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FILM ANALYSIS 2

Meet the Parents

Goffman's Theory of Self:

At first Greg's intended impressions from the visit to Pam's parents are sincere and it is to his belief that he might win their hearts. The impressions he intends to give about himself are targeted to how Pam's parents will view the man expected to marry their daughter. In Goffman's view point an individual can be fully consumed by his own actions that he may perceive his actions to match the harsh reality (Goffman, 1999). His actions had no intentions of presenting a false character to the parents he was about to meet (Goffman, 1999). Unlike what he had intended for everything to go he is unlucky due to various factors that really tarnish his image against the intended audience. This leaves in an awkward situation that he tries to correct. His initial planning of how to impress Pam's parents is affected after realizing he is to make a visit to the girl's home. According to Goffman, having a familiar setting can be helpful in instilling some confidence when performing the acts (Goffman, 1999). He was now to visit a strange place that he has no idea of its setting thus loses touch with all the plans. Greg is in an awkward position living in the new environment considering its Pam's home. Even after losing his luggage, Pam's father views Greg differently after he came across him dressed in Pam's pink robe. Despite his options being limited, the father in law gets a different opinion about him.

As previously known to Greg, Pam's father used to be a flower dealer but interacting with him perceptions about him are thwarted after coming to terms with the father's real identity. To his imagination, any person working as a flower dealer would not deny their daughter the opportunity of getting married to someone from an academic and technical profession considering he was a nurse. Greg went a notch higher to get Pam's father a unique type of flower but to his shock the father never had interest in. At some point we can argue that this incident seemed to have destroyed the avenue to which a nice relationship between Greg and the soon to be father in law would have started. The father's reaction leaves Greg dismayed with his character that never matched that of a man who worked as a flower dealer. According to Goffman (1999), Pam's father does not possess coherence of front, a role in interaction that defines how one can really act so as to enable another party react the way he is expected or fit into. It is later on that Greg learns about Pam's father's work and wonders why Pam kept it from him.

Goffman (1999) states that in case intended actions do not go as planned the reaction obtained from the audience varies. The accidental hitting by the ball of Pam's sister by Greg sends a wrong message about him to everyone who was present. From the three viewpoints provided by Goffman (1999), one view is that he is a person who does not have control of his limits thus deciding to charge on someone smaller. This is evident in Goffman (1999) view of self-presentation whereby he states there being audience that react differently to a certain scenario. The other viewpoint will perceive Greg as a person who either never or actually cares about what people will perceive of him. For Greg's case, he appeared concerned with his actions

thus seemed nervous. His concern not only applies in this situation but even his reaction to hug Pam's mother at their first meeting. Lastly, is the view of an action not being supported or has insufficient vivid direction. This implies that the background of the event is not in support of the unintended event (Goffman, 1999). For Greg, he seems unlucky after Pam's father comes across a marijuana device used when smoking in Greg's borrowed jacket. The situation leaves him in an awkward and embarrassed situation.

Goffman (1999) further touches on maintenance of expressive control whereby the intended audience is usually expected by someone performing an act to take note of the small cues that have significant importance in regards to the performance. In most cases these small cues get misinterpreted to signify another thing. From the film as Greg is seen leaving after having breakfast where he uses a similar joke that had left a good impression some moments ago. His intention simply does not intend to reveal to the family members that he is striving hard to get accepted by everyone but try to show how he values to be part of the family and create a bond with the members. Surprisingly, he uses the same joke sometime later and the response from the family is positive. Definitely, the reaction will leave Greg in a state of confusion considering the same joke had initially faced a hostile reaction.

Lastly, dramatic realization by Goffman (1999) is displayed in the film. It refers how an individual incorporates signs in his acts that somehow show assenting evidences that might as well be not clear. Greg displays this trait after being asked if he owns a Ford. His response is rather not what Pam's father was expecting. He narrates how expensive the vehicle is compared

to a midsize car and even adds that with his earning, he has the ability of even purchasing it. His intentions maybe were to prove to Pam's father that he could take care of his daughter when they get married guaranteeing that Pam will not experience any form of hardship. The same is not what Pam's father had in mind. Moreover, the use of sign equipment arises from this situation of Greg and Pam's father. It implies using of an object that carries different traits to explain something else. In some actions, specific parts might result to action against expression shown in cases an individual who was not able to carry out a specific task but opts to carry it out for the sole purpose of proving to people they possess the ability to do so. After Jinx gets lost, Greg assists in its search but comes across a stray cat that resembles Jinx except for its tail. He opts to paint the tail with some color to show the family he did not require a lot of time to get the cat. The cat later on causes disruption in the house leaving the family to view Greg differently after they discovered the cat was not Jinx.

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