AND THEY ALL LIVED HAPPILY EVER AFTER:
AN ANALYSIS OF THE BRITISH MEDIA’S
DEPICTION OF ROYAL RITUALS

by
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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for Departmental Honors in
the Department of History and Geography
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Fort Worth, Texas

April 21, 2016
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ABSTRACT

The British media’s perception of royal rituals (coronations, weddings, christenings, and funerals) can perpetuate and sustain the British monarchy as a source of national identity. The *Daily Mail* (conservative) and *The Guardian* (center-left) both reflect how rituals showcase the British monarchy’s adaptive ability to appear both stable and traditional while also modernizing. From 1936 to present, reporters highlighted a sense of national identity by presenting the nation as united in support of the royal ritual taking place, regardless of how the British people actually felt. Newspapers portrayed coronations as part of a long British tradition that makes Britain truly unique, taking care to emphasize the best traits of the new sovereign to foster a sense of hopeful solidarity for Britain. For royal weddings, the newspapers developed stereotypes for each royal bride that played into British values of the time. This allowed the British people to love the bride and rejoice as a nation in the royal wedding. Thanks to centuries’ long anxiety about succession, reporters took great interest in the births and christenings of heirs to the throne, and, in more recent years, the papers have become increasingly interested in the mother’s pregnancy. For royal funerals, reporters created a sense of national grief by eulogizing the deceased and magnifying the positive aspects of their lives as well as their deep love for Britain. The British press has the power to affirm the British monarchy’s status as a part of national identity through their representations of royal rituals.
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“Mawwage. Mawwage is wot bwings us togeder today.”¹ This frequently quoted line from the popular film *The Princess Bride* highlights the importance of marriage. Marriage unites two people, two families, and, in the case of monarchy, the royals with their subjects. Like other rituals associated with the British monarchy, royal weddings have become national functions. The British monarchy is famous for its weddings, full of pageantry and tradition, and their other royal rituals, including coronations, christenings, and funerals, have just as much significance to Britain’s history and sense of national identity. By 1918, three major European monarchies – Russia, Germany, and Austria-Hungary – had collapsed, but the British monarchy remained standing. In the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, Britain, and the world, changed in dramatic ways. The British monarchy has been able to adapt to fit the public’s needs, and this flexibility and adaptiveness has allowed it to survive as an institution while other monarchies have fallen.

Other scholars have examined individual royal rituals, but it is a holistic approach to all four major royal rituals and the role of the British press that can help explain the value of rituals and royalty. David Cannadine studied the evolution of British rituals and argued that the meanings of the rituals change although the rituals themselves do not. The royal family was unpopular from the 1820s to the 1870s so the rituals during this period were inaccessible to the masses.² The people often did not respect the rituals, and the rituals were not the seamless functions modern British citizens have come to expect.³ As the monarch gradually withdrew from political power from the 1880s to 1914 to become just the head of state, royal tradition became more popular. The rise of media also helped increase the popularity of tradition.⁴

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¹ *The Princess Bride*, DVD, directed by Rob Reiner (1988; Twentieth Century Fox).
⁴ *Ibid.*, 121-123.
From 1914 to 1953, the monarchy used ritual to express continuity in a period of change.⁵ As the world changed around them, the British were finally able to present ritual as “the unique embodiment of a long and continuing tradition in a way that had not been possible before.”⁶ Cannadine concluded that British rituals receive their meaning from the masses, as well as from the way the media portrays them. Although Cannadine recognized British ritual has entered a new phase since 1953, he was unsure exactly what that is. However, since 1953, it is becoming clear that the way the royal family works with the press can influence how the British public responds to the rituals and if the people view the monarchy as part of their collective identity and history as a nation.

