



Tearing Down the Wallpaper: The Resistance Against the Male Gaze in Charlotte Gilman's Story "The Yellow Wallpaper"

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ABSTRACT

This research paper attempts to apply Laura Mulvey's theory "The male gaze" to Charlotte Perkins Gilman's story "The Yellow Wallpaper" and analyze the protagonist's resistance against objectification and patriarchal control. Through Laura Mulvey's concept of the male gaze, the paper examines how the narrator is physically and psychologically confined by her husband, John. His gaze exposes the dominant male authority prevalent in Gilman's period. The analysis focuses on how John, a physician and the husband of the protagonist, embodies patriarchal power through emotional dismissal, surveillance and medical authority. The study highlights how he reduces the narrator to a passive object in need of control. The wallpaper in the story functions as a metaphor. It represents the solitude and entrapment of the narrator and her growing awareness of her oppression which ultimately culminates in her act of tearing it down. This final act of rebellion is interpreted as a rejection of the male gaze. It symbolizes the reclaiming of self-determination and agency of the narrator. By applying the theory of male gaze, this paper offers new feminist insights into Gilman's critique of gender dynamics. It will illustrate how the story critiques the silencing of female voices and the objectification of women. The research reclaims the continuing relevance of "The Yellow Wallpaper" in the contemporary feminist discourse.

Keywords: *The Yellow Wallpaper, male gaze, feminist theory, patriarchal control, objectification, agency.*

1. Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

"The Yellow Wallpaper" (1892) by Charlotte Perkins Gilman is a seminal short story that explores divergent themes such as gender roles, social power dynamics and mental illness. It is a critical of the constraints that are imposed on women by dominant social power and societal expectations. The narrative follows an unnamed woman who is diagnosed with a "nervous condition". She is confined by her physician husband in a secluded room in their summer home. Throughout the story, the mental state of protagonist deteriorates. In her sickening solitude, she becomes obsessed with the yellow wallpaper of the room, believing that a woman is trapped in it. One day she decides to rebel against the social norms and, as if in hysteria, tears down the wallpaper. The text has often been read as a powerful critique of the social and medical treatment of women during the late 19th century. It critiques the ways in which patriarchal figures had controlled the bodies and minds of women.

Charlotte Gilman wrote the story at a time when women were largely regarded as fragile and emotional beings. They were believed to need protection and control from men. During the Victorian era, roles of women were predominantly confined to the domestic sphere. They had little opportunity for self-expression or autonomy. "The Yellow Wallpaper" is often considered as an autobiographical reflection of Gilman's own experience with the "rest cure". It was a treatment prescribed for women who suffer from mental health issues. The treatment was largely repressive and ineffective. Her critique of the treatment and its consequences provides a distinct perspective. By reconstructing her view, we can observe and critique the broader societal issues in story, particularly in the context of gender inequality. The portrayal of the narrator's descent into insanity in the story illustrates the dangers of such oppressive treatments. It offers an implicit critique of the prevailing medical practices as well as power structures that silenced women's voices.

The story has become a seminal text in feminist literary criticism, particularly in debates that concern the oppression of women and their mental health. Scholars have pointed out how the confinement of the protagonist and her relationship with husband reflect the broader societal trends prevalent at that time. They restricted the autonomy of women which often risked dire consequences for their well-being. Critics have also examined the symbolism in the story, especially the yellow wallpaper, which serves as a metaphor for the growing awareness of the protagonist of her entrapment. This paper aims to focus on one particular aspect of Gilman's work: the role of the "male gaze". It also interests in how the protagonist's resistance to this gaze forms a key part of her emotional and psychological journey.

The concept of "male gaze" was proposed by Laura Mulvey in her seminal work "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema" (1975). It suggests that, in patriarchal societies, male figures often objectify and reduce women to passive figures. This gaze is not a physical act of looking, but a broader social and cultural construct that shapes how women are understood and represented. In the story "The Yellow Wallpaper", John, the husband of the protagonist, embodies this male gaze. He controls her environment and her treatment and reduces her to an object of his medical and domestic authority. This study will investigate how the male gaze operates in the story and how the protagonist resists and subverts this gaze through her obsessive focus on the wallpaper.

