

# REFUTATION OF LAURA MULVEY'S 'MALE GAZE' THEORY IN FILM *LITTLE WOMEN* (2019)

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## Abstract

Film, along with other literary works such as books, poetry and theater, is one of the mediums used in the contemporary day to communicate messages to society. Greta Gerwig adapted the film *Little Women* (2019) from the novel *Little Women* (1868) by Louisa May Alcott. This film shows a breakthrough over the prejudice and discrimination towards women in 19th-century cinema. The subject of female gaze has received attention since, up to this point, women have frequently only been shown as passive narrative objects, or even as the principal sexual objects in movies. Analyzing by comparing Laura Mulvey's theory regarding female gaze and male gaze through the phenomena contained in the film *Little Women*, which narrates the lives of five young women during their adolescent years. The image of women in the film *Little Women* does not appear as an object but a subject, the characters in the film *Little Women* appears strong, ambitious and optimistic. *Little Women* proves that Mulvey's theory of the patriarchal world is neither permanent nor obligatory.

**Keywords:** *female gaze, film, male gaze, Little Women*

## INTRODUCTION

There is a well-known aspect of cinema in which males objectify women in films, whether through the camera, the male character in the film, or the audience. The goal of this research is to examine how the film industry has changed since Laura Mulvey first used the term male gaze in 1975, looking for what a female gaze might be, how this term has been used in other feminist film studies, and how the process of making movies has affected the presence of those gazes. This study aims to compare Laura Mulvey's theories of female and male gaze using phenomena from the *Little Women* novel, which narrates the lives of five young women during their adolescent years. The portrayal of

women in *Little Women* is one of a topic rather than an object; the female actors portray independent, aspirational, and ambitious women. Mulvey's idea of the patriarchal world was disproven by *Little Women* as being temporary and optional.

Mass media, particularly films, presents an uneven picture of women's and men's roles in society because it incorrectly implies that males represent cultural norms and that women are irrelevant or invisible. Furthermore, women are commonly depicted as objects of both the audience's and men's gaze. Besides female sexuality is often used as a symbol of female savagery, female bodies are also often presented as sexual objects based on male gazes, such as what Mulvey calls visual pleasure. The position of women in a film is not a new discourse to be discussed. Tuchman (1979:51) says that women are viewed by men as sexual objects. Women are presented in the media, but cannot be separated from only being sexual objects for men. Lauretis (1987:13) explains how women become objects of desire for the audience (voyeurist gaze).

The concept of a "male gaze" has been prevalent since the late 1800s. The "male gaze" was a term introduced by British feminist film theorist Laura Mulvey in her 1973 essay "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," which was later included in the 1975 edition of the film theory magazine *Screen*. According to Mulvey's notion of the "Male Gaze," heterosexual males observe women in the media through their eyes and portray them as passive objects of their desire. The male gaze encompasses both how males perceive and portray women in their works of fiction. According to Mulvey, this leads to an unbalanced relationship between subjectivity and objectification in visual media. The term "female gaze" was developed by feminists in response to Mulvey's assertions that the rules established by classic Hollywood movies demanded that all viewers, regardless of sex, identify with the male protagonist and adopt the domineering male gaze that such movies were thought to be organized around. In essence, the female gaze refers to how

women are portrayed as seen through a woman's eyes as opposed to a man's. Women are perceived as beings with feelings and intelligence from the perspective of a woman.

The female gaze, an important and expanding area of feminist theory, is the theoretical concept of art analysis. Her 1975 essay "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema" investigated the movie business and the hedonistic appeal of movies made by men and for men. Since then, it has been clear that women are frequently just narrative devices; take them out, and the story still proceeds as usual, or see how they are just there to support male characters. Although Mulvey concentrated on film, the male gaze may be applied to all types of art. In the end, it refers to the method by which a viewer is viewing a work via a male perspective. The term "female gaze" was developed by feminists in response to Mulvey's assertions that the rules established by classic Hollywood movies demanded that all viewers, regardless of sex, identify with the male protagonist and adopt the domineering male gaze that such movies were thought to be organized around. In essence, the female gaze refers to how women are portrayed as seen through a woman's eyes as opposed to a man's. Women are perceived as beings with feelings and intelligence from the perspective of a woman.

