading supporters. Go to MaxFunkenstein.sex —

[Adam laughs.]

01:28:30	Adam	Promo	—set up your pledge right there.
			I really like our chances of making it to 3500 new and upgrading members. I mean, if we don't, we tried our best. But I really think that it's in range for us, guys.
01:28:41	Ben	Promo	I do too. I think we can get it. It will be a nail-biter, but if everyone listening to the sound of our voices right now steps up and goes to MaxFunkenstein.sex , we can do it.
01:28:51	John	Promo	Yeah. But let me just add a little bit of consequences to this. If we <u>don't</u> reach 3500 upgrading donors—or new donors—
01:29:01	Ben	Promo	Yeah.
01:29:02	John	Promo	I suggest we <u>never</u> do <i>Hamilton</i> .

[Multiple people laugh.]

01:29:12	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	Not only not do it, but <u>never</u> do it. So that there's a little more—y'know, there's a carrot, but there's a stick, too.
			Adam: Whaaat?

01:29:15	Adam	Promo	Ben: Wowwww. People assume that the popularity of <i>Hamilton</i> is going to take this thing over the top?
01:29:19	Ben	Promo	You can't make assumptions!
01:29:20	Adam	Promo	No, you can't.
01:29:22	John	Promo	That's exactly right. Thing is, there are some MaxFunkenstein listeners that are, like, "Oh, I love the McElroys I love Judge John Hodgman!" Those people are fucking <u>millionaires</u> .
<i>[Multiple people laugh.]</i>			
Judge John Hodgman doesn't need your 75 cents! He's—right now he's up in his vacation house in Maine shooting skeet and...			
<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>			
—y'know, like, drinking sherry out of the skull of his enemy.			
<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>			
01:29:49	Adam	Promo	The three of us— I wanna drink out of a skull!
01:29:51	John	Promo	Yeah. Well, y'know, push—maybe push this Drive a little bit harder!
01:29:55	Ben	Promo	Spare a thought—and a donation—for your hardscrabble, lower-middle-class podcasters like <i>Friendly Fire</i> .
01:30:02	John	Promo	I've been to the McElroy compound. I know—I know that the chocolate fountains flow 24 hours a day.
<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>			
01:30:12	Music	Music	They don't need your money! "I Will Remember You" by Sarah McLachlan plays in background. Plaintive, melancholy love song with piano and orchestration.
<i>I will remember you, will you remember me? Don't let your life pass you by Weep not for the memories.</i>			
01:30:16	Adam	Promo	For just five to ten dollars a month, you can make sure that podcast hosts like John Roderick get to drink out of skulls.
01:30:25	John	Promo	Mm-hm.
01:30:26	Adam	Promo	Not just one skull, either. A skull for every day of the week. That's what John deserves for all his hard work. Writing and reading introductions to <i>Friendly Fire</i> episodes.
01:30:37	Ben	Promo	Thank you to everyone who has supported. It's been a really great Drive for us and we really super—
<i>[Dog barks.]</i>			
01:30:41	John	Promo	Ruff!
01:30:42	Ben	Promo	Super, super appreciate all of the generosity of our listeners.
<i>[Music ends.]</i>			
01:30:48	Adam	Promo	It's really amazing. We love making the show. Thanks a lot.

01:30:50	John	Promo	Let me just interject here—you have an obligation to do this, listeners. I mean, Ben and Adam are like, “We really appreciate you! Thank you so much!”
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
			You know. They don’t know about straight talk. They don’t know about the tough talk—like the tough talk that I was raised with—where, y’know, people ash their cigarettes in your Pepsi and said, “Take this \$5 down to the store and get me another pack of Winstons.”
			<i>[Adam laughs.]</i>
			I’m telling you guys—and then you know what? That \$5 bought <u>five</u> packs of Winstons.
			<i>[Adam laughs.]</i>
01:31:20	Adam	Promo	Wow.
01:31:21	John	Promo	That’s what we’re really talking about. “Give me—give me a five-pack of Winstons” is what they said!
01:31:26	Adam	Promo	That’s value.
01:31:27	John	Promo	Yeah. So donating to MaxFun is basically your five-pack of Winstons. So get— <i>[Laughs.]</i> Get up and quit your crying.
01:31:34	Ben	Promo	New and upgrading donors.
01:31:36	John	Promo	Yeah.
01:31:37	Ben	Promo	Gotta step up now. MaxFunkenstein.sex .
01:31:40	Music	Music	War theme reprise.
01:31:42	Ben	Host	Well, dudes, um... I have a proposition to make. This is a Pork Chop record. But. I had a lot of fun talking about it and I kind of feel like this is also a main feed movie.
01:31:54	Adam	Host	It’s a mainstream movie.
01:31:56	John	Host	Agreed.
01:31:59	Ben	Host	Here is my proposal to you guys. This is the Pork Chop movie, but we also put it in the main feed. We’ll find a spot to slot it in. We’re gonna need to roll the dice, right? To find out what the next movie is.
01:32:11	John	Host	Yes.
01:32:12	Ben	Host	And nobody better to roll that dice than John Roderick.
01:32:15	John	Host	Well, not only am I the best one to roll it, but I’m the only one that <u>has</u> it.
01:32:20	Ben	Host	<i>[Through laughter]</i> That’s true.
01:32:22	John	Host	And it’s the—and I do it every time. So it’s not like this was optional. What’s optional is—do I put the dice in a coffee cup? Do I make a corral for it out of books? Do I... just toss it from hand to hand? That’s—the foley work isn’t as good here. I’m tossing it from hand to hand.
01:32:41	Ben	Host	Yeah. It doesn’t really sound like anything. I mean, there’s a way to live dangerously and just throw it on the table and hope it doesn’t fall off onto the floor. Without the corral.
01:32:51	Adam	Host	I’m wondering how many episodes we’re gonna do while there’s a full-scale roulette wheel behind John’s shoulder.

