

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

00:00:00	Music	Music	Electric guitar version of “Stars and Stripes Forever” plays in background.
00:00:05	John Roderick	Host	<i>[In surfer dude accent]</i> Okay. Like, we all know representation matters? And it’s going to sound weird, what I’m about to say. But hear me out. There are actually almost <u>no</u> movies about stoners. Now you’re protesting in your mind and listing all the movies about stoners. Like <i>Caddyshack</i> or whatever. But in fact, you’re thinking of movies made <u>for</u> stoners? And not <u>about</u> them? See, stoners represent an enormous demographic of cultural consumers that have always been exploited and excluded by the entertainment industry. Twelve percent of Americans smoke pot! But what percentage of music and movies are consumed by stoners? Half? More? Stoners are picking up what you are putting down, global entertainment economy!

*[Coughs.]*

We’re doing the heavy lifting of thinking that movies and music are good. Yet stoners are always represented as, like, lovable losers and dopes and clowns. Are they those things? Sure! And sure, like, maybe the stoner character has a heart of gold. But is the stoner not complicated? Does the stoner not love and feel loved? No! I mean... yes! What I mean is, the stoner deserves better! Stoners love fantasy. They love sci-fi. Stoners love superheroes. They love Tom Cruise. They love Tom Hanks. They love Tom Hardy. They love Tom Arnold. They love Tom Green! You name it! Even, like, moody Cold War movies where grey-faced people move like pieces of paper around in the rain and at the end someone gets arrested and you don’t even remember if they were in the rest of the movie or not. And what side are we rooting for, anyway, and did we win? A lot of movies that are supposedly for kids are really for stoners! Like *Wall-E*? Come on, bro, it’s stoner chow right there! There’s way too much violence and nihilism in superhero movies to show them to actual kids. God knows.

But like, does stoner America—I mean, whoa, does like Captain America have a stoner friend? Ha. Don’t make me laugh. No. You could argue—as I am doing presently—that stoners deserve to see movies about themselves just doing the things that they do! Even if those things are mostly getting stoned and watching movies! Like *Cheech & Chong* was practically fifty years ago, bro! And although their cultural references are still relevant today, it’s not enough! Stop pandering and start being more inclusive! Like, I’m not... I’m not saying I could organize any kind of boycott or anything. God. It’s kind of an empty threat, actually. But stoners are the cultural litmus test! Look at it this way—every film already has to be at least comprehensible by stoners. Or at a minimum, understandable collectively by a roomful of stoners where, like, one smart girl is following along and, like, able to recap what everyone else missed when they were making nachos. So now... we need to start making stoners comprehensible to themselves? And stuff?

What Pauly Shore did with *In the Army Now* is, in this—and it's groundbreaking! Because he made the fact that the protagonist is a stoner a secondary characteristic? He's not a wastoid or a burnout or a goof or a dope. Or rather, he is definitely all those things, but he's also, like, a hero. And his heroism isn't in spite of being a stoner? It is a result of fully channeling his stoner powers that were heretofore untapped in the world of straights. No pot is even smoked in this movie, but it's clear that the higher wisdom gained from a decade or more of getting high is a superpower in and of itself! Capable of destroying the Libyan army?! Getting stoned makes you wise beyond your years, and stoners always knew that it makes you a warrior too! But do Mr. and Mrs. USA America know it? Well... now, thanks to Señor Shore, they do!

In conclusion, this film—*In the Army Now*—represents the peak of the Golden Age of Stoner Inclusion. A what-could-have-been cultural moment. But after 9/11, and the fascist dictatorship of Herr Dick Cheney, the prejudice against stoners came down again like a curtain of iron! And it would be another generation of stoners before the prohibition would finally be lifted and stoners could once again breathe the fresh air! We owe a debt to those pioneers who tried to show us the path. I only hope that Pauly Shore—wherever he is—looks down upon us with pride at our accomplishments and things. Right on. *[Pause.]* Oh. He's still alive? Oh. Cool. Today on *Friendly Fire*—*In the Army Now*.

*[Music finishes triumphantly.]*

00:06:34 Music

Music

"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!*

00:06:57 Ben  
Harrison

Host

*[Song fades down and plays quietly as the hosts speak.]*  
Welcome to *Friendly Fire*, the war movie podcast whose hosts are asking permission—"Can we please throw up now?"

*[Adam laughs.]*

I'm Ben Harrison.

00:07:05	Adam Pranica	Host	I'm Adam Pranica.
00:07:07	John	Host	And I'm John Roderick.
00:07:10	Ben	Host	In the stereo store at the beginning, there's a scene where Pauly Shore is crawling around on the floor by the LaserDisc film selection to hide from his boss. And I was just looking at all of the other movies that we could've watched in that case.
			<i>[All laugh.]</i>
00:07:27	John	Host	What were some of the best?
00:07:29	Ben	Host	You got <i>Ben-Hur</i> . There's a John Wayne film in there. There's... <i>The African Queen</i> is one of the movies. Like, that's a pretty fun bit of set dressing, right? <i>Spartacus</i> is in there. Like, what are the movies that are going to be visible in the scene?
00:07:48	Adam	Host	LaserDisc as a format was such a satisfying thing to hold. And to search through. Like, it's too bad it never worked out.
00:07:58	Ben	Host	When I was in film school at NYU, almost everything that they showed us was shown on LaserDisc because NYU had noticed that the LaserDisc market was in freefall. And they just bought up, like, a library—like, a <u>very</u> exhaustive library of almost everything on LaserDisc.
00:08:19	John	Host	Wow.
00:08:20	Ben	Host	So that they could have that available to show in classes and they got it for very cheap because nobody was buying LaserDiscs.
00:08:28	Adam	Host	My college film studies coursework was the same way. And there was a window, Ben—I don't know if you remember this—where <i>Star Wars</i> was on LaserDisc but not on DVD. You could only get it on VHS. And so, for a certain type of film nerd, you <u>had</u> to go in on LaserDisc.
00:08:44	John	Host	Now, wasn't the <i>Star Wars</i> on LaserDisc the one that had not been CGI'd? Wasn't that the only place you could get the non-CGI?
00:08:53	Adam	Host	Mm-hm.
00:08:54	John	Host	<i>[Reverently]</i> Yeahhh. LaserDisc.
00:08:57	Ben	Host	That was the good stuff. And there's actually—there is a DVD version of that <i>Star Wars</i> that is—it's the same transfer as what was on LaserDisc. So it's not 16x9 format; it's, like, letterboxed 4x3, unfortunately. So it's pretty low-res, but you can get the—like, a pretty-close-to-original theatrical version of <i>Star Wars</i> because of that LaserDisc version.
00:09:23	John	Host	Oh. Decisions, decisions. But where—if you watched that one, how would you ever know what Jar—what the—what—Jo—what's his name? Boba, um... Gerber... Greeba...
00:09:37	Ben	Host	Jabba the Hutt? <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:09:39	John	Host	Jabba! Jabba! Jabba! How would you ever know what Jabba looked like when he was walking around the aerodrome?
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
00:09:47	Ben	Host	<i>[Through laughter]</i> Great point.
00:09:48	John	Host	You wouldn't! Y'know, you'd have to wait a whole other movie to even see a Jabba.
00:09:51	Clip	Clip	<b>Declan Mullholland as Jabba the Hutt (<i>Star Wars: A New Hope</i>):</b> Understand... I just can't afford to make exceptions!
00:09:54	John	Host	Let me ask you guys this, as film people. This is something I've always been kinda curious about and especially curious in the context of a movie like this one. It seems like... that—the people that were making this movie didn't give a shit about anything.