Feminist critical theory examines the oppression of women in literature, how the literature "reinforces or undermines the economic, political, social, and psychological oppression of women (Tyson, 1999). The patriarchal nature of society, according to Tyson, has conditioned us "not to perceive the ways in which women are subjugated by traditional gender roles." For clarity, let's define patriarchy as "any society that prioritizes males by encouraging conventional gender norms." Women are often represented as emotional (irrational), weak, compassionate, and submissive, whereas men are often regarded as rational, powerful, protective, and resolute. If the literature encourages these representations of men and women, it is sexist, or biological essentialism, since it "promotes the view that women are

intrinsically inferior to males." However, according to Tyson, feminism is "created culturally, not biologically."

The researcher applies a qualitative data analysis strategy in this study. The rationale for doing qualitative research is because the subject of the study is a literary work in the form of a film or discussion. Using this strategy, the writer was able to observe all components of the work, including intrinsic and extrinsic features connected to the human and societal problem. The mentioned problem is one that does not require any experiment to be conducted, but rather is determined by the discourse.

## **FINDING AND DISCUSSION**

### **1. Rejecting Passivity**

The first is a refutation of the theory of passivity, which is supported by the fact that the film *Little Women* seems to disprove Mulvey's assertion that women are passive. In her article titled "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," which was published in 1975, Mulvey states that the role of women are simultaneously for seen and shown, with their appearance coded for strong visual and erotic impact so that they can be said to connote to-be-looked-at-ness. Within *film*, males are the *active* viewer and females become the passive subjects, meant to represent *male* desire. In a world where men and women are treated unequally, the pleasure of looking has been recategorized as either active or passive, depending on who is doing the gazing. The female body is shaped in line with the fantasies that are projected by the male gaze, which is dominant in society. Women have traditionally been subjected to an exhibitionist role in which they are both looked at and displayed. Their appearance is coded for strong visual and erotic impact so that they can be said to connote to-be-looked-at-ness. This is because patriarchal structures require men to find their ego in active or oppressive roles in relation to women.

Jo can be seen acting as an active woman. The director does not keep his or her eyes off Jo, who is always going somewhere and working toward important objectives. Jo is thought to be ardent and gorgeous, yet despite this, she is never dealt with as if she were a passive object. This film offers a welcome departure from the male-dominated mainstream in that it depicts Jo as an autonomous and capable woman. He wished to provide for his family through his writing and insisted that his work be published so that he could do so. This demonstrates yet another form of discrimination that is based on gender. Both the patriarchal structure of society and the pervasive use of a monetary economy are factors that contribute to discrimination in the workplace.

In the fourth act, Jo is portrayed to be wary of signing her name to any of her works out of the worry that doing so will cause the attention of the viewers to shift away from what she has to say. In addition, according to Mulvey, women are a crucial component of the spectacle in classic narrative film, despite the fact that their presence onscreen frequently impedes the progression of the story by suspending the action for sensual contemplation. After then, the narrative has to figure out how to make sense of this extraterrestrial invasion. There is not a single shot of her, not even a close-up, that emphasizes or even hints that she could be sexually appealing to male viewers.

At the same time, from the movie, it could be acknowledged that Jo, who serves as the story's heroine, runs into challenges when she attempts to challenge the rules of patriarchal society and protect women's independence. The concept known as feminism seeks to bring attention to the ways in which the norms, practices, and beliefs held by men and women are distinct from one another. Every person is affected in some way by each and every factor. One can see the feminist concept of equality portrayed in the movie "*Little Women*." To put it another way, the authors of the sentences and paragraphs provided the actual content for the inferred value that they contained. Particularly

through the characters that Jo created that struggled against the stereotypes that were held about women during that era. One of Jo's characters who tends to dress in a more manly manner. The way Jo dresses is a statement that rejects traditional ideas of how women should present themselves in public. Jo's advances were rejected by a woman who appeared to be both beautiful and successful.