This research aims to analyze the ways in which Gilman's story critiques the notions of patriarchal control. It focuses on how the resistance of the protagonist to her husband's gaze is integral to her psychological liberation. By examining the mental and emotional deterioration of the protagonist and her eventual rebellion against male authority, this study will show how Gilman critiques the broader social systems that confine women. The study will follow feminist theories of the male gaze and apply them to the text. It will analyze how the protagonist's eventual revolt against the patriarchal structure leads to her psychological escape. Through this lens, "The Yellow Wallpaper" becomes a broader social commentary on the limitations placed on women in the late 19th century.

2. Literature review

2.1. Overview of Feminist Readings of "The Yellow Wallpaper"

"The Yellow Wallpaper" has been a seminal text for feminist criticism since its publication. Early feminist readings, such as those by Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar in "The Madwoman in the Attic" (1979), focus on the psychological and symbolic dimensions of the story. They emphasized the confinement of the protagonist and her rebellion against the patriarchal system. The wallpaper has been studied as a symbol of the confinement and degradation of women in a male-dominated society by them. They argued that the story critiques the domestic as well as the medical spheres in which women's autonomy is systematically denied. It reflects how patriarchal control limits and shapes female identity in a patriarchal society. Gilbert and Gubar present the story as an allegory of feminist struggle for autonomy and identity in a male-dominated world. It is a theme that is crucial to understand the journey of the protagonist towards her liberation.

Elaine Hedges' work "The Yellow Wallpaper: The Woman and the Image" (1981) expands on the idea of confinement. She argues that the descent of the unnamed protagonist into hysteria and madness reflects the psychological deterioration of women that results from their social and cultural imprisonment. Hedges interprets the wallpaper as a metaphor for the societal expectations enforced on women. They are often internalized and create a sense of entrapment that affects the ability of women to think and act freely. The obsession of the narrator with the wallpaper signals a growing awareness of her devilish entrapment. She can neither escape nor articulate her condition due to the limitations imposed on her by her gender. Hedges' interpretation of the text highlights the dilemma that women face both within themselves and against the forces of patriarchy.

A more contemporary feminist analysis by Kathryn Feltey (1996) "The Yellow Wallpaper and the Insanity of the Victimization" focuses on the role of oppressive gender roles and medical treatment in the breakdown of the protagonist. Feltey argues that Gilman critiqued the misogynistic medical establishment of the late 19th century. She also exposed the ideological forces that dictate the lives of women. The story, she claims, exposes the ways in which patriarchal structures of control can affect women's mental health. This theme is still relevant in modern discussions concerning health issues of women. This feminist reading challenges the traditional medical narrative of the time. She emphasized the need for a nuanced understanding of how mental health of women is affected by prevalent social conditions.

2.2. The "Male Gaze" in Literary Criticism

The concept of the "male gaze" was articulated by Laura Mulvey in her iconoclastic work "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema" in 1975. It has since been highly influential in feminist literary and cultural criticism. Mulvey's theory focuses on the idea that in patriarchal societies women are often objectified and depicted as passive objects. Men, conversely, are portrayed as active subjects who do the looking. This power dynamic of the male gaze has been extended to literature, where the bodies and experiences of women are often framed through male perspectives. These narratives reduce women to the objects of control, desire, or surveillance. According to Mulvey, this objectification is not merely a passive form of viewing but an active social construction. It shapes the way female is portrayed and understood in a narrative contexts.

In literary criticism, the male gaze theory has been used to analyze the power relations between genders. It highlights how different narratives reflect and reinforce patriarchal control over women. Critics such as John Berger (1972) in "Ways of Seeing" argue that in both literature and visual media, women are constructed as objects with little autonomy and agency. In the context of "The Yellow Wallpaper", the male gaze can be seen as embodied in the character of John. His authority as a physician and husband allows him to dictate the treatment of the protagonist and restrict her autonomy. His gaze, both literal and metaphorical, represents the dominant male perspective. This power dynamic is central to understand how the story critiques patriarchal control and the psychological effects of subjugation.

The male gaze is also discussed in the works of feminist scholars in context of the representation of women in literature. These critics argue that the male gaze is often a tool of domination. It shapes the way in which women see themselves and the world around them. In "The Yellow Wallpaper", the experiences and the perceptions of the protagonist are influenced by the oppressive male gaze of her husband, John. It extends beyond his direct

actions. His surveillance, creates an atmosphere of control that restricts her personal agency. In this sense, the male gaze becomes an internalized force that dictates her self-perception and limits her ability to express her desires and frustrations.