*[Ben laughs.]*

00:10:25	Ben	Host	And no one was paying any attention to really anything. If you are hired to be the set dresser... right? The continuity person.
00:10:28	John	Host	Mm-hm. How... much leeway would you have... to, like, Easter-egg your own film off-script? Or y'know, like, not following any director's vision, but just... putting <i>Ben-Hur</i> in a scene as a kind of... Easter egg for yourself or for attentive repeat viewers. Like, how come we don't have more instances where a set dresser—in the making of a film where there is clearly very little to no oversight—a set dresser just having <u>fun</u> with it and doing little things where all the light switches are always down or, y'know, like...
00:11:12	Ben	Host	Right.
00:11:13	John	Host	Because if somebody said to me, <i>[surfer dude voice]</i> "Okay. It's a video store in the early nineties; make it look like a video store. Heh, heh, heh, heh, heh. Meanwhile we'll be over here, like, doing blow off of Andy Dick's toenails or whatever." <i>[Regular voice]</i> And you're like, "Okay. Well, I got a budget."

*[Ben laughs.]*

00:11:38	Ben	Host	Y'know, "Why don't I have a little fun with it? No one's gonna notice it 'cause everybody's too baked." But you never hear about that or see that, do you? I think that, like, the selection of movies in that scene is enough great movies that it seems intentional. Like, "Let's look through what's here in this rack of films and put our favorites in the front." Or is it, "Put the greatest movies of all time in the front in order to make a subtle..." "A subtle dunk on the movie that we're making"?
00:11:52	John	Host	
00:11:57	Ben	Host	

*[John laughs.]*

00:11:59	Adam	Host	It's not the comedy language this film speaks, though. Like, a Zucker Brothers film would be making comedy out of prop and set design, but this is not the same comedy language as something like that.
00:12:11	John	Host	But the Zucker Brothers would be doing that intentionally. I'm just wondering—like, I wanna hear from people who work in film <u>in</u> the set dressing world in particular. 'Cause it's a thing I pick up on in movies, right? If I worked in Hollywood and was lucky enough to have a job where somebody said, "Your budget is \$300,000 to make everybody in this picture look like it's 1944."
00:12:36	Ben	Host	Oh my god. That would be, like, the greatest gig of your entire life!
00:12:40	John	Host	Absolutely incredible, right?

*[Ben laughs.]*

Because I would be able to say, like, "Well, that's actually not the 1911 model. The bluing was different on the—" Y'know? Like, how fun would that be?! And you notice it when it's perfect. And you notice it when it's intentionally, like, making a point. But so often—like, in a movie like this, y'know, there's kind of... no attempt. Like in the scene where the bombers are on their way to bomb the Scud

missile base? We see—Adam, correct me if I’m wrong—but between three and seven different kinds of airplanes?

*[Ben laughs.]*

00:13:24 Adam Host

All purporting to be the same—it’s the same run. It gave me an aneurism.

00:13:27 John Host  
00:13:31 Adam Host  
00:13:32 John Host  
00:13:34 Ben Host

*[Multiple people laugh.]*

Right? Aren’t there F-14s and then F-111s and then—

Yeah.

And it’s just like, “What?!”

The moment of pedantry that I found is very related to this. The kind of casual, not-give-a-fuck-ness of the continuity in this film. And the reality of this film.

*[Sound of telegraph plays in background.]*

“After they arrive in Chad, Fred sees some children wearing clothing typical of Southeast Asia.”

00:13:56 Crosstalk Crosstalk

*[John cracks up.]*

**John:** I wondered about that hat!

00:13:59 Ben Host  
00:14:02 John Host

**Ben:** Like the costumers went and just were like—

“What’s some ethnic shit we can put these kids in?” *[Laughs.]*

“These kids are from Burma.” “Yeah! Cambodia. Something.”

00:14:07 Ben Host  
00:14:09 John Host  
00:14:15 Ben Host

*[Ben laughs.]*

“That’s pretty close to Chad, right?”

If you were a set—yeah. Well, it’s, I mean, Cambodia and Chad are close to each other alphabetized.

I guess so, yeah. They— *[Laughs.]* Maybe the labels in the costume warehouse at Paramount Pictures—

*[John laughs.]*

00:14:24 John Host

—got misplaced or something.

Well, you know all those people that—I mean, now it happens on Instagram. But back in the day it used to happen with Polaroids. But like, y’know, somebody has a little frog that they carry with them all the way across the country and every time they take a picture of something they got their little frog in the picture. My friend Peter used to carry a can of Schmidt beer. An unopened can of Schmidt in his backpack. And everywhere he went, he would take this can of Schmidt out and he would put it in the foreground. And so he’s got a photo album of like, “There’s the Taj Mahal—with a can of Schmidt Animal beer in front of it.”

And there’s—I was with him. We were at the Vatican. And he put a can of Schmidt down and one of the Swiss Guards turned around, came over, picked it up, and held it and looked at it. And we’re both standing there—y’know, he’s in his full Swiss Guard outfit. And we’re both like completely gobsmacked. Like, *[gasps]*. And I’m like, “Take the picture! Take the picture!” But it was, like, old-day camera. And he’s scrambling to get the camera and the Swiss

Guard realizes it's a can of beer and gives the most—y'know, the most beautiful look. And I'm like, "Take the fucking picture!" And Peter didn't get a picture. The Swiss Guard puts the can back down. Goes over and stands with his, y'know, with his pike or whatever those guys are carrying. Anyway.

*[Ben laughs.]*

My question is, in a movie like this, why wouldn't someone say, "Okay. I'm gonna put a purple dildo somewhere in every wide shot." Right? Like, over between the—nobody would notice and it would make the film better!

00:16:02 Adam Host

My suspicion is that, like, movie trades are run so reputationally that—

00:16:10 John Host

Oh.

00:16:11 Adam Host

Like, it would be noticed, is the thing. This was not a successful film, but millions of people saw it. And the moment that your set dresser gets caught putting a purple dildo in a rack of laser discs, you're suddenly Purple Dildo Set Dresser and your phone stops ringing. The way that the trades in movies get jobs is by reference and reputation. Like, primarily. And you can't do anything to fuck that up, as much as you might want to. That's my suspicion.

00:16:40 Ben Host

It's reference and reputation and also, like, gaps in work are very catastrophic if you're working at that level.

00:16:49 John Host

I see.

00:16:50 Ben Host

I had a conversation with a friend of mine once about, like—there was some Mel Gibson movie in theaters. And I was like, "Who are all the people that agree to work on this movie, given his reputation at this point?" And he's like, "Y'know, like, the art director of a movie does not have the luxury of turning down work, usually."

00:17:09 John Host

Sure. Well, that's what they said in Nazi Germany.

00:17:12 Ben Host

I mean, yeah. Therein lies the depravity of capitalism, right?

00:17:15 John Host

Mm. Oh, I knew you'd turn it back to the depravity of capitalism!

*[Ben laughs.]*

00:17:21 Ben Host

Well, I mean, we're here talking about *In the Army Now*, which is—in a lot of ways—about two guys who have been pushed to the edge economically and are forced to make a terrible decision to join the Army that they are neither prepared for nor good at. *[Laughs.]*

00:17:40 John Host

You are absolutely right that the real victims here are Pauly Shore and Andy Dick!

00:17:45 Ben Host

What is the Marxist reading of this film?

*[All laugh.]*

00:17:52 John Host

So true! And so good.

00:17:54 Ben Host

Except for, the movie at the end makes the case that their ultimate goal of opening a stereo store was worthwhile and good. *[Laughs.]*

00:18:02 John Host

Oh yeah.

00:18:03 Ben Host

And a Marxist would never stand for that.

00:18:06 Clip Clip

**Bones Conway (*In the Army Now*):** *[With nonspecific accent]*

Because we're crazy boys!

**Gabriella:** *[Laughter.]*

00:18:09 Adam Host

I was expecting the bookend where they open their business at Crazy Boys. And then Crazy Boys goes out of business because of the success of Sahara Stereo.

00:18:23 John Host Oh, how easy! All they needed was the Crazy Boys—the sign crossed off and Sahara Stereo—why am I saying “Sahara”?  
*[Pronounces it rhyming with Sa-far-ah instead of Sa-hair-ah.]* What just happened to me?—the Sahara Studio over the top of it? What a much better ending! Oh, Adam.