It would appear that Jo makes regular use of slang terminology, which is what is suggested by the statement "Jo does utilize such slang terms!" This indicates that women throughout the Victorian era were required to exude self-assurance while also demonstrating grace. The fact that Jo used the slang word and said it in a tone that was more male than usual poses a risk to the public's impression of women. Jo expresses a wish for parity between the sexes, using the same phrases, for the same reason that she did before. As the next line will demonstrate, this is the motivation behind why I do it. Jo wants to make sure that the terms are utilized in the same manner regardless of the context. In addition, the fact that she said the term "...niminy piminy chits!" demonstrates that Jo was not like other women of her era in any way. She wishes with all her heart that she might have the autonomy of a man so that she, too, could pursue her own interests. The male gaze theory, which contends that women aren't taught to crave male bodies in movies, has been thoroughly debunked by the points that have been stated above. Instead, the female members of the audience are urged to identify with a heroine who is the object of desire for the male characters. The preceding information has been proved to be irrelevant in light of the present climate of the film industry.

Another point would be the dialogue; "You mind yourself, dearie, one day you'll need me, and you'll wish you had behaved better," Aunt March cautioned her nieces and nephews. "Thank you, Aunt March, for your work and many kindnesses, but I aim to make my own way in the world," said Jo. "Thank you for your employment." Aunt March: "No one makes their own way, not really, least of all a woman. It just doesn't work that way." You'll need to marry

well." When Jo went to visit Aunt March, they had the conversation that is above. This demonstrates that Jo has always desired the autonomy to direct her life in the manner in which she sees fit. She is of the opinion that women should be free to make their own decisions without having to rely on the opinions of others. Aunt March believed that Jo should wed a wealthy man; she is unsure that Jo can achieve her goal since she believes that women can only rely on males. Aunt March believes that Jo should wed someone wealthy. However, Jo was confident in the decision she had made and refused to submit to any form of oppression that might be attributed to the capitalist system. Jo decided she did not want to be married for the simple reason that she does not want to become her husband's private property in the future, and she is of the opinion that women are capable of leading independent lives.

## **2. Gender Inequality in Films**

The second refutation is about gender inequality in films. Mulvey states that Cinema is ruled by the asymmetry of gender power, which is fabricated for the enjoyment of male viewers and is firmly founded in patriarchal ideals and discourses. But at this time, women have a dominant role in the film. The intention of the filmmakers to have the audience connect with the dominant figure who plays a prominent role in the film serves as the impetus for the structural components that are the storyline of the film. This scene was also pretty dramatic, and as we all know, the intention of the filmmakers to have the audience connect with the dominant figure who plays a prominent role in the film serves as the impetus for the storyline. The camera angles, points of view, framing, and close-ups used in the movie all contribute to the objectification of women in society, which has an effect on the experience that the audience has while watching the movie. Although many subsequent texts have agreed and disagreed with Mulvey's ideas when analyzing more recent films, and some have even questioned whether or not these ideas apply to contexts other than the white heterosexual and cisgender relationship of

Hollywood protagonists, her thesis nonetheless served as an important starting point for discussions regarding gender difference in feminist film theory. However, despite the fact that many subsequent texts have agreed and disagreed with Mulvey's ideas when analyzing more recent films, and despite the fact that some have even As the debate progressed, theorists started to question whether or not the objectification of women had been effectively opposed and whether or not a female gaze had evolved as a result of this. They also questioned whether or not a male gaze had formed as a result of this.

