

**MERYL STREEP AS KAY MEYER GRAHAM IN STEVEN SPIELBERG'S
THE POST: MASCULINITY ISSUES**

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The Post is the second collaboration between Meryl Streep and Steven Spielberg after *A.I. Artificial Intelligence*. The director is famous for having made a vast collection of films about the different ways men feel and behave under different situations. *The Post* is, among other things, a story of a woman, Katharine Meyer Graham, in a world of men. Graham, also known as Kay, was the publisher of *The Washington Post* between 1963 and 1991. Historically, she was the first woman in the United States of America who led a newspaper as important as *The Post*.

The research question of this paper is: “to what extent can Meryl Streep’s character also be regarded as one of those ‘Spielberg men’, in spite of being a woman?”

In order to answer this question I follow an analytic-synthetic method. The first step is the analysis of Meryl Streep’s ‘masculinity’ in those moments of the film where Pat Kirkham’s and Janet Thumin’s so-called *sites* can more clearly be traced. They provide four sites as the main components of the representation of masculinities in film in the introduction to their book *You Tarzan: Masculinity, Movies and Men*. The introduction works also as a cohesive conclusion of the fourteen chapters written by male authors on the topic, drawing from fields as varied as Genre Studies, Reception Theory, and Stardom Studies. Those four sites are the body, action, the external world, and the internal world. The analysis of each site leads to a partial conclusion, and the four of them are synthesised and combined in the final conclusion.

The conclusion is that the combination of the four sites shows that Katherine Graham can be regarded as one of Steven Spielberg’s men. In spite of Meryl Streep’s fame and worldwide recognition, it has not been easy for her to get roles in films where the leading actress is also the main character of the film. In *The Post* her name, or rather her surname is printed just above Tom Hanks’s surname on the film poster. Their names occupy the top position of the stairs which take up most of the poster. Their bodies, with their back to the camera, are the first thing anyone can see of the film even before actually seeing it, just by looking at the poster. There her body is also on a higher position than Hanks’s. A great part of the film is devoted to attempting to keep Streep’s character on that top position. The main action she carries out in the film is to talk: how she does so and who she addresses define her character. The external world is mainly focused on her relationship with two institutions: the press and the government. Her internal world pivots around her being true to herself.

Key Words: Film Studies; Gender Studies; Textual analysis; Stardom Studies; Female Power.