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Vision Through Films: Women's Internalization of a Surveyor Male under Men's Promise of Power

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Vision Through Films: Women’s Internalization of a Surveyor Male under Men’s Promise of Power

Sissi Kang Undergraduate Summer Fellowship in Digital Humanities Website link: <https://sites.google.com/view/vision-through-films/home>

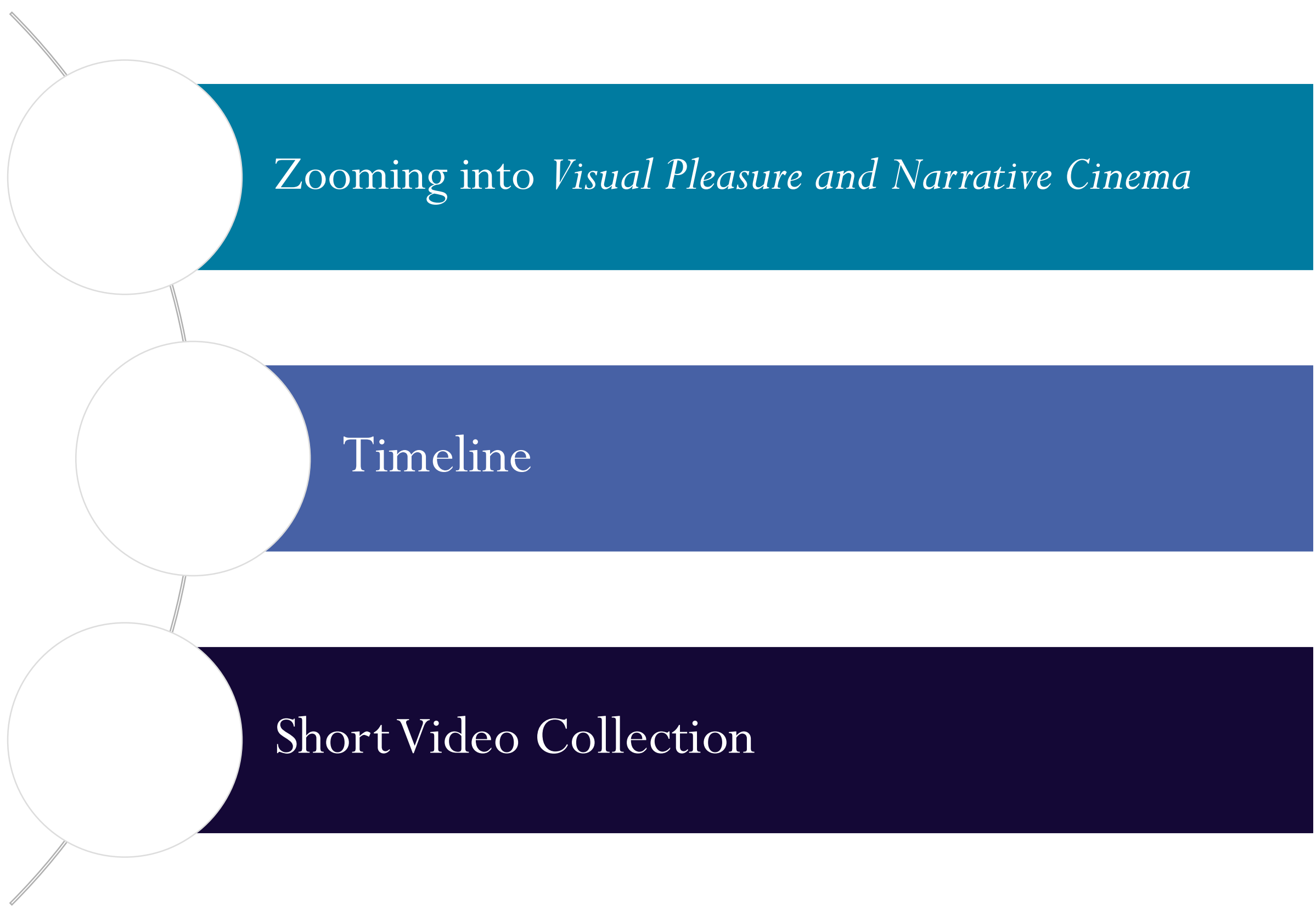
What’s Surveyor male?

In the context of gender power structures, the “surveyor male” refers to an internalized male perspective that women adopt within their consciousness. This concept emerges from the enduring influence of the “male gaze,” where women continue to evaluate and objectify themselves through a lens shaped by male expectations and aesthetics. The “surveyor male” is not an external figure but an internalized judge that women use to scrutinize their behaviors and appearances, leading them to prioritize how they are perceived by others over their intrinsic sense of self. This internalization creates a conflict between their authentic self and the socially constructed image they feel compelled to maintain.