The theory of psychoanalytic feminism, which is discussed in the film *Little Women*, contends that the origins of women's activities, particularly their self-perceptions, lie within the female psyche. From what Jo has said regarding her time spent at March's, it is quite evident that she was considering the following: Jo: "I'm sick and tired of people telling me that love is the only thing a woman is good for. In addition to emotions, brains, and souls, women also possess ambition and talent in addition to their natural beauty." Jo broke down into tears as she defended her knowledge of the experiences of women. It is clear from their conversation that Jo is appalled by remarks made by men, such as those mentioned above, in which they imply that women are solely desirable for romantic relationships. She is of the opinion that women's actions and thoughts originate from within their own souls and that the goals that they set for themselves and the abilities that they possess can assist them in achieving equality with men in society. On the other hand, she believed that because she was a woman, she was denied rights and equality. These pieces of information are a good fit for a psychoanalytic feminist classification system.

Psychoanalytic feminists argue that basic distinctions in how women perceive themselves as women may be traced all the way back to the behaviours that women take. Psychoanalytic feminists contend that the establishment of gender roles as well as the upholding of gender inequalities are the results of a cumulative impact brought on by experiences accumulated at a young age. People tend to place a higher value on male features than they



do on feminine characteristics as a result of the same kinds of experiences. In psychoanalytic feminist theory, the elements that play a person's role in determining whether they see themselves as a boy or a girl are examined.

### **3. Women as an Object in Films**

The third refutation is about women as an object in in films. Mulvey argues that the pleasure of gazing has been divided between active/male and passive/female in a world that is controlled by sexual imbalance. The term "female gaze," which refers to the perspective of a woman on an object, is frequently used to objectify men and does not correctly depict the way in which women perceive things. This is because the term refers to a woman's perspective on an object. The female gaze is differentiated from the male gaze in that it highlights female characteristics and provides a wider variety of perspectives than the male gaze does. Another definition of the female gaze, which is cited here, places an emphasis on the universality of the ways in which women view the world and the people who live in it. This way of looking at things can also be linked to concepts such as self-conception, gender roles, objectivity, and subjectivity. In addition to this, it is mostly intended for female readers to consume it. This is done so as a means of exploring the female protagonist's relationship with her sexuality. To summarize, Greta Gerwig's most recent film adaptation of *Little Woman*, which was also one of the most recent and popular examples of the female gaze, was one of the most recent and popular ones. The several powerful female protagonists in this movie are each driven by different things that have nothing to do with males. In my perspective, the most impressive thing that this movie did was give Florence Pugh's already fantastic performance as Amy March even more nuance.

To be more specific, In her article "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema" from 1975, Laura Mulvey coined the term "Male Gaze" to describe the manner in which male protagonists frequently use their gaze to sexually

objectify female secondary characters. Mulvey used the term to describe the way in which male protagonists often use their gaze to portray female secondary characters. Mulvey analyzes the various ways in which patriarchal ideology is embedded throughout the film through the lens of psychoanalytic theory. She had the intention of destroying the joy and beauty surrounding this vision of women as depicted in Hollywood films by conducting research on it and pointing out its shortcomings. The author builds on Freud's definition of scopophilia (pleasure in looking) to argue that there are three different types of looks present in cinema. First, there are the looks exchanged between the characters within the film's narrative. Second, there are the looks exchanged between the camera (under the direction of the director, cinematographer, or cameraman). Third, there are the looks exchanged between the audience and the characters.

In the film Jo tries to get her sister out of the marriage so she can pursue her dream of becoming an actress, and in return Jo will do anything to provide for the family. Scene 4 shows Jo is submitting her writing for publication at a publisher in New York. Jo seemed adamant that his writings could be accepted and published. Mr Dashwood accepted Jo's writing but with very many changes. Jo looks very resigned about it. Jo also doesn't want names written in her work. Because at that time women writers did not write their own names in their writings. And scene 6 shows that he bravely cut his hair to get money. Selling her hair seemed like the best choice if she wanted to provide for her family honestly and without asking for a loan from Aunt March. Jo literally gave herself as a sacrifice. We might add that Jo is having himself neutered for other people's sake to the common belief that one's hair is "the classic symbol of one's sexuality." From all the scenes above, Jo's character shows that he is an active character in the film.