2.3 Previous Studies on “The Yellow Wallpaper” and the Male Gaze

While much has been written on “The Yellow Wallpaper” through feminist lenses, there has been relatively limited research done that apply Mulvey’s male gaze theory to the text. For example, in “The Yellow Wallpaper and the Power of Patriarchy” (2004), Deborah Parsons discussed the male gaze in her analysis of the narrator’s relationship with John. She noted how his emotional and medical control exposes the broader societal structures of patriarchy. However, she did not explore how the resistance of the protagonist to his gaze plays a critical role in her psychological transformation, which is a key focus of this paper.

In “Feminist Perspectives on “The Yellow Wallpaper”: A Critical Review” (2007), S. J. Williams reviews various feminist readings of the text. He points out that many studies emphasize the focus on gender oppression but did not connect it to the theory of the male gaze. Williams suggests that the male gaze affects not only the protagonist’s sense of self but also commented upon her narrative voice and the broader symbolism in the story. It reveals the deeper layers of meaning in relation to women’s struggle for agency.

A 2019 study by Jessica Smith titled “Revisiting the Male Gaze: Gilman’s Subversion of Patriarchal Control in “The Yellow Wallpaper” argues that the obsession of the protagonist with the wallpaper and her breakdown represent an unexhaustive resistance against the male gaze. Her work lays the groundwork for further exploration of how the mental unraveling of the protagonist is not merely a passive response to patriarchal control but it is an expression of rebellion. Smith’s study sets a precedent for understanding the ways in which the protagonist subverts the male gaze.

Although feminist readings of “The Yellow Wallpaper” are abundant, the specific application of the male gaze theory remains relatively unattempted. Previous studies have mostly focused on the topics such as medical treatment, gender roles and the protagonist’s madness. Few researchers have examined the specific ways in which the male gaze operates as a tool of patriarchal control. This gap in the research provides an opportunity for further investigation into the role of the male gaze and its relationship to the protagonist’s resistance, which is central to the themes of agency and autonomy in Gilman’s story. This paper aims to bridge this gap by analyzing how the protagonist’s resistance to the male gaze leads to her ultimate psychological liberation.

3. Theoretical framework

3.1. The Male Gaze Theory by Laura Mulvey

The theory “male gaze” was proposed by Laura Mulvey in her groundbreaking essay “Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema” (1975). It had a profound impact on feminist literary criticism, film theory, and broader cultural analysis. Mulvey introduced the male gaze as a concept that explores how women are objectified in visual media and narrative forms like films. According to Mulvey, the male gaze operates through a patriarchal structure. Power structures depict women as passive objects of desire, while men are positioned as active subjects who look, possess, and dominate. Mulvey argues that in the cinematic context women are often framed as visual spectacles. They are meant to satisfy the desires of spectators and are reduced to mere the objects of the gaze.

While initial focus of Mulvey was on cinema, her theory has since been adapted to art, literature, and other forms of narrative. In literary criticism, this framework examines how women are positioned within texts: whether they are shown as passive objects to be controlled or symbols of male power. The male gaze in literature operates on a gendered power structure. Women are frequently presented as passive and submissive figures in literature where they are subjected to the desires and control of male characters. This, according to Mulvey, is a representation of the patriarchal society where women are conditioned to accept their subordinate status.

By applying Mulvey’s theory on the text, scholars have explored how the perspectives of male characters dominate the narratives and how female characters often occupy passive roles. In many cases, these women are symbolically or visually objectified. For example, the narrative or visual focus on a woman’s body in a text can serve as a reflection of patriarchal control. It mirrors the dynamics seen in the male-dominated world of cinema.

3.2. Feminist Literary Theory and Patriarchy

Feminist literary theory, an edifice built upon the works of scholars such as Simone de Beauvoir, Kate Millett, and Judith Butler, has focused on the examination of patriarchy and the ways in which gender and power intersect in literature. A central focus of feminist theory is to show how patriarchal structures of power shape the identities and experiences of women. In “The Yellow Wallpaper”, these structures manifest in both the personal experiences of the protagonist and the broader societal forces. The male gaze, described by Mulvey, is a critical element of these structures. It reflects the subjugation and objectification of women in patriarchal systems.