00:18:41 Adam Host They set up the bad boss figure as someone to come back to and they never do.

00:18:45 Ben Host Yeah.

00:18:46 Adam Host This is what happens when you have five screenwriters and—

*[Ben laughs.]*

—a bunch of other people involved in the story making here.

00:18:53 Ben Host You said that this was not a successful film, Adam, but this was Pauly Shore’s fourth-highest-grossing movie.

00:18:58 Adam Host But it was also the film that crucially—and critically—kind of ended his career. This was the third in the three-picture deal he did with Disney. It was the least-performing film of the three. He did go on to do other big films after, but it was a misstep by him and it’s something that he’s talked about with a lot of regret. He had the chance to take a different film with a different studio and the way contracts worked at the time was that he was beholden to Disney. He wanted to do this other movie; Katzenberg said “No, you gotta do your third.” Pauly Shore was like, “But I really wanna do this other movie. Can I come back and do the third later?” Katzenberg goes and buys the other movie that he was going to do, shelves it, makes it impossible to make, and goes, “Make the third movie, Pauly.”

*[Low whistle from John.]*

00:19:48 Ben Host Damn. Brutal.

00:19:50 Adam Host Yeah.

00:19:51 John Host Do either of you have a real-time memory of Pauly Shore? I’m betting you don’t, Ben. But do you, Adam?

00:19:56 Adam Host I do. Yeah.

00:19:58 Ben Host I definitely caught *Bio-dome* on, like, basic cable rerun or something when I was a kid. That’s the only movie I’ve seen him in. So I was expecting this to be much more of a stoner comedy than it was. And I was wondering how they were going to thread that needle. Like, “How is mid-nineties Pauly Shore going to be in the Army hootin’ doobies and getting away with it?” And there wasn’t even a reference to pot in this! That I noticed.

00:20:28 John Host No. No.

00:20:29 Ben Host I thought that was his whole thing! But I guess that’s just *Bio-dome*.

00:20:31 John Host No. At this particular moment they didn’t need to reference pot. Because this was pre-overt stoner comedy. And I’m not talking about like *Cheech & Chong*. But there was a period where—it was right before the *Dude, Where’s my Car?* era, where it was like—

*[Ben laughs.]*

“We’re just making movies where the entire plot is that people are too stoned.” But Pauly Shore—y’know, he was on MTV.

00:20:58 Clip Clip **Pauly Shore (Totally Pauly):** We’re at the Sunset Plaza on Sunset Strip. We got Sam Kinison.

**Sam Kinison:** *[Crosstalk]* It's the *Totally Pauly* show, man! For MTV!

00:21:03 John Host Other than *Cheech & Chong*, there wasn't a ton of that in popular media anymore. He filled this gap that people had, this desire that there be one hilariously stoned person in the world. But he was always a one-note thing. Right? Pauly Shore never was in a thing where he wasn't doing that. He never—he was never a romantic lead. He was never a—he never played a dramatic role. He was always the Weez.

00:21:34 Ben Host He didn't have his *Punch-Drunk Love*.

00:21:37 John Host *[John laughs.]*  
No.

00:21:38 Adam Host Right. And I think that's one of the things that's so interesting about... Pauly Shore and his life and his career. Is that, like... he got super-famous really young! And he basically grew up in The Comedy Store with professional standups as his parents. Because his mom really didn't have time for him. She was too busy running the Store.

00:22:02 John Host She owned The Comedy Store, right?

00:22:05 Adam Host Yeah! And to become famous the way that he did—like, she did not encourage him to do standup. He went and did standup outside of The Comedy Store. Found that he liked it, and then developed a persona that was MTV-ready. He really kind of built his own career into this thing. And to be someone self-made... in this very specific way and then to make one misstep. Like, in retrospect I think—I'm really being sincere when I say this. I really think it's tragic for someone to look at their career and go, like, "If I had not done *In the Army Now* and instead continued to develop the Weez..." I think the problem a lot of people had with this movie was that it was not the characters that he had been before! That he shaved his head! That he wasn't the surfer guy that people expected. And to see an entire career go away basically because of that... it's sort of a child actor-adjacent story. And he never got his fastball back afterwards.

00:23:15 Ben Host One thing I really appreciated—overall, the joke density of this script is too low for this to be like a successful comedy? But there were jokes that I was laughing at. And I think that my favorite running joke was the self-dunks. Like, he's the face of this movie and a pretty high number of jokes are based on him, like, not getting something or being an idiot or making a mistake. And there are a lot of very vain actors in Hollywood that would not do that—including comic actors. Y'know. Like, the joke being on them is a scary thing for some people.

00:23:57 Adam Host It's a quality of Pauly's standup right now. Like, I've seen him perform many times at The Comedy Store. And he's very self-aware about stuff like that.

00:24:07 Ben Host Wow. It made me think about a bit that we did on tour with *Greatest Gen*. At the end of one of our *Star Trek* films, there's a scene where Spock is put in a torpedo tube. The bit that we came up with on stage was me talking about my childhood experience of that movie and not understanding why the name "Mark IV" *[Pronounces it "Iv"]* was written on the side of Spock's torpedo tube.

00:24:32 John Host Mm. Mark Iv, yeah.

00:24:34 Adam Host And I remember searing embarrassment when I first said that on stage in front of a crowd, but also feeling rewarded by how funny it was to them. And—



00:24:47 John Host Wait, you mean you continued to not understand that until you were 30 years old?

*[Ben laughs.]*

00:24:51 Ben Host Yeah. No. Yeah. That's— *[Laughs.]* That's what I'm trying to say.

00:24:53 John Host I see. Yes.

00:24:55 Ben Host No, but just like, unlocking that for myself. Going, like, "Yeah. I don't have to be above it. Like, I can be the butt of the joke" is a real liberating idea for a comedic performer. And I reflected on that a lot in this movie. He is unafraid of making himself the butt of it.

00:25:15 Adam Host Cool isn't funny! And cool never has been. It's why there's a proportionality in success with standup comedians. Like, the more popular they become and the bigger they get, they become less funny.

00:25:28 John Host I had no idea when watching this movie that I was going to be doing a show with two Pauly Shore revisionist apologists, one of whom apparently—

*[Ben laughs.]*

—is a superfan who's seen him a dozen times on the stage. Who's, like, celebrates his entire catalog. And the other—

00:25:46 Adam Host You see a dozen comics every night at Comedy Store! Don't paint me with that brush! I'm not buying Pauly Shore tickets! I'm buying tickets to see a show!

00:25:54 John Host You just go to The Comedy Store like you're on your way home with a bag of vegetables and you're like, "Think I'll stop in at The Comedy Store and see what some new young artists..."

*[Ben laughs.]*

00:26:03 Adam Host Before I went to LA I went to The Comedy Store almost every time I visited.

00:26:06 John Host Well, that is a horrific thing to learn about you, too!

*[Ben laughs.]*

I don't even know how to unpack it! But then over here, Ben is like writing a film paper about how Pauly Shore is a model of humorous self-effacement. I came here to dunk on this fucking shit movie and you guys are all, like, rhapsodizing about how you're in the Church of Pauly Shore!

00:26:30 Ben Host The problem, John, is that you showed your cards the night that you watched the film by texting us at 3 a.m., "Why is this movie 90 entire minutes long?"

*[John laughs.]*

You gave us a full 36 hours to formulate rebuttals for comedic effect.

*[Multiple people laugh.]*

00:26:45 Adam Host Ben and I were talking before we got on mic about how much fun it would be to gaslight you—

*[Multiple people laugh.]*

—into approaching this film totally academically and sober and serious.

*[All laugh.]*

And seeing how long it would take for you to break!