The movie takes a more balanced approach by depicting her actions without demonizing her femininity or her readiness to conform to the expectations of her restricted culture. She delivers a renowned speech to

Laurie (Timothée Chalamet), a childhood friend of her sisters, in which she defends her decisions in the context of the gender standards of the Victorian era. Greta accomplishes something that generally people would believe no male filmmaker could do, and that is to make Amy March strong-willed and sympathetic to a contemporary audience despite the fact that she does conform to gender norms, centres at least part of her life around men, and makes decisions that some might consider being shallow. For many years, the feminist movement has revolved around women's experiences. Because these difficulties are prevalent in the lives of women, they are frequently addressed in literary works such as films. The *Little Women* is a film that explores the feminist qualities of women in order to portray their uniqueness. It has various variations, the most recent of which was directed by Greta Gerwig and released in 2019. Although the film *Little Women* is set in the nineteenth century, the viewpoints are nevertheless applied in the current period, presenting a different perspective than the original. The analysis of this film revealed that feminist beliefs were ingrained, notably in the primary character of Jo. Jo's viewpoint has the potential to alter how women pursue their jobs while balancing family responsibilities. She demonstrates that women will be able to speak up against all types of inequities and oppression, and will be able to modify their ways of thinking, speaking, and acting so that they are treated equally with males..

The widespread notion that marriage was the one and only respectable path open to women at the time is reflected in the film's recurring narrative about the subject. One of the earliest instances of this trope is when Mr. Dashwood gives the piece of advise to Jo that "if the main character is a girl, make sure she's married in the end." "Either that, or you will perish." An excellent illustration of this can be found in Jo's determination that "I don't believe I will ever marry." "To put it more succinctly, I am pleased with the way things stand in my life right now. In addition, I place a far too high of a value on my autonomy for me to give it up easily." Amy's Aunt March has a huge

influence on how she thinks about marriage and the prospect of being married. In the movie, Amy's aunt March consoles her by telling her that her cousin Beth is ill and that Amy needs to "marry well" in order to assist support the family financially. Jo is left with a sense of helplessness, while Meg's perspective has been altered by an inept teacher. Amy's viewpoint on the significance of marrying into a wealthy family remains unchanged throughout the series, in spite of Jo's best efforts to disprove the stereotype. Since we are the audience, we are privy to the fact that she views Fred Vaughan as the perfect suitor, not due to any feelings of romantic attraction but rather due to a strong sense of obligation. Amy carries the weight of this stereotype, which has traditionally had a disproportionately negative impact on women and continues to do so today. While we are experiencing Amy's growing awareness of her powerlessness in a world governed by males, we learn how profoundly Aunt March's attitude has influenced Amy's outlook on marriage. This information is revealed while we are witnessing Amy's growing awareness of her helplessness.

What did the woman say? "I'm nothing more than a woman. It is impossible for me to provide for myself, especially given that I am a woman. Sadly, it's not enough to get by on and feed my family, even if we cut back on other expenses. And even if I did have money of my own, which I don't, once my husband and I got married, the law would consider it to be his property. In addition, if we were to have children together, they would be his children and not mine. It's possible that he'll claim possession of them. Don't simply let me sit there while you try to persuade me that getting married isn't a business choice because it is. Even if it isn't for you, I need to have it for myself." Amy's description of marriage as an "economic proposition" is one of the most intriguing passages in the movie because it reveals how Gerwig subverts the usual "male perspective" that is prevalent in visual media. The expression on the faces of moviegoers as they watch a movie is referred to as their "gaze." It provides them with background information about the film's traditions as well

as the characters, but it does so without giving anything away. The term "man gaze" refers to the way in which women are positioned as subjects of observation whereas men move freely across a given location. In Gerwig's interpretation, Laurie is rooted to a specific location, whereas Amy wanders aimlessly around the set. Amy is portrayed as a powerful woman who is delivering an encouraging speech; despite the fact that her statements lack any sense of conviction whatsoever.