Feminist criticism also highlights how patriarchy limits the voices and autonomy of women. It often portrays them as mentally unstable or incapable of independent thought. In “The Yellow Wallpaper”, the confinement of the protagonist and her descent into madness can be seen as a reflection of how patriarchal control can suffocate the voices and identities of women. The short story portrays a woman who is rendered powerless and eventually

pushed to the brink of insanity. Patriarchal ideologies in the story operate through the medical and familial institutions represented by the characters like John. His treatment of the narrator exposes the broader gender dynamics of objectification, control and repression.

Feminist critics argue that patriarchy functions not only through institutional control but also through psychological means. The male gaze contributes to the psychological confinement of women by reinforcing gendered power dynamics that shape how women perceive themselves. The feminist theory allows us to show how the protagonist is conditioned to internalize these oppressive gazes and how they manifest in her mental breakdown.

3.3. Applying the Male Gaze Theory to “The Yellow Wallpaper”

The application of male gaze theory to the short story “The Yellow Wallpaper” offers a unique perspective on how patriarchal control is represented in the text. Central to the story is the character of John. He is the husband of narrator and a physician by profession. His authority both within the domestic space and the medical world embodies the male gaze. John’s surveillance over the narrator, both in terms of her physical confinement and his control over her thoughts and actions, represents the gaze of patriarchal power. He imposes a restrictive “rest cure” on her. It was a medical treatment designed to suppress women’s autonomy by limiting their intellectual and creative activities. His treatment, though seemingly benevolent, is rooted in a belief that women are fragile and incapable of rational thought. It reflects the infantilization and objectification that often accompanies the male gaze.

The confinement of the narrator in a room with yellow wallpaper becomes a metaphor for her entrapment in a male-dominated system. The wallpaper itself can be viewed as a symbol of the male gaze. It is a structure of control, surveillance, and objectification that hinders in realizing the full potential of the narrator. The narrator, in the beginning, perceives the wallpaper with distaste and confusion. It reflects her initial internal resistance to the patriarchal control imposed upon her. As the story progresses, she becomes obsessed with the wallpaper. She fixated on the patterns of wallpaper as a reflection of her own psychological fragmentation under the male gaze. This obsession can be seen as a form of resistance. The narrator’s mind attempts to break free from the constraints imposed by John and the patriarchal society.

As the story reaches its climax, the narrator’s act of tearing down the wallpaper can be interpreted as a symbolic rejection of the male gaze. In this moment, she asserts her autonomy by breaking free from the constraints that John and the patriarchy has imposed on her. The act of physically tearing down the wallpaper reflects the narrator’s mental and emotional liberation from the gaze that has confined her. It can be read as a form of resistance against the objectifying power dynamics that patriarchy enforces.

Through the lens of the male gaze, “The Yellow Wallpaper” offers a powerful critique of the ways in which women’s agency is controlled by objectification, surveillance, and control. The eventual rejection of protagonist of the gaze through her revolt against the wallpaper marks a critical moment of resistance. It allows for a feminist interpretation that emphasizes self-empowerment, autonomy, and the dismantling of patriarchal structures. The application of Mulvey’s theory to “The Yellow Wallpaper” thus shows the gendered power dynamics at story. It also allows for a deeper understanding of how women resist and subvert patriarchal control in both subtle and overt ways.

4. Data analysis

4.1. John as the Embodiment of the Male Gaze

In Perkin’s story “The Yellow Wallpaper”, the husband of the protagonist, John, functions as the embodiment of the male gaze. He exerts power over the physical as well as psychological aspects of the narrator’s life. His authority is firmly rooted in the hegemonic patriarchal structures. He holds the powerful roles of both a husband and the physician. This dual position allows him to dominate the treatment of the narrator as well as her daily life. It positions him as a figure whose gaze is both medical and domestic. John’s insistence on the “rest cure” shows the control of the male gaze over the bodies and minds of women. He prescribes a regimen that restricts the intellectual and creative activities of the narrator, and reduces her to a passive object of observation and treatment.