But why even study royal rituals? Royal rituals are important because they not only can show that the monarchy is modernizing but they also can provide a sense of stability during times of social change. John M. T. Balmer explained that the British monarchy is a corporate heritage brand. Because of its declining political power, the crown has become less product-like and more brand-like.⁷ As a heritage brand, the monarchy can harness positive public emotions, focus on rituals, look at not just the past and present but also the future, and are “stable reference points in a changing world.”⁸ Balmer concluded that as a heritage brand, the monarchy relies on trust between itself and the public, and its ability to do so helps explain its permanence as an institution. For example, one reason Edward and Wallis’s marriage did not receive much public support is because the crown was not as open with the British people. This lack of trust hurt the sense of nationalism the people could have felt during the nuptials. On the other hand, Elizabeth’s coronation increased positive national sentiments through providing a hopeful future.

⁵ Ibid., 139.
⁶ Ibid., 145.
⁸ Ibid., 528.
and serving as a source of stability. Because the British monarchy has become more of an economy of products and brands, the royal family must carefully construct their image so the people feel that royalty is essential to British identity and that becoming a republic would mean a loss of what sets Britain apart from other nations. The British Crown’s ability to work in this economy of public support has helped allow it to remain while many other monarchies have fallen. The monarchy uses the press as a tool to depict royal rituals in order to frequently remind the public of the royal family’s role as a permanent institution. These rituals are valuable because the British have been trying to redefine their national identity for the past century.

Of course, one cannot talk about twentieth-century British history or national identity without also considering the role of the British Empire. In the 1950s and 1960s, Britain’s empire began to fall apart at the seams as colonies such as Malaya had insurgencies. The British Empire had long been a source of pride for the British, and the loss of colonies and the decline in military power shook the nation’s foundations. Furthermore, increased migration in the twentieth century forced Britain to ponder what defined Britishness and what made a person a Briton.

The monarchy serves as a very practical, political unitive force. Once various parts of the empire gained sovereignty, they came to be known as the Commonwealth, which consists of the United Kingdom and many former members of the British Empire. Even though each realm of the Commonwealth is now sovereign, the British monarch is the uniting factor among all the realms and serves as the symbolic head of the Commonwealth. The British Commonwealth is unique, and the monarchy is what unites these nations and makes the Commonwealth possible. Even within the United Kingdom, it is the monarchy that keeps England, Scotland, Northern Ireland, and Wales united; without the monarchy, there would be no “kingdoms” to unite.
In regards to royal history, 1936 proved to be an important year for the British. Edward VIII abdicated to marry his true love, and reporters even today still comment on, and make connections to, the abdication crisis. The 1930s were also a time of privacy from the press, and this time period serves as a foil to modern media who constantly report the royals’ every move. While some newspaper articles compared the royals of the 1940s and 1950s to Queen Victoria, the most frequent comparisons of modern royals to past royals involve Edward VIII. These comparisons are significant because continually bringing up British monarchical history illustrates the longevity of the monarchy as an institution and provides further context and meaning for later rituals.

Although British newspapers highlighted comparisons between past and present royals, they sometimes used these comparisons in different ways. Everything has a bias, of course, and newspapers are no different. The Daily Mail is a conservative paper, more frequently supporting the royal family. The Guardian and its Sunday counterpart, The Observer, on the other hand, is a center-left paper. As support for the royal family has become more contested in recent decades, the divide between these two newspapers’ reporting on royal rituals has become more pronounced. Though these two newspapers often had different agendas, their articles about the royals not only help characterize each member of the royal family who underwent a major royal ritual but also help to explain the importance of each ritual to Britain’s national identity. Again, the monarchy was able to adapt in order to stay relevant.

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9 A Note about names in this paper: I chose to use the names people most commonly use when referring to the royals. Edward VIII became known as His Royal Highness The Duke of Windsor upon his abdication, but for continuity’s sake, I refer to him throughout as Edward VIII or Edward throughout this paper. Similarly, mainstream media consistently refers to Diana, Princess of Wales as “Princess Diana,” Catherine, Duchess of Cambridge as “Kate Middleton,” and Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother (Elizabeth Bowes-Lyon) as “the Queen Mother” so I will use these women’s colloquial, albeit inaccurate, names for the sake of clarity.

