

Something Strange is Happening in the Town of Stepford A Thesis on the Portrayal of Women in The Stepford Wives (1975, 2004)

[Dahl, Kristina](#)

Master thesis

View/Open

 [Dahl_Master.pdf \(713.2Kb\)](#)

Year

2014

Permanent link

<http://urn.nb.no/URN:NBN:no-45504>

Metadata

[Show metadata](#)

Appears in the following Collection

[Engelsk \[667\]](#)

Abstract

The thesis works from the assumption that films produced in Hollywood are important historical documents that can provide interesting comments on changes in U.S. society and culture. Through a comparative analysis of The Stepford Wives film from 1975 and its 2004 remake, this thesis aims to examine how changes in genre, plot and overall narrative from the original to the remake reflect public understandings of feminism, and what the lead characters in both movies can reveal about the changing roles of women in American society. My research shows that some of the modifications that were made in order to modernize the story did make the updated version more relatable to a 21st century audience and can be said to reflect a fundamental change in the perceived roles of women in American society. However, my discoveries also reveal that the changes complicated the reading of the underlying message in the remake and shifted the basic premise of the original film from addressing the oppressive nature of a deeply patriarchal society to focusing on conflicting demands of women in 21st century America.



Responsible for this website
University of Oslo Library

Contact Us
duo-hjelp@ub.uio.no

[Privacy policy](#)

The Stepford Wives is a 1975 American science-fiction horror film directed by Bryan Forbes based on the 1972 novel by the same name of Ira Levin. Joanna Eberhart has come to the quaint little town of Stepford, Connecticut with her family. There she discovers, that most of the female residents are perfect, submissive housewives. With the help of another Newcomer, Bobby Markowe, she begins to investigate. The connection to "The Stepford Wives" — Bryan Forbes' unsettling 1975 flick with Katharine Ross, not the atrocious 2004 remake with Nicole Kidman — is particularly strong. In that movie, a homemaker (Ross) leaves the city with her husband and two kids for a new life in the suburbs. But she doesn't fit in with the other women, who all seem absurdly passionate about cooking and cleaning. Like "Get Out," it blends social commentary (racism in "Get Out," women's lib in "Stepford") into a horror-movie setting. Things To Do app: Get the best in events, d