Sample Film Critique   
*Forrest Gump*

“Life is like a box of chocolates. You never know what you're gonna get." However, when you watch *Forrest Gump* starring Tom Hanks as Forrest and Robin Wright as Jenny, you know you are going to get a lot of laughs and even a few tears. The screenplay for the 1994 movie was written by Eric Roth, based on the novel by Winston Groom. The story follows Forrest through 30 years of trials and tribulations, placing Forrest within historical moments of history, and in pursuit of his one dream--his “most special friend,” Jenny. According to the *Washington Post,* Forrest Gump won Oscar awards for Best Picture, Best Actor (Hanks), Best Director (Robert Zemeckis), Film Editing, Visual Effects and Adapted Screenplay. The movie was well deserving of these awards since the acting and the visual effects were extraordinary.

The films' actors’ success in portraying their characters is a major factor in the film's awards. Tom Hanks and Robin Wright worked well together, just like “peas and carrots." The on-screen chemistry between the two was phenomenal. I felt a real connection between the two, finding myself mad at Jenny when she blew Forrest off and in tears when he told her that he was heading to Vietnam. *Mokui’s Movie Review* states “Tom Hanks IS Forrest Gump…He breathes life into the guy and you will feel what Forrest feels" (1994, par 1). James Berardinelli states, “Robin Wright gives the best performance of her career, surpassing what she accomplished in The Playboys” (1994, par2). Another performance that stands out is that of Gary Sinise. Sinise plays the part of Lieutenant Dan Taylor, whose life is saved by Forrest during the Vietnam War. James Berardinelli writes, “In this movie, his Lieutenant Dan Taylor is riveting" (1994, par 3). I thought that Sinise was quite convincing with his emotions throughout the movie, as if he was really a disabled vet who had lost both legs in the war.

Just as good as the actors were those working behind the scenes with the special effects. Throughout *Forrest Gump* the special effects were incredible. During Lieutenant Taylor’s scenes, I was convinced that he really didn't have legs. I was studying the scenes, looking for any signs of legs, trying to figure out how it was done. It turns out that each and every frame was painted over to give it the true to life values that it holds. Also bringing the movie more credibility was the ability to place Forrest in history making events. These events ranged from Forrest teaching Elvis how to swing his hips to meeting Presidents for various accomplishments. These television clips of Forrest were done with such finesse that they look real. Critic Brian Webster (2003) states, “This is handled virtually flawlessly; if you didn't know better, you'd believe that a fellow named Gump really did tell President Lyndon Johnson that he had been shot in the rump while acting heroically in Vietnam" (par 2). *Rolling Stone* (2003) states, “The effects dazzle, though never at the expense of the story” (Travers, par 2).

This story, complete with the Oscar winning performances in both acting and special effects is perfect for those in need of a dose of goodness. My family enjoys watching *Forrest Gump* together for rejuvenation, to view someone with true values of honesty, friendship and family. Forrest, with his heart of gold and his low IQ, never gives up. He always looks for the best in every scenario. The movie opens with a feather floating down over the city, landing at Forrest’s feet. Near the end of the story, Forrest questions, “Do we each have a destiny – or do we just float around accidental, like on a breeze?” As you are contemplating this question, the feather reappears and floats through the countryside right up into the ending credits.

 Source: https://apps.spokane.edu/

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