[Multiple people laugh.]

			No one's commented on it yet. We're just—we're not even gonna refer to it? As an option here?
01:33:04	Ben	Host	I certainly will not.
01:33:05	John	Host	Hang on. Here's what we're gonna do this in.
			<i>[Faintly, as though farther away from the microphone.] This time—</i>
			<i>[Clanging and scuffling.]</i>
			I'm gonna take this box of LEGOs—
			<i>[Multiple people laugh.]</i>
			<i>[At full volume]</i> A giant box of LEGOs. And I'm going to put the ball in the box of LEGOs and use the LEGOs to randomize the dice. Here we go.
			<i>[Sound of LEGOs being shaken in a box at length. Dog barks in background.]</i>
01:33:45	Ben	Host	<i>[Laughs.]</i> Okay. It's like finding a 120-sided dice in a box of Legos!
			<i>[John laughs.]</i>
01:33:53	John	Host	And it is... 107!
01:33:58	Ben	Host	Wow. Big number!
01:33:59	John	Host	107.
01:34:02	Ben	Host	This is a film directed by John Dahl from 2005 depicting WWII in the Philippines.
			<i>["The Great Raid" from The Great Raid OST by Trevor Rabin plays briefly in background. Plaintive, tense, swells.]</i>
			It's called <i>The Great Raid</i> .
01:34:15	John	Host	<i>The Great Raid. Great Raid.</i>
01:34:16	Adam	Host	John Dahl of <i>Rounders</i> fame.
01:34:19	Ben	Host	Oh, yeah!
01:34:20	Adam	Host	That's how I know that name.
01:34:21	Ben	Host	Starring Benjamin Bratt. "500 American soldiers have been entrapped in a camp for three years. Beginning to give up hope they will ever be rescued, a group of Rangers goes on a dangerous mission to try and save them."
01:34:31	John	Host	Oh, it's a Bataan Death March film!
01:34:34	Ben	Host	Dang.
01:34:35	John	Host	We don't get enough of those.
01:34:36	Ben	Host	James Franco?!
01:34:37	John	Host	Hello.
01:34:38	Ben	Host	No kidding! How is there a James Franco movie that I haven't been advertised incessantly?
			<i>[Adam laughs.]</i>
01:34:44	John	Host	When is this from?
			<i>[Theme song "War" begins to play in background.]</i>
01:34:45	Ben	Host	2005!
01:34:47	John	Host	Hm. Well, the fact that we haven't heard of it is not a good sign.
			<i>[Multiple people laugh.]</i>

01:34:51	Ben	Host	<p><i>[Through laughter]</i> No. Certainly not. I mean, part of the point of this is to review the films. And even if they're bad, we have to review them.</p> <p><i>[John laughs.]</i></p> <p>But we're gonna leave— <i>[Laughs.]</i> We're gonna leave it with Robs from here. So for John Roderick and Adam Pranica, I've been Ben Harrison. To the victor go the spoiler alerts.</p> <p><i>[Theme song plays at full volume briefly, before fading into background as Rob begins speaking.]</i></p>
01:35:12	Rob Schulte	Producer	<p><i>Friendly Fire's</i> Pork Chop feed is a Maximum Fun bonus content podcast. It's hosted by Ben Harrison, Adam Pranica, and John Roderick. The podcast is produced by me, Rob Schulte. Our theme music is "War" by Edwin Starr, courtesy of Stone Agate Music, and our logo art is by Nick Ditmore.</p> <p>We've covered a lot of movies in the Pork Chop feed and thanks to MaxFunDrive, it looks like we're gonna be able to continue. But that doesn't mean we're done yet! Make sure to head to MaximumFun.org/join to pledge your support and keep the show going. We <u>really</u> appreciate it. And thanks for all the help! If this is your first Pork Chop episode? Go back and check out all the other bonus content! You can now follow <i>Friendly Fire</i> on Twitter and Instagram under the handles FriendlyFireRSS, in addition to all the discussion groups we have on Facebook and other platforms. So join in the conversation! Thanks for listening. We'll see ya next month with another Pork Chop film.</p>
01:36:26	Music	Music	<i>[Theme song plays at full volume, then fades out.]</i>
01:36:27	Speaker 1	Guest	A cheerful ukulele chord.
01:36:29	Speaker 2	Guest	MaximumFun.org.
01:36:30	Speaker 3	Guest	Comedy and culture.
01:36:32	Speaker 4	Guest	Artist owned— —audience supported.