

Woman's perception to the films by hitchcock essay

[Sociology](#), [Women](#)



Introduction

Lara Mulvey is a renowned theorist of films who has written several articles about different aspects in the film industry. One of her most famous essays is Visual Pleasure in the Narrative Cinema that generally explores the roles played by women in the film industry (Thornham 25). Lara in this essay states that there are two general roles of women in the film industry. She outlines the male gender automatic power to look at women as desire objects by the passive observation of their bodies. In this case, the women become simple symbols or objects with no real power or agency. This is glorified in the films in that the male's audience puts the women as objects of display. This is a contradictory conclusion because the film's audience is not entirely comprised of men and not every female in all film is portrayed as a desire object as evidenced by some recent films with leading female actresses.

Mulvey bases most of her arguments on one of Hitchcock's most famous films, Rear Window and this is quite understandable. The idea of the male gaze is clearly visible in this film. There is clear and cutthroat evidence that Lisa Fremont, the main female character that her character demands constant attention from the male audience as a result of the director's costume choices, general close-ups and the way that she is portrayed in soft flattering light.

The 'gaze' aspect as stipulated by Lara Mulvey can also be explored from different perspectives that include the increase of female nudity in the films together with the gaze aspect internalization into women such that they have reached a point of even viewing themselves as simple objects of desire.

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Mulvey also expresses that there has been a massive shift in the view of objectification such that it is currently viewed as a pleasure source thus leading to its massive glorification in Hollywood films. The fact that the men have been identified as the primary lookers throughout history has also contributed significantly to this issue.

Lara Mulvey's ideas are evident in the film because of their expression in different ways including subjective camerawork. This particular film device makes a placement of a specific character on the audience thus giving viewing power to the audience (Mulvey 18). However, Hitchcock tries to place more complexity on things through the non-alignment of identification and viewpoints in some of the film's parts.

Many years after the release of this essay, Laura Mulvey wrote an article titled "Afterthoughts on 'Visual Pleasure and narrative Cinema'" inspired by *Duel in the Sun*. In this article, Laura Mulvey tries to respond to some of the criticism that had been brought forward by various critics on her original article *Visual Pleasure in the Narrative Cinema*. Mulvey expresses that the main question that she has been asked is about the choice of a male audience as the representative of film viewers. In fact, she states that the use of singular male as a representative when in fact the film audience is varied in nature and includes people of all genders. Mulvey tries to respond to this issue by stating that at the time she was writing the sample in 1981, her main interest was the relationship between the portrayal of the woman in films and the perception that the better part of a film's audience comprised of the male gender, that is the audience is masculinized.

Mulvey however states that the film *Duel in the Sun* managed to convince her

of a different perspective of this issue. She states that the role of women in the film has definitely evolved and argues that the intended female spectator can take two roles in modern films. The two roles include the acquired perception of women as objects of desire and the masculinization by film makers of the audience.

Another distinguishable feature of Hitchcock's films is the general portrayal of the females in his films including their perceptions and the roles they play in his films. The perception of women by Hitchcock has also been a huge subject of discussion by film critics. Most emphasis on this issue has been on the selection of the lead women in his films and the role that they play.

There have been varied opinions among the critics, experts and general film lovers about this hot issue. Some are of the opinion that Alfred Hitchcock can be displayed misogynist characteristics while others were of the opinion that he opened more opportunities for ladies in the film industry by giving them high levels of importance, something that most notable directors did not do or even consider. In one of his most famous films, titled Rear Window distinctive aspect about women can be identified. This is that all women are mirror reflections of each other in terms of their characteristics and values (Durgnat 36).

The main female protagonist in the film, Lisa is made to look like a reflection of her fellow women including even some of her physical attributes and characteristics. The film Rear Window tries to express or show the wide variety of women's dimensions and the splitting of these dimensions into different female characters to show the incapability of the woman to possess many dimensions instead of one.

Once again, Lisa the main female protagonist is perceived by the film as a sophisticated individual in affairs considered frivolous only. However, she does not possess the capability to be complex or multi-faceted life. This is the same view that the male character Jeff has on Lisa, something that automatically rubs off to the film's audience.

However, the role played by women in Hitchcock cannot be over emphasized. Although many are generally not satisfied with the portrayal of women in his film, the part that he played in balancing the gender balance aspects in film is significantly huge.

Hitchcock definitely opened doors for a lot of the female actors and this one of the reason where there is a general gender balance and streamlining in the modern film industry. Some of the actors that were involved in his Hollywood hits like, Psycho and Rear Window, went on to become huge figures in the motion films culture.

It is however quite clear that there will be no end to this debate in the near future and this will continue to be a subject of discussion in many film circles. Lara Mulvey's viewpoint should not be criticized since she is merely expressing her opinion that everyone is completely entitled.

The perception of women as displayed in films by directors such as Hitchcock are simply their own definitions of the female character aspects and should not be used to generalize about the entire male's gender opinion on female characters portrayed in the thousands of films that are released throughout the world.

Works Cited

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