10 Prior to 1959, the full name of The Guardian was The Manchester Guardian.
Each royal ritual fulfills a different function, and the press emphasizes these distinct functions, all while attempting to sway public opinion in favor of the monarchy. Of course, not everyone in Britain is a staunch royalist, but reporting on the royal family and its rituals so frequently and completely gives those rituals extra importance. Media coverage of the royal family, especially during a ritual, is so prevalent and pervasive that it is almost impossible to ignore. The ways in which the British newspapers have invented media images of the royals to report on coronations, weddings, christenings, and funerals from 1936 until present support and sustain the British monarchy as a source of national identity.

CORONATIONS

Perhaps the ritual most associated with royalty is the coronation. The monarchy is continuous: the new monarch becomes head of state the moment the old one dies, even if the coronation ritual itself occurs a year or so after the death of the old monarch. As one of the most famous monarchies in the world today, the British monarchy has a long tradition of coronations. In *Coronations Past, Present, and Future*, Henry Everett, Paul Bradshaw, and Colin Buchanan asserted that coronations vary slightly for each monarch in order to “fit” him or her.¹¹ This tailoring can appear in how the people and the newspapers interpret the symbolism attached to the ritual. Coronations are full of symbolism, which underlines the British monarchy’s spiritual and sacred nature. Without a written constitution in the United Kingdom, it is the coronation ritual that provides an assertion of national values and ruling principles.¹² Newspapers presented coronations as part of a long British tradition that makes Britain truly unique, and reporters took

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care to highlight the best traits of Edward VIII, George VI, and Elizabeth II to create a sense of hopeful solidarity for the nation.

Edward VIII became king on January 20, 1936 upon the death of his father George V. Edward came to the throne with immense popularity and approval from the papers, but his love for divorcée Wallis Simpson forced him to abdicate on December 11, 1936, which threw Britain into crisis. British adults in the 1930s would have seen the fall of other monarchies around Europe, and, already facing high rates of unemployment and possible political unrest abroad in the form of fascism, the people were more anxious about the fate of Britain and the monarchy. Additionally, the abdication caused so much turmoil because it connected private life with political responsibility and thus created tensions between the people’s values and what they perceived to be the monarchy’s values.\(^\text{13}\)

The 1930s afforded the royal family much more privacy than the royals today receive, and newspapers controlled the public’s access to the information about the abdication.\(^\text{14}\) In fact, newspaper coverage was so limited and opinionated that many people viewed the radio as a more authentic information source since they could hear Edward’s actual abdication address without the influence of propaganda press.\(^\text{15}\) This abdication was tremendously important for British royal history, and later royal rituals still reference the abdication.\(^\text{16}\) The longevity of this event illustrates its importance to British history and to understanding the modern British monarchy. Though newspaper coverage of Edward’s ascension to the throne and subsequent abdication was more limited than coverage for a coronation today would be, newspaper articles can still contain useful information regarding how the press tried to influence public opinion for this ritual.

\(^\text{14}\) Ibid., 55.
\(^\text{15}\) Ibid., 56-58.
\(^\text{16}\) Ibid., 61.
Although journalists characterized Edward as immensely popular when he became king, during the abdication crisis the newspapers highlighted Edward’s lack of constitutional power in the situation and showed the people’s fear that Britain would suffer from losing him as a king.

Once Edward became king, the newspapers portrayed him as extremely popular, lauding his sincerity, naval career, life at Oxford, and status as a bachelor king. In “King Edward VIII,” G. Ward Price of the Daily Mail went as far as to say, “If the Crown could be bestowed by the votes of its 450,000,000 subjects throughout the world, their choice would fall on the very man who now inherits it.”¹⁷ The Manchester Guardian’s similarly titled article furthered this sense of hope by asserting, “It is the best of all signs for the success of the new reign that in long years of training Edward the Eighth has, if anything, amplified and extended his father’s experience.”¹⁸ Articles such as these created the impression that the entire nation loved Edward and completely supported his reign, uniting the country in hope, which is exactly what the nation needed with so much political and economic unease on the continent.

