

Analysis for "Gut"

Orion Musti

I included social media into my movie because I feel that it does more harm than good, at least for teenagers, and I wanted to show what it can do to some kids. Research shows that teens are often comparing themselves to the people on their social media site either consciously or unconsciously. The term "Facebook Depression" refers to when preteens and teens get emotional disturbance from spending an excess time on social media sites (1). This leads to depression. Another thing that is hard for kids is the fact that people are only posting pictures of themselves having what looks like amazing times. It puts pressure on kids to be always having a great time, and it can also make kids feel like they are missing out. Another thing that can make kids depressed is the gap between the fake personas people are online and who they really are as a person (2). Studies also show that the same brain circuits are activated when a teenager eats chocolate and wins money as when teenagers get a high number of likes on their social media site (3). But most importantly, it just makes kids forget to live, makes them too self-conscious and insecure, and is a waste of time.

I included groupthink into my movie because it's one of the many problems teens have to deal with and it destroys the childhoods of kids. The term groupthink was created by a social psychologist named Irving Janis. The definition of groupthink is "a deterioration in an individual's mental efficiency and ability to perceive the reality as a result of social pressure (4)." This happens when a group is focused on having complete consensus at all times, and does not accept opposing views (4). This can lead to the group making stupid decisions and also suppressing good ideas. It usually destroys creativity, personalities, and individuals. It makes kids afraid to say what they really think, and it makes kids change who they really are.

I included depression because it is obviously a major problem all over the world. To be severe enough to be diagnosed with "depression," it has to affect a person's ability to function in some way (5). Depression is the most common health disorder in the United States among teens and adults (6). About 3,000 young people commit suicide every year in the United States (5). Suicide is the third greatest cause of death for people of ages 10-24 in the United States (5). About 105 Americans commit suicide every day (7). I think the hardest thing about depression is that there is not just one cause and effect of it, and it is not easily identified. Most of the time family and friends would have never thought that the person would have ever committed suicide. A person who's depressed might not even know that they have depression or know how serious it is. It's silent and sometimes invisible.

1. Ramasubbu, Suren. "Influence of Social Media on Teenagers." *The Huffington Post*, TheHuffingtonPost.com, 26 May 2015
2. Jacobson, Rae . "Social Media and Self-Esteem | Impact of Social Media on Youth." *Child Mind Institute*
3. Wolpert, Stuart. "The Teenage Brain on Social Media." *UCLA Newsroom*, 31 May 2016
4. "Groupthink." *Psychology Today*, Sussex Publishers
5. Dryden-Edwards, MD Roxanne. "Teen Depression Facts, Treatment, Symptoms, Statistics & Tests." *MedicineNet*

6. "Teen Depression Statistics & Facts." *Teen Help*, 9 Feb. 2016
7. "Youth Suicide Statistics." *Parent Resource Program*

Script

Scene 1: This scene was to show how absorbed people can become on the internet, whether it be social media, youtube, or whatever. I researched internet addiction where people can be addicted to endless things online like blogging, social media, chat rooms, and researching topics. Some people use the internet to escape problems like anxiety and depression. Internet addiction like most addictions can hurt the person's relationships. Addicts usually spend most of their time alone and don't talk to real people. I thought of the idea of what it would be like to see from a phone's perspective, to show what people look like as they stare at their phones, laptops, kindles, ipads, and ipad minis. I almost wanted my character to be looking like he's staring at someone he really loves and is amazed by.

Scene 2: This is obviously showing depression and suicidal thoughts. The definition of depression is "feelings of severe despondency and dejection." The definition of despondency is "a state of low spirits caused by loss of hope or courage." The fact that he feels like he has no real friends led to his loneliness and low self esteem, which led to his depression. Though it doesn't show it in the movie, no one is in the house. It is night time (in my research I found that suicides are more likely to happen after midnight). He is deciding on whether not he wants to commit suicide. I wanted the camera to not follow him and remain static as he paces back and forth to get the feeling that no one cares what he's going through. He's all alone in this.

