

5 Reasons to Celebrate Groundhog Day by Watching Groundhog Day

To me and mine, 1993's *Groundhog Day* is the absolute perfect movie for a wide range of ages and both genders, a potent blend of chill bump romance, tear-jerking storytelling and ROTFL comedy that does so with essentially no sex or language. We have written about this movie before in a blurb [here](#) but we decided that a movie this incredible deserves its own article.

On to the list!

1. It's the 25th Anniversary of its release!

This is what Americans do. We celebrate anniversaries. Of everything. Facebook alone is proof.

2. The Patriots are going to win another Super Bowl. So like 98% of us need something to bring us joy this weekend.

Let me save you the torture. New England will win. The commercials will be mediocre. Watch something this weekend with a happy ending and no dead spots.

3. You may laugh uncontrollably several times.

True Story...sometime around 2004 on New Year's Eve, the twenty-somethings and teenagers of my church gathered at my friend Chris's house as per our tradition. We watched movies to ring in the new year and included in that year's line up was

Groundhog Day. At least three times, we had to pause the movie because someone got going laughing quite loudly and for a disproportionately long time. It was a riot. Normally I am the one who does this but this time I wasn't the only culprit. Now, I did lose it for a long time when Phil starts driving the car on the railroad tracks. But my friend Joel lost it when Phil steals the Groundhog. My friend Tommy lost it when Phil got Ned to leave him alone by warming up to him, so to speak. I bet it took us two hours to watch this 100-minute movie because people just could not get it together.

Another True Story...in 2011 my 20-member family was at the beach for vacation. About half of us sat down to watch this movie. The scene with Phil, Gus and Ralph got my mother going like I've never seen. When Phil asks Ralph, "Do you want to throw up here or in the car?" and Ralph replies, "I think, both" she got started. When Gus says, "You know Phil if we wanted to hit mailboxes we could let Ralph drive," she was crying laughing. By the time they crash and the cop comes up to the driver's side door and Ralph orders flapjacks, my mother was beating her knees with her hands and stomping her feet on the floor laughing. To this day if you want to make someone in my family laugh, you just have to ask, "Too early for flapjacks"?

You deserve a good laugh this weekend. Watch this movie.

4. Bill Murray gives a performance for the ages.

This is truly one of the most moving performances that I have seen and one thing that makes it different from others in that category like Heath Ledger as the Joker is that he makes it look so easy and normal. It's not a big or loud or extravagant role. It's just a normal man reacting to insane circumstances. And it's one of the most incredible things I've ever seen.

If you got to see Larry Bird shoot a 20-foot jump shot or pre-2010 Tiger Woods putt, and then tried to do those things yourself, you'd realize how they make something very hard look very easy. That is what Bill Murray does with this role. He barely changes facial expression or decibel level the whole time. The scene where he kidnaps Groundhog Phil to drive him off a cliff, Bill Murray is just in a car, deadpan face, cracking wise with Phil the groundhog. And yet it causes people to fall on the floor laughing. How does he do it?

And then there are the serious moments. The romantic ones are the core of the movie and it is not just his "You love boats but not the ocean" speech that shows how good Murray is at monologues. He brings the goosebumps again when he tells her he doesn't deserve her as she is falling asleep and doesn't hear him. What a heart-wrenching moment that is. Bill Murray makes you feel it this movie.

Andie McDowell is cute as the love interest and Steven Tobolowsky is unforgettable as Ned the Head, Needle-Nose-Ned Ryerson. But make no mistake—this is Bill Murray's movie. And he gives us a Joe Montana needing 92 yards to win the Super Bowl performance.

5. It's the rare movie that gets better with multiple viewings.

I don't know if anyone really knew back in 1993 what a timeless cultural phenomenon this movie was going to be. Roger Ebert didn't and humbly admitted so. It offers such a poignant commentary on what really matters in life and in the most unique set of circumstances. It is absolutely about character transformation, which I have written on numerous occasions is perhaps the most beautiful thing in fiction and real life.

Beyond the significant scenes already mentioned, it is relentless in its entertainment in the minor, in-between

moments and many are more noteworthy to me after the second or third viewings. Like when Phil tries repeatedly but cannot save the homeless man. Or the hilarious execution of small time loop moments, like when Phil encounters the large “Off to see the Groundhog?” guy as soon as he leaves his room. Or when we are treated to LOL moments by minor characters as when Phil is changing the old ladies’ flat tire and one of them thinks it’s an earthquake. And, on top of it all, we even get Sonny and Cher every few minutes!

So do yourself a favor and watch it. Do it to laugh until it hurts. Do it to count how many people were in it who also had guest spots on *Seinfeld*. Do it to watch Ned get punched one more time! But by all means, watch this masterpiece of film this weekend. You will thank us later.