The full monty movie analysis

The Full Monty is a movie based on a group of men who have been made redundant due to effects of economic change and political misfortune. This leads to a shift in social organisation, when taking into consideration in conventional social order men are anticipated to be the primary breadwinners. As a final way out, the group decide to put on an amateur strip production for the ladies in the local workingmen's club as a way to make money. For the purposes of this sociological analysis of the film, The Full Monty, two sociological theories will be consulted namely from Raewyn Connell regarding hegemonic masculinities and social order and Émile Durkheim concerning egoistic and anomic suicide.

2. Key Theorists

Raewyn Connell, is an Australian sociologist acknowledged for her work in the fields of sociology, education, gender studies, political science and history (University of Sydney, 2010) She is currently a Professor at the University of Sydney's Faculty of Education and Social Work . Connell's work deals critically with social structures, inequalities and social justice, gender relations and gender identity politics in the context of hegemony, especially hegemonic masculinity. She is for the most part recognised for her widely-cited book, Masculinities (University of Sydney, 2010).

David Émile Durkheim (April 15, 1858 – November 15, 1917) was a French positivist sociologist. Durkheim developed the sociological positivism of Auguste Comte in greater detail, hence developing a rigorous methodology combining sociological theory with empirical social research.[2] Also influential in anthropology, Durkheim was a structural functionalist and an early proponent of solidarism.[3]HYPERLINK "#cite_note-3″[4] During his

lifetime, Durkheim gave many lectures, and published numerous sociological studies on subjects such as education, crime, religion, suicide, and many other aspects of society.

3. Hegemonic Masculinity and Social Order

The Full Monty is set in Sheffield, North England after Thatcher's era (1979-1990) (Tamba, 2002). After the fall of the steel industry in Sheffield, men's roles in society were compromised, they were no longer able to be the breadwinners of the household and as such the women became the providers and started impeding on the hegemonic masculinity of these men. Official figures show that the number of men of working age with jobs has fallen from 92 per cent in 1971 to 75 per cent. The number of women who are employed has risen from 56 per cent to 69 per cent, narrowing the gap between women and men to 6 per cent (Watt, 2010). This gives women more financial independence and often leads to them wearing the trousers in a relationship, further contributing to the man's loss of masculinity. The men in the film feel inadequate and hopeless with being unemployed. " With women increasingly becoming the breadwinners and traditionally roles being reversed by their newfound economic independence, men were forced to re-examine their relationships and deeply held beliefs about gender roles" (Tamba, 2002)

The group in this film come up with this strip act which is directed at getting money as they are all struggling financially. However, a number of social issues and perceptions arise on the lead up to the act. Social order is challenged when certain traits are defined as either being specifically feminine or masculine. When the men are together in Gerald's house taking

off their clothes, they start comparing themselves to the " Chippendales", who were the strip group that gave Gaz the idea to do it themselves. They show their insecurities about their bodies and as such their masculinity. Dave, one of the members of the group, finds himself dealing with a weight complex. He views himself as overweight, unappealing and repulsive. As he discusses this with the rest of the men, one of them, Gerald states that " fat David is a feminist issue". This perception is generalised, meaning that it is only women who should have to conform to the models of attractiveness that are set by men. However, Dave challenges this notion with this concern about his weight and appearance. In the beginning of the movie whilst they were taking auditions for the group, the presence of Horse, a black man, sets about a succession of wild whispers and accusations about how black men have good bodies and bigger sexual organs. The film yet again contradicts this theory as Horse, upon hearing they were going to do the full Monty is seen buying a penis enlargement product.

5. Durkheim's Suicide

Durkheim (1897) stated that there are four types of suicide, these are based on the degrees of imbalance of two social forces: social integration and moral regulation. In the film, a young man, Lomper, was a security guard at Harrison's, the steel mill where Dave and Gaz once worked. After Lomper finally loses his job long after the mill shut down, he tries to commit suicide by asphyxiating himself in his car by carbon monoxide poisoning. By coincidence Dave and Gaz are out jogging and pass Lomper trying to start his car. Dave, who stops to help, tries to have a conversation with Lomper however cuts off the contact after getting no response. After a few seconds,

whilst walking away, Dave realises that Lomper was trying to asphyxiate himself and runs back to save Lomper's life.

The subsequent scene shows Dave, Gaz and Lomper sitting on a hill, talking about different ways of committing suicide. Dave suggests " getting a mate to run you down right fast (with a car)", to which Lomper says he " hasn't got any mates". Gaz rebuts telling him they just saved his life, " so don't tell us were not your mates". Lomper's inclusion in the group gave him a newly-optimistic attitude on life.

Lomper's attempted suicide can be attributed to two of Durkheim's types of suicide. The first is Egoistic suicide. This form of suicide is the result of a weakening of the bonds that normally integrate individual into the collectivity. Durkheim refers to this type of suicide as the result of " excessive individualisation", meaning that the individual becomes increasingly dethatched from other members of the community. He went on to discover that particularly males who were unmarried, with less to bind and connect them to stable social norms and goals, committed suicide at higher rates. Lomper who says he has no friends is an example of this type of suicide. He is not sufficiently bound to a social group and left with little social support or guidance, therefore his attempted suicide into this category of an Egoistic suicide.

The second type of Durkheim's suicide that Lomper's attempt subscribes to is Anomic suicide. Durkheim says that anomic suicide ' occurs in times of social upheaval and moral disorder in which people do not know where they fit in within their societies' (Germov & Poole, 2008: 28). The male characters

in the film were once proud workers in the heavy steel industry who suddenly found themselves without a job, without hope and without a proper role in society. During the economic downturn of the industrial business in Sheffield a lot of the men lost their jobs, including Lomper. According to the British Medical Journal (1999) between 1980 to 1991 the suicide rates for males aged between 25-65 was double compared to the under 25 age group. This could show that these higher age groups were more greatly affected by the social defragmentation as they were the ones most likely in the now devastated steel industry. Consequently Lomper was not sure where he fit into society once he lost his job and he had no friends to converse with, making him a person with an increased risk of suicide according to Durkheim (1897).