Gerwig highlights the pressures that Alcott alludes to as a woman in her masterwork *Little Women* by concentrating on Amy, the protagonist. Literary commentators have seen parallels between Jo and Alcott; but, in Gerwig's adaptation, Amy is also a part of the likeness being drawn between the two characters. In the same way that Jo's objection mirrors Alcott's opposition to Jo's marriage to Friedreich Bauer, Amy's surrender to Aunt March's wishes (right up until the very end) is evocative of Alcott's submission to Jo's marriage to Friedreich Bauer (Alcott never married). Her editor requested that she write the typical happy ending for a female heroine of the time period, which was for her to get married, even though Alcott, who was a lot like Jo, did not want that to happen. In the original book by Alcott, Jo's voice is definitely Anne Lamott's, but in Gerwig's adaptation, we can also recognize it in Amy O'Neil's performance as Jo. Amy, in addition to Jo, expresses Louisa May Alcott's discontent with marriage in Gerwig's cinematic masterpiece. Jo also shares this sentiment. By doing so, she elucidates the gender conventions that prevailed throughout Alcott's time period and prompts us to examine whether or not we have made any advancements since then.

#### **4. Sexually Suggestive Scene by Women in Films**

The fourth refutation is about a sexually suggestive scene by female characters in the film. Woman displayed as a sexual object is the leit-motif of erotic spectacle: from pin-ups to strip-teases, from Ziegfeld to Busby Berkeley, she holds the look, plays to and signifies male desire (Mulvey, 1975). Despite

the fact that it has a number of handsome and beautiful performers, there is not a single sexually suggestive scene in the movie. The movie is able to make the female characters appealing without blatantly sexualizing them. Same goes to the male character. Timothee Chalamet, the character most analogous to a Bond girl in the picture, appealing to the female gaze without blatantly sexualizing him. This is a significant accomplishment. In spite of the fact that the camera moved slowly over him, it did not give the impression that he was an object. This is the very first time that he is seen in the movie, and the action is told from the perspective of Amy, who may or may not end up becoming his future bride. In contrast to the Bond women, he is completely clothed in Victorian attire, and the camera does not linger on any particular part of his body at any point in the scene. This movie was not only the most stunningly gorgeous film ever seen directed by a woman, but it was also the film that was most historically accurate and had the best direction. The film featured the most impressive director, and its clothes were the most impressive ever seen in any film set during the Regency period. It appears that the feminine point of view is particularly frequent in writings of this type. In order to depict a previous period in which women had fewer legal safeguards, the filmmakers behind this project have devised more intriguing characters and clothing than are typically seen in films made in the present day.

There is no sexually suggestive scene by female characters in the film. The way Jo dresses is a statement that rejects traditional ideas of how women should present themselves in public. Jo's advances were rejected by a woman who appeared to be both beautiful and successful.

Marmee questioned, "Where did you get the money from?" Putting it another way, Jo said, "I basically sold what was mine." Regarding Beth's hair, Jo makes the following remark: "Oh Jo, how could you?" Meg made an exclamation. At long last, Beth declared, "Your hair has been shaved." Amy remarked, "You are the one and only beauty in the world!" Hannah said, "You look like a boy," when she was questioned whether or not she was a female or

a male. Jo tells her friend not to cry since she knows it won't alter the future of the country. This scene takes place within the home of the March family, when everyone is rushing around trying to get ready for Marmee, March's mother, to leave. She was getting ready to go see her ailing spouse when she made the decision to instead enlist in the army and fight in the civil war. When Jo walked in, everyone was helping their mother pack up to depart, and she had twenty-five dollars to pay for the train fare. Because Jo needed to pay for her mother's train ticket, she made the decision to have her hair cut short. Jo did not worry about the negative connotations that society at the time attached to women who cut their hair short. Jo made the decision to dress as a man, despite the fact that her family and friends strongly discouraged her from doing so. However, she did it of her own free will. According to what was said, Jo has made the decision to sell her long hair, and no one else ought to be able to prevent her from doing so. Jo's short haircut in a man's style exposes the macho part of her personality. In general, women who lived during that historical period did not have any masculine physical traits. The pictured women of that time period all exhibit an air of sophisticated femininity. This form of radical libertarian feminism advocated for women to adopt androgynous traits, which meant that they would take on both masculine and feminine qualities (or, to put it another way, both masculine and feminine traits, whether they were positive or negative) in whatever proportions they deemed appropriate. Despite the fact that an overemphasis on the feminine may make it more difficult for women to develop into fully complete human beings, viewers of this video will nonetheless get insight into this subject as a result of viewing it.