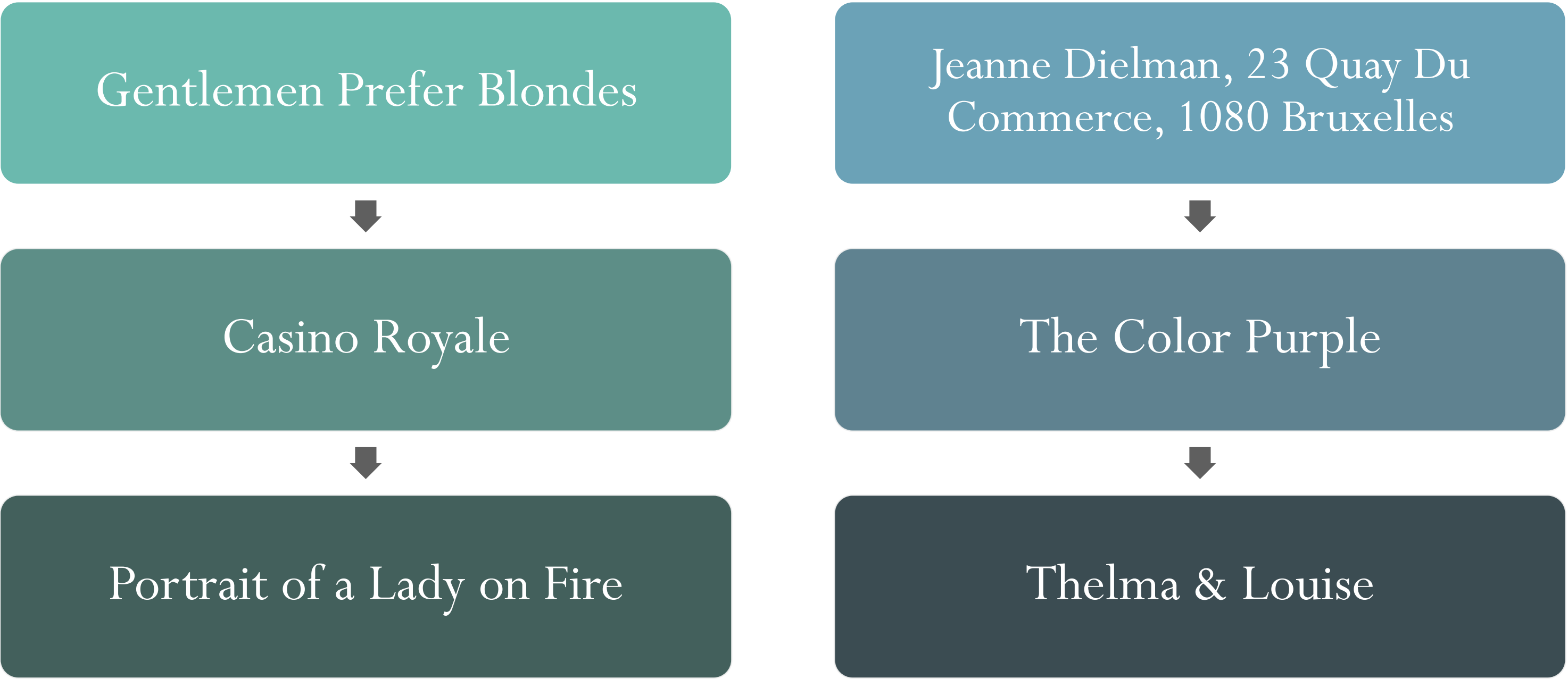
What’s This Project About?

This is an online platform that blends psychoanalysis, film theory, and feminist theory to discover the complexities of women’s representation in visual culture. It begins with an introduction to the fundamentals of psychoanalysis, followed by two main sections: a Knightlab timeline tracing the evolution of psychoanalysis and feminism in film, and a video collection featuring popular TikTok/Reel videos with textual analyses. The timeline spans from the 1960s to the present, highlighting the growth of psychoanalysis from a theoretical discipline to its influence on artistic movements, media culture, and everyday visuals in a consumer-driven era. Below this timeline, the project explores the rise of social media and contemporary short video culture, applying these theories to examine how, even in an era that appears feminist and sexually liberated, women continue to internalize an idealized image that confines them to the role of beauty subjects.

