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Due to an influx of more time and a sudden fancy for a chick flick, I watched both
Groundhog Day and *The Rules of Attraction* this weekend, with a quick look at *Timecode.*

Groundhog Day depicts the unfortunate travels of Phil Connors, who becomes stuck within
February 2nd in Punxatony, Pennsylvania. He transitions from a weather forecaster with a
huge ego to a confused guy to a use-everything-to-his-advantage player to a
crazed-suicidal-psycho-who-can't-take-it-anymore to a modest man that helps out as many
people as possible. He becomes an expert, learning the heart of the town. The movie itself
is procedural as its characters follow set patterns. Phil himself embraces and utilizes this
repetitious setting. We proceed through his daily day, watching as he goofs up and
compensates for his mistakes in the next twenty-four hours. He interacts with random
people, learning the schedule of the town. He first robs a money truck, but eventually times
his day so that he rescues three old ladies in a car and he saves a kid from falling out of a
tree. The procedural aspect of the movie carries us on an ephemeral, yet ever-lasting
February 2nd. Events throughout the day continue to repeat, but Phil's protagonistic
interaction is renewed daily. Each time he talks to people, he remembers a facet of their
lives, but they don't remember ever talking to him. The movie proceeds inexorably through
Phil's time-warped journey through Groundhog Day to find himself, allowing us a spatial
aspect of navigation through the thought patterns and nuances of the small town of
Punxatony.

The Rules of Attraction is an interesting tidbit of a movie that travels in memories and a
maze of associations. In the beginning of the movie, we see the majority of Camden
College at "the End of the World Party," where glances trigger memories that flow along
the details of characters' lives. Lauren, in love with Victor, decides at the last drunken
minute to lose her virginity to a random film student from NYU. Her scenario plays by, and
then is caught on rapid rewind. This ends at a new beginning: Sean sees Lauren walk out,
and his heart breaks as he scowls and tears up a purple note. Another scene plays out; he,
the emotional vampire, stalks out new prey in the form of a blonde fling. From across the
room, we see Paul shoot a smoldering gaze in Sean's direction. Scenes play out, are
rewound and told from a different perspective with a different storyline.
Misunderstandings are understood only by the viewers. Explanations appear as transitions,
relevant or otherwise. The end becomes the beginning, with a cut-off twist.

The procedural qualities of the movie help us down the paths of these characters'
emotional buildups, in a maze of drugs, sex, and college. The movie is a database of
characters' emotions that allows us to spatially navigate their fulfilling journeys, their
mishaps and mistakes, their desperate struggles therein. Though not up to the stellar quirky
quality of *Groundhog Day*, *The Rules of Attraction* did explore several facets of
relationships in the extremes of college atmosphere. Independently-made and briskly
desperate, *Rules of Attraction's* omniscient style of rewind plays through the flamboyant
characters, leaving a whirlwind in its wake. It achieves a balance in following each person

one at a time, as opposed to *Time Code,* which tries to accomplish four quadrants of character, leaving us with too much of a headache. Both *Rules of Attraction* and *Time Code* weave interactions throughout the stories, but *Rules* plays with time, whereas *Time Code* plays ith space.