*[Multiple people laugh.]*

00:26:58	John	Host	It took me 20 minutes before I was like, “I can’t—what is happening?!” You guys are cutting off my oxygen.
00:27:07	Music	Transition	Short reprise of theme song “War.”
00:27:13	Ben	Host	You could not imagine a more 1995 set of jokes and ideas. And it really finds a way to be sort of a recruitment film.
00:27:21	Adam	Host	Did you stick around for the credits and see the grateful participation of the United States Army? Like, involved in the film? That had to be how they got at that materiel. Like, those are real helicopters.
00:27:37	Ben	Host	Yeah. They shot on a couple of real army bases and—
00:27:41	John	Host	I don’t know how they didn’t get some good footage of—if it’s gonna be F-111s, y’know, get more than two shots. Get all four.
00:27:52	Adam	Host	The dark secret to this, I read, is that one of the units that sustained the most casualties during Desert Storm was the water treatment group of people. It was actually a <u>very</u> dangerous outfit to join for a desert war.
00:28:09	Ben	Host	Wow.
00:28:10	John	Host	Whoa.
00:28:11	Adam	Host	And so the idea—like, it’s played for a laugh. Water treatment’s gonna be safe duty. And then Lori Petty’s like, “No. In a desert war you definitely get sent out into the field. But you also die.”
00:28:23	John	Host	Wow. No kidding. Y’know, the elephant in the room—the camel in the room—there already was this movie and it was called <i>Stripes</i> , and <i>Stripes</i> wasn’t a good movie, either. But <i>Stripes</i> had Bill Murray and Harold Ramis in it—
00:28:41	Ben	Host	I feel like the induction and boot camp stuff in this movie is just like, “What if we did <i>Stripes</i> but with Gen-Xers instead of Boomers?”
00:28:49	John	Host	Yeah. That’s exactly it.
00:28:51	Clip	Clip	<b>Staff Sergeant Ladd (<i>In the Army Now</i>):</b> <i>[Screaming]</i> What are you?

**Privates:** Quick!

**Ladd:** What are they?

**Privates:** Dead!

**Ladd:** Any volunteers?

**Bones:** Yeahhhhh!

00:28:56	Adam	Host	I read an article that mentioned that the boot camp scene in this film is shockingly realistic. Down to the vehicles used and the training that everyone had to do together. The uniforms, especially, were all screen-correct.
00:29:11	Ben	Host	Hm.
00:29:12	John	Host	The way that Pauly Shore is like—what would you say? Just completely flippant and also, like, sexually creepy to his drill

sergeant throughout the whole boot camp scene and never really experiences any punishment other than being given pushups.  
 00:29:29 Adam Host Did you think it was weird that all the drill sergeants were black? Every one of 'em!

00:29:35 John Host Hmm. Well, remember this movie was made during the quote-unquote "post-racial America." This is before the O.J. chase, but after the Rodney King riots.

00:29:53 Ben Host This movie came out in August of 1994. O.J. was chased by the LAPD in his white Bronco in mid-June of 1994. So this movie was done and in the can, probably, when that happened.

00:30:07 John Host Right. Right at the—oh, boy. I remember that time so vividly. Y'know, I was still getting high when this movie came out. Not for much longer, but I still had—I still had three months of getting high before I got clean. So.

00:30:21 Adam Host You put your works down after seeing—

*[John laughs.]*

—that Bronco chase?

00:30:26 John Host The Bronco chase definitely put the fear of God into me. But I had—but I kept getting fucked up for six more months. But I definitely was not in line to see a Pauly Shore movie at this time in my life. That was—if I had five dollars, that was not where I was gonna spend it.

00:30:40 Clip **Fred Ostroff (*In the Army Now*):** I see things very clear now.  
 00:30:43 Ben Host I read a very interesting tirade by someone about the David Alan Grier character and why he should've been of a superior enlisted rank—

00:30:53 John Host Hmm.  
 00:30:54 Ben Host —than the rest of them? Because he would've had to have a Bachelor's degree to be in dental school and therefore would've entered the Army as a specialist. An E-4. I guess it's not called a promotion if you get made a PFC off of being a private. Like, it's an advancement but not a promotion. And to become a sergeant you actually undergo training that you wouldn't get as a PFC. But Fred should've been—should've been bossing them all around and *[through laughter] [inaudible]*.

00:31:30 Adam Host I could not believe how much David Alan Grier did with so little. Like, if there's ever been a bad David Alan Grier performance, I've never seen it. He always gives 10 outta 10. He's this side character in this movie given one character note. And he plays it like a fiddle. It's... it's so fucking great.

00:31:54 John Host There's pathos in him, in a movie where there is zero other pathos.  
 00:31:58 Adam Host Right.  
 00:31:59 Ben Host Yeah. Pauly Shore is almost totally immune to pathos—

*[Adam cracks up.]*

—as a comedic persona.

00:32:07 John Host Mm-hm.  
 00:32:08 Ben Host And it's amazing that they, like, even had any in the film, given the fact that it was a Pauly Shore vehicle. But I feel like David Alan Grier understands comedy better. Y'know?

*[John laughs.]*

00:32:21 Adam Host Oh yeah. I think that's hitting it right on the head. He's a lifer.  
 00:32:24 John Host Yeah.

00:32:25 Ben Host Yeah.  
00:32:26 John Host Lori Petty—in a very early nineties role—is the love interest in this film. And also the, like, super-butch, hard-ass, aggro, like, “Go Army!” person. And I think that is a unique character in war movies. She’s the only one really that’s like wearing that shaved head with any style. And then somewhere along the line the movie decides that she’s also the sexpot.

00:33:01 Ben Host She wants to suck face with Pauly Shore.  
00:33:02 John Host Yeah.  
00:33:03 Ben Host Yeah. She covers a lot of interesting character ground. She’s in a very girly outfit at the end, which—I feel like movies of this era don’t typically have the most bloodthirsty character also be the girliest character?

00:33:18 John Host Ninety-four, I mean, that’s peak riot grrrl in the culture. Right? So... y’know, Lori Petty and her shaved head firepower bitch? But also, like, a cute girl at the end? That’s... that’s a pretty ’94 spin to put on the baseball. Well, no, that had to have come from Pauly Shore or from somewhere in the—inside the movie. That’s something I don’t think a scriptwriter would have imagined. I think that probably had to come from casting Lori Petty and she’s just like—

00:33:54 Ben Host “Here’s what the character is.”  
00:33:55 John Host Yeah. Or Pauly Shore said that. Like, “We gotta get Lori Petty and it’s gotta be this.” Y’know.

00:34:01 Adam Host A lesser movie elevates Gabriella into—or someone who looks like Gabriella—into that role. But that it’s Lori Petty, I think, makes the film a lot better. And she represents a type of beauty that she had for the entire decade. Like... like, Lori Petty shaved her head so that Charlize could become Imperator Furiosa.

[Multiple people laugh.]

Like—like, she started the whole thing! And she made it safe and good to crush on, like, a manic pixie dream tomboy and not just a Gabriella type that I think everyone going to movies in the nineties was force-fed. Like she built her career on these types of roles! And it’s a great career!

00:34:48 Ben Host The next year, she made *Tank Girl*. [Laughs.]  
00:34:50 John Host Really? Oh, nice!  
00:34:51 Ben Host She went from *In the Army Now* to *Tank Girl*. What fun.  
00:34:54 Clip Clip **Tank Girl (*Tank Girl*):** Get your narrow little butt over here! I wouldn’t want you to miss all this fun!

00:34:59 Ben Host I wanted to talk a little bit about chemical weapons and Scud missiles in our conversation today. Because these are pretty, like, terrifying ideas. Like, the idea of... as belligerent a regional power as Libya is, getting its hands on weapons of mass destruction, and it is treated with very little seriousness by this movie. But yeah! Like, the threat that is looming over the American military here—who I guess is just here to stop Libya from invading Chad?

00:35:34 John Host Yeah.  
00:35:35 Ben Host [Laughs.] Like, some of this strains a little credulity. That they would just wanna take over the huge swaths of completely barren desert in the north of Chad.

