[Rubin & Ed clip 2](https://youtu.be/JAR28Vl2cJw)

For this Try, I am going to analyze a clip from Trent Harris’ 1991 film, Rubin & Ed. The movie was considered a disaster, pulled from theaters after a short run, it now has some cult-status creed. Simply summarized, the movie is about a road trip taken by two misfits who view the other as a necessary inconvenience.

Misfits are a tried and true movie trope, and in this movie a misfit is identified by the clothes they wear and the degree of social awkwardness. The purpose of the road trip is to bury a frozen cat, but both Rubin *and* Ed hope to benefit by capitalizing on an arranged friendship of sorts. Rubin hopes to convince his mother that he made a new friend and win the return of his stereo. Ed hopes to show that he has potential as a salesman by bringing Rubin to a pyramid scheme sales seminar and win the return of his ex-wife.

This scene, (lacking in Ed I’m afraid), starts with Rubin finding the perfect cave to bury his cat, hitting his head and (slowly) knocking himself out before it transitions into a flashback. The flashback shows Rubin as a confident, happy version of himself. Just floating in a lake on an inner-tube, wearing some impressively tall platform shoes while he watches his cat waterski behind a boat being driven by an attractive woman.

Until this moment Rubin is not a likeable character, he is defensive, argumentative, and selfish. The audience gets to see Rubin’s version of a perfect moment: a day spent in quiet surroundings, a love of tall shoes, his cat being alive, and the brief social acceptance of someone that he doesn’t actually have to have to interact with.

The scene ends by revealing the cause of his cat’s death, a moment that leaves Rubin without his one connection to his idealized world, a world where he is not challenged to conform to social norms.

Watching this clip from a film that is almost 27 years old (! gratuitous exclamation point), in the current political atmosphere, exemplifies the idea of privilege and entitlement. Rubin as a white, cis, male has the ability to be inflexible to change, to wear clothes that don’t fit social norms of what is fashionable or gender appropriate, to mourn his cat by storing it in a bag in his freezer for months. Rubin has the privilege of identifying himself as a misfit and for the most part being given the freedom to do so. Rubin is a fictional character, and his character may have been created with a backstory that addresses his choices. When situations exist where a person who would dress in Rubin’s misfit uniform as a way to identify their gender or sexual identity, or as a sign of economic strife, or mental health are forced to defend their existence, the portrayal of a character who doesn’t have to explain or defend their misfit behavior never challenges the audience to think outside of their comfort zone.

I still enjoy the movie and this clip, sometimes it’s nice to watch a movie where a misfit is just a misfit.