The male gaze hypothesis is another direct point that should be used to move in the opposite way because it does not fit in with the initial idea and is likely to bring up how equality has changed over the years. Because of the patriarchal culture that dominates the film industry as a whole, mainstream movies tend to present male and female characters in a manner that adheres

to a pattern. His actions drive the tale forward, while the woman is confined to the role of an object, or what Mulvey refers to as "to-be-looked-as-ness." The male is the heart of the story; he is the one who controls the amazing components of the movie and who bears the gaze. The existence of the female character is detrimental to the progression of the story when she is portrayed as a sexual object for the purpose of satisfying the visual pleasures and needs of the male viewers

This objectification of women is, without a doubt, internalized by the general public as a direct result of the prejudiced and oversexualized portrayal of women on television that is perpetuated by the media. This bias is ubiquitous in Hollywood, according to Laura Mulvey's male gaze theory, which describes the phenomenon. According to Mary Devereaux, the concept of gazing is a representation of male superiority in society, as it reduces women to nothing more than objects of sexual enjoyment. Not only does this societal standard belittle the contributions made by women, but it also slowly educates female viewers to objectify themselves by placing more attention on looks than on brains.

The film industry sees the satisfaction of female viewers as a chance to broaden their customer base. As a result, masculinity becomes a crucial selling element for the audience that appreciates male sexual objectification. As a result of this movement, the male gaze hypothesis is seen as simplistic and out of date. Kaplan's initial inquiry into the demographics of spectatorship poses the question, "Is it only male?" I.e. (Kaplan, 1983). It is important to the concept of the female gaze to claim that male viewers may also experience objectification at the hands of the film's camera and characters. Films like *Romance*, which feature overt scenes of male eroticism, provide a permissible example .

The female gaze critic, however, is not immune to rebuttal. Steward disputes the view that male and female objectification are on par. As she puts it, "...this is a false equivalency; in fact these male bodies are not studied in such



detail or through such a restricted lens of sexualization" (MacCallum-Stewart 2014). More importantly, Malone presents a rather well-reasoned argument that, because to the inherent nature of the power disparity between men and women, effectively contradicts the ratio of the female gaze (Malone, 2018). Male objectification is associated with a sense of authority, while feminine objectification is seen as a sign of weakness.

The fact that there have been several remakes of old movies is evidence that directors and producers are aware that there is a sizable audience for these kinds of works in the present day. Furthermore, it demonstrates how easy it is to romanticize these works and adaptations, as well as the characters that are contained within them, as a result of the idealized depictions of the past that they offer, both historically and interpersonally. This is due to the fact that these works and adaptations present the past in a manner that is idealized. The various adaptations, re-readings, and analyses of these classic novels are evidence of their ongoing reception and add validity to the growing prevalence of the female gaze in film.

## **CONCLUSION**

Getting male viewers to stare and focus on feelings rather than visuals certainly seemed difficult. Patriarchal language has long permeated Hollywood film styles, yet these conventions could be changed. Women's viewpoints are typically better represented by female directors who have a desire for a non-patriarchal world because male directors have a higher inclination to transfer their patriarchal fantasies onto the screen. To generate shared emotions from the audience, directors can prioritize the conversation and content of the women's characters over their performances.

Little Women stated that a film that focuses on men to stare at women is not impossible. Little Women proves that Mulvey's theory of the patriarchal world is neither permanent nor necessary. There are several refutations of Laura Mulvey's theory in the film Little Women, including: 1) The theory of

passivity. 2) Gender inequality in films. 3) Women as an object in films. 4) Sexually suggestive scene by female characters in the film.

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