00:35:46 John Host Mm. Chad.  
00:35:49 Ben Host But also that they would use chemical weapon-tipped Scuds to do it is, uh... y’know, that was like the animating fear of the American

military for a long time. And it was the pretext that we did the sequel to Desert Storm on.

00:36:04 John Host Y'know, northern Chad is full of diamonds. They're all buried under 600 feet of desert. You can't get to them. But they're there.

00:36:14 Ben Host This podcast is full of diamonds that you also can't get to.

*[John laughs.]*

00:36:16 John Host Also pirates' gold. There's a lot of pirates' gold in northern Chad.

00:36:21 Ben Host Does anybody actually live there, or is it just, like... totally barren? 'Cause it's one of those dead-straight international boundaries, but also, like... I can't imagine that there's like a river that they could've drawn the border along or something like that.

00:36:37 John Host The Sahel is the sort of prairie region along the entire southern side of the Sahara. It's, like, a geographical region that kinda transcends national borders. And that is... to the south of the border of Chad and Libya. But it's the lower—it's the lower part of Chad. The lower half of it. And the northern—wherever that border region is, is just the Sahara! But southern Chad is like... kind of funky. Or central Chad. Pretty nice. You've flown over it, right? I mean, you've been there.

00:37:21 Ben Host I have flown over it, yeah. The flight that I took was, like, almost perfectly along that line where the Sahara meets the—you called it the Sahel?

00:37:32 John Host Sahel, yeah.

00:37:32 Ben Host I flew from Addis Ababa to Kano, and you look out one side of the plane and it is just like... completely desolate desert as far as the eye can see. And you look at the other side and there's, like, plants. It's like, a totally amazing thing to see. And yeah. Like, Chad is a huge country by land mass. As is Libya! It's hard to imagine what life is like in that border region and I think that that's kind of something that this movie plays on, that they can just rely on our almost total ignorance as American heshers to just be like, "Okay. I guess Libya's real mad at Chad today!"

00:38:16 Adam Host The decades of Libyan involvement as the heavy in any kind of film.

00:38:21 John Host Right. I think it's not a coincidence that they picked Chad because you can say Chad like, *[surfer dude voice]* "Chaad." Like—

*[Ben laughs.]*

00:38:40 Clip Clip Chad is a hilarious name for a country! Like, *[surfer voice]* "It's named Chad! Like your brother!" I'm sure that had to play into it. **Stand-up Comedian:** Like, "Hey, what's up? It's me, Chad! Welcome to my African nation!" *[Audience laughter.]*

00:38:47 John Host But that region stretches all the way across Africa and it's really a cultural region. It's like, you have to look at Africa from east to west instead of north to south throughout that area. And it's—I don't know. I wish I knew more about it. That feels like a thing that you could spend a lifetime studying.

00:39:08 Ben Host Like, so many of those borders are more the result of previous colonial powers than any, like—anybody that actually lives there. I think the Tuaregs go to Chad and they definitely go to Niger, which is... right next door and also has a bunch of weird straight-line borders with Chad.

00:39:26 John Host The thing about the Scud missile was, the Scud did play a large role in our imaginations during the first Gulf War. Because it was—in a way—I mean, what made Iraq such an interesting country to invade

and fight that war—y’know, against them when they invaded Kuwait—was that they were an unusually... like... potentially sophisticated adversary. They weren’t your typical—it wasn’t like fighting in Lebanon or your typical situation where you’re kind of fighting a proxy war in Angola or whatever it was, y’know, it’s not like invading Grenada where there’s no army really and there’s no resistance. But the Iraqis had a real air force and, y’know, all this kind of Soviet military stuff. They were battle-tested from their decade of war with Iran. And so, y’know, going in to that war we had all this expectation that like, “The Scud missile!” In a way, it hadn’t been since Vietnam—

00:40:47 Ben Host Patriot missiles and Scud missiles! They were, like, the stars of the show!

00:40:52 Adam Host Great marketing for those missiles.

*[Ben chuckles.]*

00:40:55 John Host We were facing an army that was one of our favorite things, which was—we were gonna test our guns against Soviet guns in the battlefield to see who was better. Like, whose short-range missiles were better? Y’know, that was what made the conduct of that war so... I’m talking about the original Iraq War—so, kind of, on the one hand, there was a lot of flag-waving about it. But it was also kind of despicable because, yeah, they had a big army and we basically bulldozed them into a trench, but you could still say “Scud” at this point in history and have it conjure up, like, an incredible threat—“The Scud!”

00:41:36 Ben Host Yeah.

00:41:37 John Host The Scud was coming to getcha!

00:41:40 Ben Host When I was in high school, there was a kid that was friends with friends of mine named Burim. I think he was Albanian and he was in the U.S. going to high school because of conflicts in his home region and when he rolled joints he would roll, like, cone-shaped joints. Giant cone-shaped joins. And he would say, *[with accent]* “You want to hit this Scud?”

*[All laugh.]*

And he was like—y’know, he just had a thousand-yard stare. He was unlike any of the kids I’d ever met.

00:42:16 John Host Yeah, man.

00:42:17 Adam Host One of those will really blow up your tent.

00:42:20 Ben Host Yeah. *[Laughs.]* No kidding.

00:42:22 Adam Host Did you guys notice the scar on the back of Pauly Shore’s neck after they shaved his head?

00:42:26 Ben Host Yeah! What was that?

00:42:28 Adam Host It was from an ejected shell casing from filming this movie!

00:42:32 John Host What?

00:42:33 Ben Host No kidding!

00:42:34 Adam Host He got pretty injured by it and that scar is no joke. It landed on his neck and it burned him really bad.

00:42:42 Ben Host Wow. I thought he had like a nubbin bug or something.

00:42:45 Adam Host Yeah. Pretty rugged looking. He also learned how to treat water! Like, he actually...

*[Ben laughs.]*

He actually went through the coursework to learn how to do all that stuff.

00:42:58 Ben Host *[Through laughter]* That's amazing.

00:42:59 John Host I am so glad that this podcast has a Pauly Shore expert!

00:43:05 Adam Host *[Multiple people laugh.]*  
I really did not want to step up to this episode and, like, curb-stomp it for an hour? That's no fun to me. I think what *Friendly Fire* does to even bad movies is worth doing and worth listening to.

00:43:17 John Host Oh, you would be wrong, my friend.

00:43:20 Adam Host I don't read our comments, John.

00:43:24 John Host *[John laughs, claps.]*  
Yeah.

00:43:25 Clip Clip **Bones:** Ooh, you're gonna get some noogies later! I'm gonna just pound you like this!

00:43:29 Ben Host It may have been the same tirade about the ranks, but somebody was complaining that the discussion of the water was that it tasted good and that Army water purification experts don't get charged with making the water taste good and they don't have the equipment to do it. All they do is make the water drinkable.

00:43:47 Adam Host Have you ever had water out of one of those LifeStraws or anything? Like, have you ever drank fetid water that's been purified?

00:43:55 Ben Host I've done, like, backpacking trip in the Sierras where we had to do iodine tablets, but I've never done, like, the—more of the high-tech version.

00:44:05 Adam Host What's that like?

00:44:07 Ben Host Uh, kinda gross. Y'know. Like, you bring Kool-Aid with you so that you can make the flavor a little bit more pleasurable.

00:44:14 Adam Host Do people in the military do that, too?

00:44:16 Ben Host I dunno! That would be cool. If your MRE came with a little packet of Kool-Aid powder. *[Laughs.]*

00:44:24 Adam Host Oh yeah.

00:44:25 Clip Clip **Speaker 1:** I feel like I need to sit down. Already. That's incredible.

00:44:29 Adam Host You get shot in the chest right through all of your Kool-Aid packets. Your buddy's cradling you in his arms. He's like, "Oh, it's not gonna be so bad! Also tastes delicious!"

*[Multiple people laugh.]*

"It was the damndest thing! He passed away in my arms, but the smell was intoxicating."