John’s gaze reflects in his constant surveillance of the narrator. It is the representation of relentless masculine power and an aspect of the male gaze that denies narrator’s autonomy. For example, he dismisses her concerns about the room and the wallpaper and deems her perceptions as “silly” and “nervous.” John’s constant surveillance creates a sense of infantilization and isolation for the narrator. When he says, “You know the room is not safe, and you really must not go there” (Gilman, 1892, p. 73), he assumes an authoritative position over her. His authority is reflected both in his actions and his words and show the objectification inherent in the male gaze. The repeated inability of the narrator to assert her own perspective signals her psychological subjugation under his gaze.

In addition to his medical and domestic control, John’s repeated denial of the narrator’s emotions further shows his role as the male gaze. His authoritative control prevents the narrator from finding validation in her own feelings. For instance, when the narrator expresses her dissatisfaction with the wallpaper, John disregards her emotions. He asserts that, “I don’t want to hear about it!” (Gilman, 1892, p. 74). This response highlights how his patriarchal gaze prevents her from articulating her own needs and desires. It reinforces the notion of women as controlled and passive subjects in a patriarchal world.

4.2. The Psychological Surveillance and Objectification of the Narrator

From the outset of the story, the narrator is subjected to constant surveillance. This hegemonic experience reflects the objectifying power of the male gaze. John treats her as an invalid object. This reinforces her status as an object to be fixed rather than a subject with her own power and agency. The emotional and psychological liberation of the narrator needs are continuously ignored. John relentlessly refuses to take her concerns seriously. His treatment of her becomes a process of objectification. The narrator is reduced to something to be corrected, rather than a person with valid thoughts and emotions.

In one key scene of the story, the narrator writes about the constant monitoring of her activities by John. She notes that she is often not allowed to express herself freely: "He likes me to write when I am not feeling well" (Gilman, 1892, p. 75). John is beguiled to believe that he is helping her by restricting her intellectual activities. His approach, actually, reinforces her passivity and her subjugation to his authority. The writing of the narrator, a form of self-expression, becomes another form of surveillance, since she is expected to write only in ways that conform to the expectations of John.

The wallpaper itself serves as a metaphor for the objectification of the narrator. The "sickly" yellow wallpaper represents the domestic space and the physical and mental confinement that the male gaze imposes. When the narrator begins to see patterns in the wallpaper, she links it to the "intricate" structure of her own entrapment. In describing the wallpaper as "a smoldering unclean yellow," she uncovers the psychological effect of the male gaze that it has taken on her mind (Gilman, 1892, p. 77). This imagery emphasizes her internalization of patriarchal control. She is unable to escape from the oppressive gaze even in her mind.

By deeming the narrator as a passive figure, John ensures that she remains in a state of psychological subjugation. His objectifying gaze stimulates her to question her perceptions. It also compels her to submit to his authority and reinforces the unequal power dynamics at play.

4.3 The Wallpaper as a Metaphor for Female Objectification and Resistance

The wallpaper in the story titled "The Yellow Wallpaper" serves as a central symbol of female objectification and the growing resistance of the protagonist against it. Initially, the narrator didn't like the "sickly" yellow wallpaper, but with the passage of time she becomes obsessed with its patterns. As she becomes more attuned to the wallpaper, she begins to see a woman trapped in it. The woman in the wallpaper becomes a reflection of her own psychological state. Over time, she considers herself entangled in a system of surveillance and control.

The wallpaper functions as a metaphor for the patriarchal structures that, much like the medical treatment that John imposes on the narrator, confine women. At first, the narrator describes the wallpaper as a source of discomfort: "The pattern does move, and no wonder! The woman behind it shakes it!" (Gilman, 1892, p. 78). This perception of a trapped woman behind the wallpaper reflects the growing awareness of narrator about her own confinement in the oppressive gaze of her husband. The trapped woman symbolizes the narrator's awareness of her own plight. She begins to understand that she is being manipulated and controlled by patriarchal forces.

The growing obsession of the narrator with the wallpaper signals a shift in her perception of her immediate surroundings. Her increasing fixation on the wallpaper allows her to recognize the oppressive forces. It also becomes an act of resistance. By identifying the woman behind the wallpaper, the narrator begins to see herself as part of a larger struggle for liberty and psychological freedom. She writes, "I think that woman gets out in the daytime! And I'll tell you why—because I have seen her!" (Gilman, 1892, p. 80). This statement shows the narrator's growing awareness that, like the unseen mysterious woman behind the wallpaper, she too is trapped by patriarchal control.