However, Edward himself dashed these hopes when, 325 days later, he abdicated, creating a crisis in Britain. Trying to make sense of the turn of events, the reporters characterized Edward as having little power and emphasized that his abdication could potentially cost Britain greatly. By the 1930s, the British monarchy was already a constitutional monarchy with the king wielding little real political control. The British government pressured Edward to abdicate, and newspaper articles attempted to create sympathy for Edward by showing how little

power he had in the abdication. Once he had decided he could not live without Wallis, there was little he could do in preventing the subsequent crisis. In “State Policy & the King,” F. W. Memory stated, “In the present crisis, the question at issue is really this: Has the King-Emperor, the keystone of the British Commonwealth of Nations, a private life like the meanest of his subjects…or is he such a servant of the State that his every action is a matter of national and Imperial concern?” Memory labeled the abdication as a crisis – typical language for the time – and drew upon the issue of privacy, which still affects the royal family today. The question created sympathy for Edward since it emphasized his lack of constitutional, political power in the situation. Because Edward had to follow his heart but did not have power in the preventing the abdication, the people were less able to blame him for creating the crisis. While most people have the luxury of privacy in their romantic relationships, Edward did not have this privilege, and Memory played on that to create more sympathy for him in an attempt to unite the country in compassion for Edward.

While some newspaper articles tried to create sympathy for Edward, reporters also mused about the effects of the abdication on Britain. A *Daily Mail* reporter asked in his article “Can We Afford to Lose Him?” if anyone had fully realized the cost of Edward’s forced abdication. Drawing upon the public image of Edward’s popularity, the reporter claimed, “In all the history of Royalty no monarch has ever known such proved and universal popularity.”

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popularity and Britain’s potential loss worked hand in hand to create a sense of national loss.

The article “Abdication of Edward VIII” discussed this “most anxious and astounding day in the history of our empire,” saying, “His ‘final and irrevocable’ abdication fills every heart with an overwhelming sense of tragedy. Indeed, the event far transcends man’s capacity to realize it and all that it implies.”21 Yet again, the reporter portrayed the nation as united in grief. Labelling it as the “most anxious and astounding day in the history of our empire” heightened the drama of the moment, forcing the British people to pay attention to the event and to also mourn the loss of Edward together as England entered a new phase of royal history. British adults would have seen the fall of the Russian, Austro-Hungarian, and German monarchies after World War I so there would have been a real concern that Britain could lose their monarchy too if the people withdrew their support from the royal family. The newspapers implied that the loss of Edward as king was great, but the loss of the British monarchy would be even greater.

Of course, the British monarchy is continuous – as soon as one monarch dies or abdicates, the next one takes the throne. In this case, Edward’s brother, George VI, became king, and his coronation was on May 12, 1937. Here, the press reflected how the monarchy adapted to what it perceived the people needed in order for it to survive while other monarchies fell. To counteract the turmoil Edward’s abdication caused, newspapers focused on George VI’s sense of duty and family ties to create stability and hope for the nation.

Reporters emphasized how George dutifully worked for the people. “The New King Emperor” cited a story of George’s visit to a glue factory where officials did not want him to enter the factory due to the odor. George replied, “If it’s good enough for my father’s subjects to be working in, it’s good enough for me to go inside,” and “without more ado he entered.”22

This no-nonsense approach to leadership showed his steadfastness and his loyalty to his people, and this article made him seem more egalitarian. “Long May He Reign” stated, “Never before did the nation feel a firmer faith in the wisdom and unflinching spirit of duty of its Royal Family.” This sort of sentiment is exactly what Britain needed to hear after Edward’s shocking abdication and with fascism already in Europe, and the stability the papers emphasized worked to put people at ease.