00:44:48 Ben Host *[All laugh.]*  
What did you think of the stuff about like Special Forces being assholes and we're gonna make fun of them and win every prank war against them?

00:44:59 Adam Host That enlisted versus reservists conflict is a real thing, though.

00:45:05 John Host Right?  
I was trying to think about this in the context of the time. In the last fifteen years, culturally, we have become Special Forces fetishists. Like... basically if you make a war movie now, and it's not about the Navy SEALs or about some kind of special forces super-soldiers? It wouldn't even make sense to a contemporary audience. Every

00:45:40 Adam Host single soldier in a movie now is some kind of hyper-trained operative. You never see just, like, soldiers doing soldier stuff. Even Jack Ryan has been field-promoted from desk to hyper-badass.

00:45:46 John Host Yeah, right. He's doing multiple karate chops. Every time he shoots his gun, he can't possibly miss. But I think at this point in time, there was—I mean, Special Forces has always played some kind of role in popular imagination. But Esai Morales. He's not just a regular soldier; he's given—somebody refers to him as some kind of Special Forces. But he's a figure of fun and their hyped up energy—they're like, "I'm a super-badass" energy—is played for laughs. And I think that would've worked at the time. Y'know. It's an antiauthoritarian comedy or a nonconformist comedy. You gotta find your bad guy in the—in some conformity. That's what's kind of weird about the movie, is that it doesn't really—it doesn't really tilt itself against the Army, exactly. It doesn't indict the Army.

00:46:48 Ben Host No, it really makes a case for being in the Reserves! It feels very positive about the Army.

00:46:54 John Host And we never really even see any Libyans up close except for—I mean, they're always in wide shot. So it's not like, really, the Libyans are the enemy. Y'know, the enemy is just kind of like... I mean, for me, as a viewer, the enemy was the film itself.

[Ben laughs.]

But within the film's universe, it's kind of an enemy-less place, really.

00:47:21 Ben Host Most of their challenges are getting lost in the desert or whatever.

00:47:24 John Host Yeah. Maybe the desert is their primary antagonist?

00:47:29 Ben Host It's a lot like *Lawrence of Arabia* in that way.

[All laugh.]

00:47:35 Music Transition Short reprise of theme song "War."

00:47:38 Adam Host All films on *Friendly Fire* deserve a custom rating system, even *In the Army Now*. Not every path is a journey, but the *Friendly Fire* journey has led us to here. To *In the Army Now*.

[Ben laughs.]

Camels represent so many things in *In the Army Now*. It's a form of currency in the scene where they have to trade their truck for one. That same camel provides companionship. That camel saves Bones' life from that Libyan that's about to charge up the sand dune at him with the assault rifle! And then finally—for some reason—it's that same camel that's been airlifted into the base at the very end that gives us our feel-good ending.

[Ben laughs.]

One of, like, three feel-good endings that this film has, oddly enough. I approached this film expecting to hate it and I did not. I'm looking at its rating on Amazon. Four and a half stars for *In the Army Now* based on 447 reviews. Stars are not how we review films on *Friendly Fire*, though. For today it will be one to five camels.



There's a lot to think about when you think about *In the Army Now*, more than one may think. This film inspired a lot of research on my part. I did a lot of research about Pauly Shore, obviously. Pauly Shore, a standup I've seen a number of times, as stated before. On what he experienced in his life, Pauly Shore said this: "Because I grew up in a comedy club, raised by Sam Kinison and Richard Pryor and Garry Shandling and Roseanne Barr and all of these people that are very kind of crazy, my mom wasn't there. And she gave me to the comedians. And my dad was out on the road and I had no parental supervision." And I think when you look at Pauly Shore right now, he's still working. Mitzi Shore left The Comedy Store to him to manage when she died. They dim the lights for Pauly Shore when he takes the stage, and I don't think that that's just because he's gotten older. But I think it's out of respect. And I mean there are a lot of fun stories to read about him, but there are a lot of other troubling, bad stories about him in his life. I think his is an interesting story of early Hollywood success, and maybe one that kind of serves as a warning for people that followed in the later nineties.

Why do we watch movies, guys?

*[Ben laughs. John joins in.]*

For a lot of people, especially in the mid-nineties, it was about turning your mind off. There was no Peak TV then 'cause there wasn't anything on that was challenging. So when we talk about the movies of their time or the actors of their time, this is a version of that. This was part of the peak, right? It isn't always gonna be *Platoon* or *Apocalypse Now* in your movie theater. Sometimes your Kurtz is gonna be Pauly Shore. Sometimes that water buffalo is gonna be a camel. But either way, we're just trying to escape the mundanity of our lives.

*[Ben snickers.]*

And you could turn left and see *Clear and Present Danger* in 1994, or you could turn right—and see *Airheads*. Or *In the Army Now*. What I'm trying to say is—

00:50:59 John Host  
00:51:02 Adam Host

*[Laughs.]* What is happening in this review?  
—we're all hurting.

*[John laughs.]*

We always have been. And it's just about finding something that makes you forget that for 90 minutes. That's why I'm gonna give *In the Army Now* three and a half camels.

00:51:13 John Host  
00:51:14 Adam Host

Wow.  
It didn't make me hurt for 90 minutes. And I think that's doing a lot these days.

00:51:19 Ben Host

It's true. There are few places that you could turn for a movie that is as... casually racist—

*[Adam laughs.]*

—casually homophobic. Casually transphobic? Casually xenophobic as this movie. That are also as, like, somehow inoffensive and enjoyable? *[Laughs.]* Like— *[Laughs.]* Like, it's definitely a product of its time and it's definitely got some really regrettable beats, but I kind of feel—similar to you, Adam—it's all so low-stakes that it doesn't—like, none of that stuff... feels important enough or like it couldn't have just been left on the cutting room floor enough that I'm going to let it compromise my mild enjoyment of this mildly enjoyable movie. There were some funny stuff in it. Not as much as you would hope in a film that's billed as a comedy, but when it was funny, it was—there were some really funny moments! And it was fun to see this cast. It was fun to see the people in it at this age hanging out. I guess... nobody had quite cracked the Adam Sandler code of "If we're going to do a movie we don't care about, we might as well set it in a place we wanna hang out in for two months"?

*[Adam laughs.]*

00:53:27 John Host

The fact that their codename is, like, "Glendale" and "Burbank" is, y'know, telegraphing how seriously they took the movie and how seriously they want us to take the movie. So just from a watching-it standpoint, it's fine. It's an acceptable 90-minute film. And from a *Friendly Fire* standpoint, I thought we had a more interesting conversation. This is one of those ones where I came in going, like, "Is there even enough meat on this bone?" And yet we still had a pretty enriching conversation and I'm glad that we're able to do that, even about a movie this silly. So I'll give it two and a half camels. I think that this is a classic issue of generation gap between the three of us. That gulf is largest in movies like this one. Pauly Shore and I are almost exactly the same age. He's, like, six months older than I am. And so my relationship to all these people at the time was already deeply conflicted before you even got into them making movies. Y'know, these were my Generation X peers who were already famous at 21. At a time when, y'know, I was crashing on people's couches and just trying to stay high all the time. And so I naturally... had that, y'know, that 20-year-old's feeling of—that there was injustice in the world all around. That's what defines a person in their early 20s.

And a lot of the injustice, it seemed to me, you could connect to things like the fact that Pauly Shore was famous, which was as unjust as, like, famine. To me at the time. And watching this movie, it really confirmed it for me. And it's sad, because 1994—I should watch a movie from 1994 and rejoice in remembering the time, at least. *[Through laughter]* I don't remember it from firsthand experience, but I—y'know, there should be some touchstones! I should be like, "Yeahhh!" The only good that you can take away from this is that Pauly Shore—and I'm going to give him credit now, Adam—despite, as Ben points out, the kind of just low-grade cultural tone-deafness of it—Pauly Shore has not been outed as, like, an actual creep. But watching this movie, it was just such a joyless experience.

