

Boring Revelations and Fanciful Victimhood: The Prince Harry and Meghan “Oprah Show”

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This is the sort of stuff barnacles clinging on the antiquated raft known as British Royalty were waiting for. One of the royal couples makes a dash for it, shirking and then shedding their subsidised duties. They get in touch with that great squeeze and fluff of publicity, Oprah Winfrey. Being interviewed by Winfrey is not going to get you kudos for aristocratic virtue but will appeal to a certain demographic. (New fashion design in the offing? Perfume line?)

The Prince Harry-Meghan Markle revelations were boring, uninspiring, tedious, self-promoting celluloid slush. For a moment, royalty gorgers and gloaters could forget the pandemic, the deaths of over 500,000 Americans, millions of job losses and incompetent governance. They could feast their eyes on a privileged couple being interviewed in the environs of Californian luxury talking about their terrible hardships.

Press outlets such as Associated Press were merely [stating](#) the obvious in claiming that the interview revealed a “picture of racism, insensitivity and deep-rooted dysfunction” in the royal family. On the racist charge, Meghan revealed that there had been “concerns and conversations” between Prince Harry and the family “about how dark” the skin of their offspring would be. Meghan was adamant that her treatment in the British media was different to that offered to other royals, particularly Prince William’s wife Catharine. It was one thing to be “rude”, another to be “racist”.

The discussion of racism was less bombshell than damp squib; Meghan had come into the House of Windsor. The records, satirised, anatomised, and scoured, suggest that if you want to join such a concern, you must expect a system that rejects evolution. But the couple, and certainly Meghan, might have believed that their marriage was somehow a change in the order of things, a sprinkling of diversity to the institutional monochrome.

This was itself almost amusing in its derangement, given Harry’s own past of race-related behaviour. When training at the Sandhurst military academy, the prince [was recorded](#) calling a soldier “our little Paki friend”. Another video [revealed](#) the royal saying the following to a combat helicopter pilot before training: “Fuck me, you look like a rag-head.” To comedian Stephen K. Amos, Harry [remarked](#) that he did not “sound like a black chap.” Then there was that rather infamous case of [donning Nazi uniform](#) at a fancy dress party. “Harry the Nazi,” roared *The Sun* at the time. The fruit never falls far from the tree.

In this, Harry shares much with his grandfather, Prince Philip. For years, anybody interested in the royals would be waiting for the dotty utterances of a man whose mouth really ought to have been taped. The Duke of Edinburgh, currently recovering from heart surgery, is Britain's national treasure of petrified prejudice, incapable of changing and always ready with an incautious remark. Perhaps it was he who ventured the colour question. To dampen such speculation, which evidently had the opposite effect, Winfrey revealed that Harry [confirmed](#) "it was not his grandmother nor his grandfather [who] were a part of those conversations."

The bleeding obvious category was also filled by observations aimed to inspire audience sympathy and garner click bait. Harry claimed to be trapped but initially suffered from false consciousness. "I was trapped but I didn't know I was trapped." His father and brother were similarly trapped. "They don't get to leave." Evidently, the prince lacks understanding on the difference between roles and people.

The issue of mental health was also given a generous airing to add to victim standard bearing. Meghan revealed she had suicidal thoughts. "And that was a very clear, and real, and frightening, constant thought." The palace's human resources insufficient support. In this, the Duchess of Sussex ticked another self-promoting box: as aspiring mental health advocate. This conversion certainly worked for Serena Williams, who [wrote](#) of those "mental health consequences of systematic oppression and victimization" and how they were "devastating, isolating and all too often lethal." Billie Jean King also [joined](#) the party. "Her honesty will hopefully lead to more acceptance and more help for those who need it."

Even the White House was bewitched. "For anyone to come forward and speak about their own struggles and mental health and tell their own personal story, that takes courage," [babbled](#) the barely credible press White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki.

What Meghan and Harry have done is publicise the tedious and the personal as a platform. Brendan O'Neill, editor of *Spiked*, [sees](#) a cultural coup at work, an enterprise on the couple's part "to seize the throne of the victim industry and consolidate their cultural power in the post-traditional world." At the very least, they have become publicity harlots, modern royals with a link to their own celebrity creating machine. They feed that machine even as they complain before an audience of 17.1 million viewers about breaches of their privacy.

In the aftermath of the showing, the couple's efforts yielded much nauseating fruit. The whole exercise shows that Meghan is merely continuing the shallowness of showbiz by other means. Harry has become a tag along, an essentially useless royal who had already expressed dissatisfaction with the institution before meeting his wife. The lack of utility for the royals was already in evidence before the couple decided to step back from their duties. Leave that orbit, and you are merely a spec in search of vacuity masquerading as relevance.

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