In addition to highlighting George’s sense of duty, the newspapers emphasized George’s family, who were also very dutiful individuals. The royal family became the national family, held up as examples for working-class families around Britain. Edward Grigg in “Crown and Empire” described the royal family, saying, “The Crown has so long mirrored to us the perfect home...that we rejoice from the bottom of our hearts to see that ideal held up to us once more in the household of our King and Queen. There is no surer hold on our hearts.”

Reporters were quick to reassure the British that life in Britain could return to normal after the abdication and that this steady royal family would not fail them.

This emphasis on the royal family as Britain’s national family played a role in the success of George’s coronation as well as in the success of subsequent royal rituals. In “Media Representations of the British Royal Family as a National Family” Pat Robbins said that

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although the monarchs are not always capable of acting like ordinary British citizens, they have still become the national family. He explained princes and princesses have become “representatives of ‘elevated normality,’” thanks to the media’s portrayals of them. Because the royals can seem more accessible, royal rituals link the royals’ happiness and hopes with those of the nation. Thus, George’s young family became a symbol of hope for all of Britain, especially young Elizabeth who would one day become Queen.

Elizabeth II became Queen on February 6, 1952 after her father’s sudden death, and she was crowned on June 2, 1953. Although World War II was over and Britain had technically emerged as one of the three greatest nations in the world, the British still had rationing in place. This coronation provided a much needed moment of celebration, healing, and national unity. In 1953, Edward Shils and Michael Young published their frequently referenced article, “The Meaning of the Coronation.” In their article, they declared the idea that the coronation was not simply an expression of the British love for pomp and circumstance or just an excuse to party. Instead, the coronation allowed people to reaffirm the rightness of society’s moral rules and values, similar to the functions Christmas and Independence Day serve. Also like Christmas, there tends to be more goodwill than usual during a coronation, and even the pickpockets were inactive. Although Elizabeth had the first televised coronation, newspaper articles about her ascension to the throne and her coronation still provided specific characterizations and tropes to encourage British citizens to support Elizabeth and the monarchy. Frequently characterized by her youth and her gender, newspapers emphasized Elizabeth II’s service and compared her to

Queen Elizabeth I and Queen Victoria in the hopes she would create another golden age during her rule.

One of the defining attributes of Elizabeth’s reign has been her service to the country, and the newspapers recognized this as soon as she became queen. In “The Beauty of This Moment Will Ever Live in My Mind,” Guy Schofield explained that during her anointing, Elizabeth was “a very symbol of humility and service amid so much magnificence.”

In this moment of recognizing her service, Schofield also noted how Elizabeth’s coronation united the people, explaining, “A tide of emotion sets in. We are piercingly aware of our common unity…. One realizes that within the Abbey there are no mere onlookers. We are all of the Coronation; we are participating.”

The Manchester Guardian’s article “Queen Elizabeth the Second” also highlighted her service, quoting the speech Elizabeth had made in South Africa on her twenty-first birthday in which she pledged her life for the people of Britain and the Commonwealth, who “were to be touched by her public acceptance of that duty.”

A characteristic of great leaders is often the practice of serving their followers, and British reporters capitalized on that connection between service and strong leadership when writing about Elizabeth’s coronation.

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31 Ibid.
In addition to her great service, comparisons to Elizabeth I and Victoria also characterized reporting about Elizabeth II. Even the newspaper article title “A Queen Rules after 51 Years” was telling, instantly drawing connections to Queen Victoria.33 “The Husband of the Sovereign” was quick to point out that there have only been five reigning queens.34 These queens are, of course, some of the most famous monarchs in British history, and putting Elizabeth II in their company encouraged people to expect great things from her. More importantly, likening her to Elizabeth I and Victoria created the hope that Britain might enter into another golden age. F. G. Prince-White in “Our Sovereign Lady” stated, “The effect of the first issue of the new Elizabethan stamps was instant and widespread; the Queen’s head had once more become a symbol of Britain and all that this nation represents in the modern world. In the minds of many it was, as well, a symbol of rejuvenescence.”35 Prince-White clearly associated Elizabeth with the hope and the new beginnings that defined her coronation. This hope buoyed public support for the monarchy, allowing it to continue to survive as an institution.