*[Ben laughs.]*

Like, to find the jokes funny would require that you—you give them a lift up on the box? Like, you kind of bend down and put your hands together and go, “Okay, joke. Go ahead. Step on my hand. I’ll lift you up over the—” Y’know, like, you had to help the—you had to give the jokes not just the benefit of the doubt, but you had to go, like, “Let me fill in the gaps for you, joke. In my own mind. And make that one funny enough to like... yayyyy. Hoorayyy.” This is the only movie—and I make jokes about watching these movies on my phone in the bathtub while I’m eating. But this was the first movie where I felt like... it was fine for me to have the movie going in a screen on my laptop and also be looking stuff up in a different screen on the laptop. I’ve never done that before.

00:56:21 Crosstalk Crosstalk

**Adam:** Come on, man.

00:56:23 John Host

**John:** I’m always—

00:56:27 Adam Host

I’m always watching the movie and just, like—

You gotta—*Friendly Fire*’s serious business, man! You can’t do that!

00:56:30 John Host

Even the ones—even the movies that are terrible, I’m just like, “I’m watching this.” But by the time we got even halfway through boot camp I was like, “I’ve seen this movie. Not only have I seen this movie, I’ve seen this movie 20 times. Some of those 20 movies that are this movie that I’ve already seen are among the worst movies I’ve ever seen, and this one is worse. This is the worst one of these. And there’s already five of them on that list that are among the worst movies I’ve ever seen.” So... I—y’know, if a rating system is to have any meaning at all, it has to—you have to explore the full breadth of it. Right? You can’t do this thing like with Adam where he charges the battery every time it gets below 15%, so pretty soon his battery only has the top 15%? You have to run that battery all the way out and then recharge it all the way in order to keep the entire depth of the battery.

00:57:30 Adam Host

Yeah, but my batteries are always changing. Sometimes they’re batteries and sometimes they’re camels.

00:57:35 John Host

But you’re always—you have to buy new batteries because you don’t run the battery out. *[Stammering]* You recharge too fast, Adam.

00:57:43 Adam Host

You don’t know how I treat my batteries.

00:57:45 John Host

I know what your battery budget is, and it’s a lot higher than mine.

*[Adam laughs.]*

So I have to give *In the Army Now*, starring Pauly Shore and Andy Dick and Lori Petty. And DAG. I have to give it a zero camels rating.

*[Adam or Ben gives a low whistle.]*

00:58:13 Adam Host

There is no reason to watch this movie. And if there was a reason it would be, “Watch this movie and be transported to 1994.”

You answered this question with your rating, but I’m gonna ask the question explicitly: do you think bad comedy is worse than sincere drama that fails? Because I know that you didn’t give a score this low for *USS Indianapolis*. Like, I get the sense that you’re less forgiving of comedy than drama. And I wonder why that is. ‘Cause I’m less forgiving of drama! Keep that false sincerity out of my movies.

00:58:46 John Host The problem with *USS Indianapolis* is that no one involved in the production of that movie had earned the right to tell that story. And in failing to earn the right to tell it—and in doing such a miserable job of telling it—they, like, insulted its memory and insulted me. But there was sincerity somewhere. But this movie—*In the Army Now*—is cynical about... everything. In the sense that it just feels more bankrupt, even, than cynically deploying the deaths of thousands in a military tragedy in order to make, like, a movie that's an abortion. Somehow to me.

I could write a better script for this when I write the intro to this movie in three months. When you guys say, "Oh hey, you've gotta write that intro to Pauly Shore movie" and I go, "Huh? What? Oh right!" And then I write the intro starting at 11 p.m. the night before. I guarantee you. And I have no idea, right now, what that intro's gonna be. People listening to this episode are going to have listened to it already. And so let them be the judge. Is the intro that I write to this going in totally blind three months from now... a better pitch for a screenplay than this entire film? And I think it will be.

01:00:13 Adam Host What I love about this is that there is a better than 80% chance that you will not have done the intro in time.

*[Multiple people laugh.]*

01:00:25 John Host And it's me or Ben that has to do it. So. Cool. Alright. Alright. So! In that case, if it is you or Ben that does the intro—because there's a *[through laughter]* better than 80% chance that I don't. That I forget that we even had this conversation.

*[Ben laughs.]*

01:00:44 Adam Host I bet you your intro will be a better—that's the charge, right? That's the assignment.  
01:00:45 Ben Host Good save.  
Boy, I think that John is still gonna be so mad about this movie in three or four months that he will insist upon writing the intro. That's my prediction.

*[John laughs.]*

01:00:56 John Host I'm not sure! I'm not—you know how it goes. Sometimes it's like, you say I have to write the intro to something and I don't remember having ever watched the movie and then I forget that you told me I had to do a thing. I mean that's basically, like, how we run this show, right? You'll be like, "Write the intro to *In the Army Now*" and I'm like, "Uh, durr."

*[Ben laughs.]*

01:01:17 Adam Host Sometimes it feels like no one's running it.

*[John laughs.]*

Wow. Well, just a... not real tight grouping of ratings for this one. I wonder how tight our guys are gonna be. And as soon as I said that, I realized that's not how I wanted to put it, but... Ben, who's your guy?

01:01:38	Ben	Host	Uh... I'm gonna give my guy award to a character named Link, played by Brendan Fraser.
01:01:47	Adam	Host	Yeah! Cameo!
01:01:48	Ben	Host	He coincidentally played a character named Link in <i>Encino Man</i> .
01:01:52	John	Host	Mmmm.
01:01:53	Ben	Host	I thought it was pretty fun that he popped in. He was not a very famous guy at this point in his career. But just popped in. I love seeing his smiling face. It was a bright point in the movie for me.
01:02:07	John	Host	He was just there for a second, right?
01:02:08	Ben	Host	Yeah! It was so surprising to see him and I'd forgotten that he had worked with Pauly Shore in <i>Encino Man</i> . That I was like, "Oh, wow! He's gonna be a character now." That scene felt like they were setting up the Brendan Fraser character to come back later and do something else? And... y'know. He did not. But y'know. Leave 'em wanting more! And I wanted more Brendan Fraser. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
01:02:35	Adam	Host	Yeah. I wanted more David Alan Grier. I think as he was used in this movie, it was probably—probably the right choice. Sprinkling him around the way that they do. David Alan Grier has always done something with his eyes that feels like magic to me. You get a sense for the character he's portraying just through a kind of micro-expression he's able to do. Whether it's, like, a micro-twitch or a direction his eyes are looking? But that is just a superpower. And as soon as Pauly Shore sits down next to him in that classroom and DAG turns to look at him, you're about 80% there on what Fred Ostroff is going to be as a character. Just by the way he looks. And it's weird, because like David Alan Grier isn't a guy who's ever worn a lot of makeup or prosthetics. His hair isn't different in movies. Like, what he has as his instrument is his face. And he's got a great face. So he's my guy.
01:03:43	Ben	Host	John? Guy?
01:03:47	John	Host	<i>[Sighs.]</i> Yeah, my guy is, um... has gotta be Fabiana Udenio. Who plays the implausibly hot girlfriend, Gabriella.
			<i>[Adam laughs.]</i>
			When she first appears in the film, pretending to be a customer who is gonna save Pauly Shore—she's gonna save his job by pretending to be a customer that he upsells—as a seasoned American cinamtiste—cinamaiste? How do you say that, Ben?
01:04:19	Ben	Host	Hm. Cineaste?
01:04:22	John	Host	I recognized, "Here's this implausibly hot girl. She will either be seduced by Pauly Shore—against all natural odds—or then the twist—that it turns out she was his girlfriend already." Really, it's the thing at the very top of the movie where you realize, "Oh, this is taking place in an alternate universe." So she's my guy, just because... she— <i>[Laughs.]</i> Because she is a pretty low-ranking movie star and also completely puts Pauly Shore in his place in terms of—on, like, three or four different spectra of taste and quality.
01:05:03	Music	Transition	Short reprise of theme song "War."
01:05:05	Promo	Clip	<i>[A quick, energetic drumroll.]</i>

**Music:** Exciting techno music plays.

**Jarrett Hill:** Hey, I'm Jarrett Hill, co-host of the brand-new Maximum Fun podcast, *FANT!*

**Tre'vell Anderson:** And I'm Tre'vell Anderson. I'm the other, more fabulous co-host, and the reason you really should be tuning in!