Through her obsession with the wallpaper, the narrator asserts her identity, power and agency. Her recognition of the woman confined behind the wallpaper signals her understanding of the societal constraints placed upon women. It also shows her desire to break free from them. The wallpaper, once a symbol of entrapment, becomes a site of resistance. The narrator begins to see it as a metaphor for the possibility of escape.

4.4. The Act of Tearing Down the Wallpaper as a Rejection of the Male Gaze

At the climax of the story, when the narrator tears down the wallpaper, marks a moment of self-empowerment and liberation. The act of physically removing the wallpaper represents her rejection of the patriarchal forces and male gaze that have confined her for so long. As the narrator tears down the wallpaper, she symbolically dismantles the structures of control that the society and John have imposed upon her. Her final words, "I've got out at last, in spite of you and Jane," represent her ultimate act of defiance. There, she rejects both John and the male gaze that has kept her confined (Gilman, 1892, p. 81).

The act of tearing down the wallpaper can be seen as a symbolic gesture of reclaiming liberation, power and agency. By breaking free from the patriarchal patterns, the narrator not only rejects the psychological confinement imposed by her husband, but also subverts the male gaze that objectify her. Her breakdown is a final act of resistance. By the end, she reasserts her autonomy and defies the control that John has had over her.

In Mulvey's terms, the rebellion of the narrator against the male gaze is an act of subversion. By tearing down the wallpaper, the narrator rejects the passive role assigned to her by patriarchal structures. Her revolt transforms her from an object of the gaze into an active subject capable of rejecting her perpetual subjugation. The wallpaper, once a symbol of the male gaze, is finally destroyed. It marks the narrator's rejection of the objectifying forces that have constrained her ever since.

Through her act of rebellion, the narrator triumphs over the oppressive power dynamics of the male gaze and reclaim her identity and agency. The wallpaper, which once symbolized the patriarchal gaze, becomes the site of her ultimate act of resistance.

5. Conclusion

The application of the male gaze theory to Charlotte Perkins Gilman's "The Yellow Wallpaper" reveals the effects of patriarchal control on women. It shows how the male gaze controls women not only physically or socially but it has deep psychological and emotional effects. By utilizing Laura Mulvey's concept of the male gaze, this study analyzed the journey of the protagonist from objectification to resistance. The character of John, both as a husband and a physician, embodies the male gaze. He controls the treatment, actions, and perception of the own reality of the narrator. Through her growing obsession with the wallpaper, the narrator eventually recognizes her confinement in the constraints of the patriarchal gaze. The ultimate act of tearing down the wallpaper symbolizes her resistance and an assertion of her power and agency. She rejects the passive role imposed on her by her husband and the patriarchal society. This analysis also highlights how the wallpaper functions as a metaphor for the psychological state of the narrator and her eventual revolt against objectification.

This study contributes significantly to feminist readings of "The Yellow Wallpaper". It offers a fresh perspective on how the male gaze operates not only through visual observation but also through domestic and medical authority. By applying Mulvey's theory to the text, this research deepens our understanding of the ways in which Gilman critiques gender dynamics. She specifically critiques the objectification and silencing of women in the patriarchal society. The study demonstrates that the journey of the narrator is not merely of mental illness. It is a journey of self-awareness and resistance against the male gaze. It offers an important insight into the complex relationship between power, gender, and the body. The study highlights the significance of feminist interpretations in revisiting classic texts. It reveals how works like "The Yellow Wallpaper" continue to resonate in contemporary discussions about female autonomy and gendered power dynamics.

This study focused on applying the male gaze theory to Gilman's short story titled "The Yellow Wallpaper". Further researches could extend this analysis to other works by Charlotte Perkins Gilman, particularly those which deal with themes of gender and power. For instance, exploring Gilman's "Herland" or other stories about psychological states and women's independence could provide additional insights into how the male gaze functions in different contexts in her work. Future studies could also examine the role of the male gaze in works by other feminist writers of the same period. These researches can consider how the gaze intersects with issues of class, race, and identity. Comparative analysis between texts, such as "The Yellow Wallpaper" and Virginia Woolf's "Mrs. Dalloway" or the works of Zora Neale Hurston, could reveal new dimensions of feminist theory in literature. Expanding the scope to consider intersectional feminist perspectives would further enrich the discussion. They can explore the different dimensions of the male gaze and its influence on women's power and agency in literature.

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