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Being the first queen in fifty-one years, Elizabeth was subject to gendered expectations of the 1950s, which meant reporters frequently commented on her attire. Although attention to royal fashion is not new, Elizabeth’s appearance defined her in a way that did not apply to the previous male monarchs. “The gay Royal Family dance the night away” detailed the royal family’s Coronation celebrations, clearly mentioning, “The Queen wore a crinoline type dress of rose pink, and a diamond tiara and a heavy diamond and ruby necklace. She wore a star of the Order of the Garter. Princess Margaret was in white.”

However, the most important gown was the Queen’s Coronation dress which Tanfield called “the best-kept secret of the Coronation” in the article “First details of the Queen’s Coronation dress.”

Tanfield also reported that Mrs. Thelma Holland, the Queen’s cosmetician, “specifically designed a new lipstick and rouge that will blend with the robes. It is a light red with a faint blue undertone – a deep shade does not suit television.”

The Manchester Guardian also published details of the gown in the article “Beauty, Glitter, Symbolism of the Queen’s Gown,” explaining the embroidery and beading represented all parts of the United Kingdom and the Commonwealth. Some of the details of the Coronation gown could unify the empire through the Queen artistically acknowledging all her subjects in her dress, which was important.

38 Ibid.
since the empire had begun unraveling at the seams. However, this attention to fashion does not appear in Edward VIII’s or George VI’s coronations. These articles further show how newspapers in 1953 defined Elizabeth II by her gender.

These various characterizations point to the theme of hope for a new Britain. In “Monarchy Revived,” the reporter noted, “Once more, as when King George VI died a year ago, we find that a Royal event has the power to eclipse everything that normally occupies and excites the public consciousness…and to reach into depths of collective emotion never touched by the business of Governments.” Furthermore, the reporter said, “In celebrating our Monarchy, we celebrate a triumph of the unifying, civilizing, and healing powers of political human nature, and we profess a newly strengthened and refreshed humanist faith.” This article highlighted the importance of royal ritual and emphasized the unity in the country’s emotions. Regardless of whether the entire nation actually felt the monarchy united, civilized, and healed people, there was power in the reporter stating that the British as a whole believed in the strength of the monarchy. These positive emotions would have been important to readers in the early 1950s who still felt the effects of World War II and a long rationing period. The healing theme continued in “Duke of Windsor Watches in Paris.” The article stated, “The Duke was profoundly interested in the ceremony and was very moved,’ Mrs. Biddle’s secretary said. ‘He explained some of the technicalities of the ceremony to the Duchess, but otherwise didn’t speak or smoke throughout the ceremony.’” After Edward had thrown the country into chaos, it was poetic that he watched the coronation and that the ritual moved him. If a duke in exile could embrace the new queen and, presumably, feel hopeful for her and for Britain, that chapter of

41 Ibid.
British monarchical unease could be officially over. This ritual symbolically reunited the duke with the British, and this sense of unity and healing came across in the article.

Previous coronations have emphasized the monarchy’s stability and traditions, but the next coronation will most likely highlight the royal family’s modernity and increasing connectivity to the people. The next coronation has the possibility of continuing to unite the nation, especially if the media works to enhance the monarch’s carefully crafted public persona in order to connect him with the people. Ian Bradley asserted in “The Shape of the New Coronation – Some Tentative Thoughts” that the next coronation should still have similar effects on uniting the British people. He claimed that the funerals of Diana and the Queen Mother show that coronations could still touch people because both funerals and coronations contain traditional Church of England rituals and liturgies. Furthermore, the monarchy’s continuation for several more generations is becoming more certain. A 2013 survey discovered that sixty-nine percent of British people believe Prince George will one day become king and that two-thirds of people polled think Britain is better off as a monarchy. There is little recent precedent for William to ascend the throne instead of his father Charles, and the country seems split over who should be the next king. Women and young adults increasingly like William, Kate, and Harry, but the Queen is still the most popular member of the royal family. The country seems more divided over the issue of the monarchy’s expenses with about half of polled people thinking the expenses are worth it while the other half does not think the royal family is worth the cost. The events of the past few years – including William and Kate’s wedding, the