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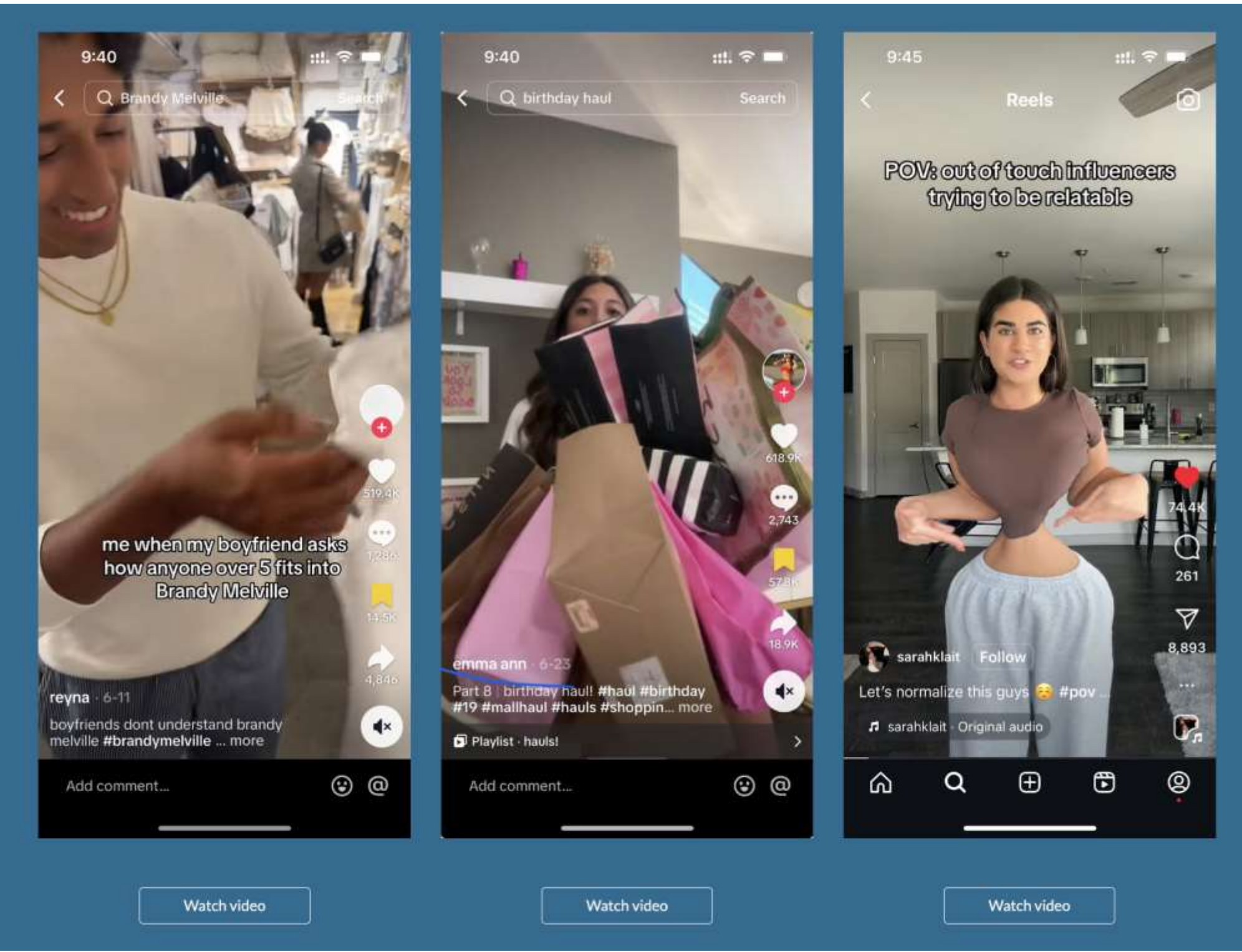
Combining traditional cinema with male gaze perspectives and the new voices from increased female engagement, this timeline allows the audience to examine changes from the 60s to the present, showcasing how social awareness has altered and subverted former gender hierarchies.



The first section aims to introduce *Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema*, the essay that made the word “male gaze” popular. This section functions as a “Psychoanalysis 101,” which offers a quote from the original essay along with explanations of key terms and overall meanings. This allows the audience to perceive the content in the most suitable way for them: beginners can start with the annotations and then explore the original text, while advanced learners can read the original essay and compare it with their own interpretations.

Content Covered:

- Phallogentrism and Castrated Women
- Lacan’s Three Orders and Signs
- Scopophilia and Its Connection to Cinema
- Gender Roles in the Pleasure of Looking



The last section explores how the male gaze continues to shape everyday life through short videos on platforms like TikTok and Reels. Focusing on themes like shopping hauls, posing styles, and idealized body types, these videos reflect how women influencers self-objectify to gain popularity. This section also highlights the influence of media on women’s self-perception, illustrated by an anecdote from Douban, which shows how the pursuit of beauty can become a source of self-worth, yet also a source of anxiety as it becomes intertwined with societal conditioning.