Scene 3: This is to show the importance of social media to teenagers right now. He is looking at other people's photos and seeing that they have a high number of likes. This relates to my research on the way the brain reacts the same way when someone gets money or eats chocolate, as it does when someone gets a high number of likes. I added notification sounds when the number of likes is show to get more of a sense of that reward system. Instead, in this case Steve is not getting the likes--other people are. He is comparing himself to all of these other people, and it's making him feel terrible that they look like they're having fun and he's not. Studies show that kids are usually doing this comparison and it can lead to depression.

Scene 4: Same as scene 2. We first see his face as he paces back and forth, building interest. We get a high angle of him pacing, making him look small.

Scene 5: This scene was to show groupthink. I actually saw this exact thing happen in the school hallway as I was working on this movie and wrote it down as soon as I got back to my laptop. I always feel so bad for kids who are stuck in a group of insecure boys who are too afraid to say what they really think, so they agree with everyone else and say they like what everyone else likes. I wanted to show that Steve really didn't enjoy being part of this group, but

it was better than being alone to him. In groupthink there is usually a leader of sorts who everyone follows, and I saw that as being the kid who kept calling Steve gay. I know nice kids who hang out with kids that aren't similar with them at all and who I can tell they don't even like, but they still hang out with them.

Scene 6: This is where Steve first thinks of a method of killing himself. He sees a knife and picks it up. In my research I read that males usually choose more violent methods of killing themselves than females. That's why I wanted him to see the knife and think about using it.

Scene 7: This was again to show the importance of social media, and how carefully people choose the photos they pick. Also, to show how often people check their phones. Research says that people touch their phone (by tapping or swiping) an average of 2,617 times a day. I purposely took a bunch of photos of myself doing the exact same thing because that's what people really do. I wanted the shot to make it look like what he was doing was pointless. The shot of himself in the mirror was made to look like a tiny confined space, to make it look like he is trapped. I also wanted to show three of me (my real body, my reflection in the mirror, and my camera screen) to show how self-centered taking a picture of yourself can be. It's almost like there's three people in the shot but they're all him, so it shows how he's not having any interactions or communication with people.

Scene 8: Same as scene 6.

Scene 9: This is another example of groupthink. This was partly based on an experience I had in your AP US History class. We were sitting in our groups and Black Lives Matter came up, and two to three kids in the group said some awful and very stupid things about Black Lives Matter. I was so shocked that I didn't know what to say because I thought they were all relatively good kids. I'm pretty sure that one of them "joked" that they were a bunch of monkeys or gorillas or something. I wanted to show how almost all kids in school are scared of the least bit of confrontation or disagreement and how stupid kids can sound when they are in a group. Kids usually just agree 100% with everyone else in their group. I could tell one of the kids in the group knew the kids were stupid, but he didn't say anything. I also read YouTube comments online to see what bad things people had to say about Black Lives Matter.

Scene 10: More with the importance of getting likes and depression. He hasn't been happy for a while but the social media just adds to it. He bases his worth on how many likes he gets.

Scene 11: This was to show his loneliness. I also wanted the part where he talks to Alec on the phone to be handheld for the first time in the movie because I wanted to make it feel more intimate because it's the first time he's having a healthy interaction. I wanted to show how he felt like he had no one to talk to. He wants to talk to someone but can't. That's why he decides to answer the call, even though he knows it's the wrong number. The phone call was just a phone call between two people. I looked at it as Alec could tell from the way Steve was talking that he was in trouble. I wanted them to talk about whatever popped into their head, which was really

just whatever popped in my head when I was writing it. Steve liked Alec and decides to not kill himself. His connection and communication with another person is what makes him feel okay enough to not kill himself.

Scene 12: Steve going outside represents him getting out of his head. The whole movie he is inside his house or in school, usually in a small confined space, so I wanted him being outside to feel free and open and hopeful. He is surrounded by darkness but one half of his face is lit up by the front light. The last shot of the movie is from the side of his face that is lit up. He's got open space in front of him-- hopeful.