**Jarrett:** I feel the nausea rising.

**Tre'vell:** To be *FANTI* is to be a big fan of something, but also have some challenging or "anti" feelings toward it.

**Jarrett:** Kind of like Kanye.

**Tre'vell:** We're all fans of Kanye. He's a musical genius, but, like, you know...

**Jarrett:** He thinks slavery's a choice.

**Tre'vell:** Or, like, *The Real Housewives of Atlanta*. Like, I love the drama, but do I wanna see Black women fighting each other on screen?

**Tyler Perry (as Madea):** *[Singing]* Hell to the naaaaw. To the naw-naw-naaaw.

**Jarrett:** We're tackling all of those complex and complicated conversations about the people, places, and things that we love.

**Tre'vell:** Even though they may not love us back.

**Jarrett:** *FANTI!* Maximum Fun! Podcast!

**Tre'vell:** Aa-ow!

*[Music fades out.]*

01:05:52 Promo Clip

**Music:** Chill, rhythmic synth music plays in background.

**Jesse Thorn:** Hey, friends! Jesse here, the founder of Maximum Fun, and I have some really great news to share with you. This year has brought a lot of changes for all of us, and one tradition that we were grateful to be able to hold onto is our annual pin sale to benefit charity. This year, through your generosity and love of pins, you helped raise \$95,400 for GiveDirectly. If you're a member and you bought pins, they'll ship in January. In the meantime, your support will provide direct cash relief to families impacted by COVID-19 across the United States. Even in this incredibly tough year, the MaxFun community remains extraordinarily kind. And whether or not you bought pins, you can continue to help by heading to [GiveDirectly.org](https://www.givedirectly.org). And as always, thank you.

*[Music fades out.]*

01:06:46 Music Transition  
01:06:47 Ben Host  
01:06:57 John Host  
01:06:58 Ben Host  
01:07:01 Adam Host

Short reprise of theme song "War."  
Well, the only way to turn John's cratered mood around is to watch a different—maybe better?—movie next time?  
Maybe.  
It's possible that the next movie will be better than this.  
I like our chances.

01:07:02 John Host Alright. Let's see. I gotta clean out the—*[makes slurping noise]*— coffee at the bottom of the cup. *[Makes licking noises.]*

01:07:09 Ben Host The *Friendly Fire* tradition.

01:07:12 John Host Alright. Here we go. Get the 120-sided die. Aaaaand... we're off!

*[Sound of die clanking inside ceramic mug.]*

01:07:29 Ben Host Fifty-seven! Five-seven!  
Fifty-seven is a 2004 film directed by Wolfgang Petersen about the Trojan War!

*[Tense, rumbling music begins playing in background.]*

01:07:38 John Host Uh-oh!

01:07:39 Ben Host Starring Bradley Pitt. It's *Troy*!

01:07:42 Crosstalk Crosstalk **John:** No. No! Nooo! Nooo! Noooo!

01:07:46 John Host **Adam:** Wowww.  
I was just talking to someone on our *Friendly Fire* Facebook page about *Troy* relative to the fact that we recently watched *Gladiator*. And oh, we're out of the frying pan and into the fire here.

*[Ben laughs. Adam joins in.]*

01:08:02 Ben Host I think I saw *Troy* in theaters and haven't seen it since!

01:08:06 Adam Host This is a continuation of a little mini film festival we've been doing on *Friendly Fire*. Another Sean Bean movie!

01:08:13 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Ben:** Oh, yeah!

01:08:15 Adam Host **John:** Wow.  
I've not seen this movie, but you guys seem to think it's not good.

01:08:18 John Host Oh dear. You're probably going to love it, frankly.

01:08:21 Adam Host How could it not be good? It's Wolfgang Petersen!

01:08:24 John Host Yeah.

01:08:26 Ben Host I wonder—I wonder if there's, like, a director's cut of *Troy*... that's good. Oh yeah! There is a director's cut!

01:08:34 Adam Host Oh, let's see that!

01:08:35 Ben Host Three hours and sixteen minutes, guys. Woof!

01:08:38 John Host Nooo!

*[Adam laughs.]*

I'm partly worried that I won't hate it as much when I watch it a second time. Because when I saw it in the theaters, I don't think you could hate it more?

01:08:54 Ben Host Right.

01:08:55 John Host And so I'm at real risk of... liking it more because it's not as bad as—I've spent ten years—fifteen—how long ago was it? 2007? Spent thirteen years hating this movie above all other movies. So.

01:09:13 Ben Host Wow, really! That's—that is a powerful hate! That's its own theme week! *[Laughs.]* We're doing a series of films that John dislikes.

*[John laughs.]*

01:09:22 Adam Host We need to have John pick out the Pork Chop.

*[Theme song "War" begins playing faintly in the background.]*

01:09:24 John Host Aw, thank you.

01:09:25 Adam Host Just to make sure he doesn't leave the show.

01:09:28	John	Host	<i>[Ben laughs.]</i> That would be nice. That would be nice. Give me—throw me a bone.
01:09:32	Ben	Host	Well, <i>Troy</i> , director's cut, will be next week's film here on <i>Friendly Fire</i> . In the meantime, we're gonna leave it with RobsRobsRobsRobs. So—for Adam Pranica and John Roderick, I've been Ben Harrison. To the victor... go the spoiler alerts.
			<i>[John laughs. Adam joins in.]</i>
			<i>[Theme song plays briefly at full volume until fading into background as Rob speaks.]</i>
01:09:52	Rob Schulte	Producer	<i>Friendly Fire</i> is a Maximum Fun podcast! Hosted by Adam Pranica, Ben Harrison, and John Roderick. This show is produced by me, Rob Schulte. Our theme music is "War" by Edwin Starr, courtesy of Stone Agate Music, and our podcast art is by Nick Ditmore.
			This holiday season is the perfect time to explore the <i>Friendly Fire</i> back catalog. Like our episode on <i>Major Dundee</i> from last year! That's a Sam Peckinpah-directed, Charlton Heston-starring, <u>Western</u> . Go check it out! Now!
			Feel like supporting our show? Well, head to <a href="http://MaximumFun.org/join">MaximumFun.org/join</a> and for as little as \$5 a month you'll gain access to our monthly Pork Chop feed! And all of the bonus content from Maximum Fun. And go give us a follow on Twitter and Instagram under the handles <a href="https://twitter.com/FriendlyFireRSS">FriendlyFireRSS</a> . Thanks for listening. We'll see ya next week with another episode of <i>Friendly Fire</i> .
01:11:13	Adam	Host	<i>[Theme song plays briefly at full volume before fading out entirely.]</i> Andy Dick had a compass the whole time!
01:11:15	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	<i>[Ben laughs.]</i> <b>Adam:</b> Come on, Andy Dick!
01:11:18	John	Host	<b>John:</b> He just forgot about it.
01:11:21	Ben	Host	That was a funny bit. That was good. You can also use a watch to reckon your direction. They must not have been paying that much attention in map-reading class.
01:11:30	John	Host	Yeah. Shoulda read <i>The Anarchist Cookbook</i> .
01:11:34	Ben	Host	Mm. Woulda been on-brand for them!
01:11:37	Music	Transition	A cheerful ukulele chord.
01:11:38	Speaker 1	Guest	<a href="http://MaximumFun.org">MaximumFun.org</a> .
01:11:39	Speaker 3	Guest	Comedy and culture.
01:11:40	Speaker 2	Guest	Artist owned—
01:11:41	Speaker 4	Guest	—Audience supported.