

A clever reconstruction of american culture

[Art & Culture](#), [Artists](#)



However, if the meta codes are read with more sensitive antennae, a different picture can be perceived. Existentialist ideas are in the background throughout the movie. Chance and destiny are counter played in the lives of Jenny and Gump; there is no higher purpose, no good and evil, no God. There is only life. In this context, countercultures are just one aspect of life. It is just by chance that Jenny is immersed in them and Gump is not, their roles in the movie are starkly black and white, to drive home the message. They could easily have exchanged their roles, their trajectories, their "destinies". Real-life is a mixture of both, and any human being can during his/her lifetime partake in hell and heaven. The elements of the counterculture have always been there and will always be, as long as there is a human alive. The same glories and miseries are the theme of the most ancient forms of drama and will be replayed over and over; just their costumes and scenery change along with our history.

2) Indeed, this is a very interesting and original interpretation of the feather as a link between the novel and the film. However, I wonder if a reference to intertextuality was the intention of the filmmakers, given the existence of several explicit and nonsymbolic references to the novel, as the other participant correctly points in his/her posting. Other interpretations have been proposed: "the unbearable lightness of being; Forrest Gump's impaired intellect; the randomness of experience" (Lyall, 1994); how we deal with the chance elements to our life (Anonymous, 2001); "destiny and dumb blind luck" (Anonymous, 2000).

I can think of other alternatives, among which one deserves some consideration. Webster's Dictionary defines "white feather" as a symbol of

cowardice, and I was reminded of words by Sartre: (" Those who hide from themselves the complete freedom of their existence, with deterministic excuses, I shall call cowards). Maybe Gump's idiocy and chance are just " deterministic excuses" to escape nausea provoked by a universe deprived of purpose. Faced with nothingness, with the mysteries of the physical world controlled by its own mysterious laws, with so many questions about ourselves that we cannot answer, we cowardly invent a totalitarian system, a religion, and transfer our responsibilities to its minions. Gump is all of us who deserve the white feather.