



Prince Harry: the black sheep of the British royal family?

PRINCE HARRY

Member of the British Royal Family

Married with Meghan Markle, 2 children

Scandal : decision to break free from the family

Why is it relevant for cultural studies?

Because the Royal Family is a huge symbol of the United Kingdom all around the world (Englishness, britishness, monarchy...) The decisions of Prince Harry and Meghan will have a lasting impact on the representation of the Royal Family and its values.

“Harry being in the line of succession to the British throne, he was often the subject of media attention.” (Encyclopaedia Britannica)

1) Prince Harry: one of the favorite targets of tabloids like his mother

⇒ A year before she died, Lady Diana screamed „You make my life hell!“ at paparazzi. One year after Diana’s death: “**Code of practice**” was written and “the most significant – and the strictest – amendment to the Code concerned the protection of children’s privacy”. It was to protect Harry and William because they also “were being pursued while they were at school”.

⇒ Since his childhood, Prince Harry has been **massively exposed to medias and tabloids**. Many scandals blew up : dressed up like a Nazi, went to strip clubs, took drugs...

⇒ However, he is a part of the **symbol** of what the British royal Family is.

“**National culture** is recognised as a variable that determines **the behaviour of actors in any development process and influences the choice of methods and design of information systems development**” (Kappos, 2008).

2) Prince Harry: never did what the Crown expected of him :

⇒ Married with Meghan Markle, a divorced American actress with African American origins.

⇒ a **sign of change in the monarchy**: “The couple, whose union reflected the changing social landscape of an increasingly multicultural Britain, seemed determined to modernize the monarchy and to connect it with the lives of everyday Britons.” (Encyclopaedia Britannica)

⇒ However, Great Britain is also known for its colonial past which means racist ideology. Jackson wrote that “**racism was “structured and institutionalized” and bound up “with the very notion of English nationalism**”.

“It is known that **women who behave in an authoritarian manner are evaluated more negatively than a man behaving in the same way** (Eagly, Makhijani & Klonsky, 1992). Similarly, it has been shown that a woman who **refuses to behave altruistically is judged more negatively than a man in the same situation** (Heilman & Chen, 2005)”.

3) Prince Harry : responsible for his actions or manipulated?

⇒ Despite the controversy surrounding him, Prince Harry seems to be a good man who **fits the stereotypes of the male gender : he is a white, cisgender, straight, wealthy man, member of the British royal Family, who was in the army, he practices sport, he has a family (wife + children)**. He also said that he “has been growing increasingly concerned about his wife’s wellbeing”.

⇒ However; the word “**Megxit**” is used, as if Meghan was the only responsible of this decision. She is depicted as the villain.

In fact, Piers Morgan, a TV Host tweeted on the 8th of January 2020 :

“**Well done, Your Majesty, right decision. Only surprised it took her so long to get Harry to ditch his family, the monarchy, the military and his country. What a piece of work.**”

“The concept of gender is exposed to particular norms in society, and causes people to think within the context of binary oppositions such as male and female, man and woman, nature and culture” (Judith Butler, 1988)

CONCLUSION

1) Prince Harry is an **ambivalent figure**. On one hand, he is seen as the black sheep of the family, **very criticized** by the British tabloids, who are furious that he has renounced to the crown. On the other hand, he is a man who puts his wife and children first and wants to keep them out of the spotlight.

2) He is also a **symbol of modernity** because of him marrying a non-white woman and voluntarily distancing himself from the Royal Family.

3) He recently took part in a podcast with Dax Shepard and described his previous life as “**a mix between 'the Truman Show' and being in a zoo**”. He also worked on a documentary series called “*The Me You Can't See*” with Oprah Winfrey. This series discuss about **mental health** and is available on Apple TV+.

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