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45 Ibid.
46 Ibid.
47 Ibid.
Queen’s Diamond Jubilee, and Prince George’s birth – have helped to solidify support for the monarchy. Although popular royal events of the past thirty years have mostly revolved around beloved, charismatic women such as the Queen, Diana, and Kate, William’s and Harry’s popularity, along with the positive public opinion Charles’ second marriage garnered, suggest the next King of England could captivate the hearts of the nation as well. Future royal events have the potential to create more unity for Britain, but these statistics suggest the royal family will have to take finances into consideration. Only time will tell how the newspapers characterize the next monarch in an increasingly digitized age.

WEDDINGS

Coronations may be a hallmark of royalty, but royal weddings are arguably one of the most popular royal rituals. Royal weddings captivate people, conjuring fairytale stories and happily ever afters. British royal weddings began to draw significant attention from the public in the past century. In “The Context, Performance and Meaning of Ritual: The British Monarchy and the ‘Invention of Tradition,’ c. 1820-1977,” David Cannadine reported that the 1922 marriage of Princess Mary to Viscount Louis was “no longer Mary’s wedding but… the ‘Royal Wedding’ or the ‘National Wedding’ or even the ‘People’s Wedding.’” 48 Royal weddings cannot be just for the bride and groom and their families; the celebrations must include the public

so the people can feel an emotional connection with the couple and thus with the entire royal family.

Thanks to the press and its growing electronic component, the media covers almost every aspect of the wedding and the wedding planning from the engagement to the cake, the guest list, the venue, and, most importantly, the bride and her dress. Because of the fairy tale associations and the potential for change in the monarchy, the bride is the focal point of each wedding, and the press centers on her personality and appearance. The British media created precise representations of and tropes for royal brides like Wallis Simpson, Diana Spencer, Camilla Parker Bowles, and Kate Middleton, and these characterizations reflected the changing British values at the time. When the royal family handled the press properly, the media’s portrayal of the royal wedding could emphasize the brides’ positive qualities. Their depictions highlight the ability of British rituals to create a sense not only of modernization to become more relatable, but also of stability during periods of great social development. The press’s coverage of the wedding and the bride maintains public interest in the monarchy and perpetuates the royal family’s relevance.

In the 1930s, Edward and Wallis faced obstacles like the social stigma of divorce and the monarchy’s ignorance of how to manage the press. The nation was shocked when Edward announced in December of 1936 that he wanted to marry Wallis Simpson, a twice-divorced American socialite. Wallis retook her maiden name of Warfield to try to become more acceptable, an attempt that ultimately failed since people still remember her as Wallis Simpson, the surname of her second husband. In order for Edward to marry Wallis, he had to abdicate the throne to his brother, George VI.49 Despite increasing divorce rates, divorce was still taboo in the 1930s, especially for the head of the Church of England. In 1937 when Edward and Wallis

married, there were only 4,886 divorces in England and Wales. To contextualize, there were thirteen divorces an hour in England and Wales in 2012.\textsuperscript{50}

While Wallis Simpson’s status as a twice-divorced American caused controversy, the public might have been more sympathetic if the royal family had handled the situation better. Today, the royal family can use the media to spin the news in their favor if there is a crisis. However, the paparazzi were in their early stages when Edward and Wallis announced their engagement, and the royal family never dreamed the press could become so invasive. In fact, although Wallis was Edward’s almost constant companion before news of the engagement broke, the press did not report any news of the scandal until a few days after their engagement.\textsuperscript{51} This media silence seems almost unthinkable today. The 1930s was the era of prehistory for the paparazzi, which appeared in the 1940s and 1950s in Italy for the sole purpose of taking candid and unflattering pictures of celebrities to counterpoint their formal portraits and make them seem more rounded to the public.\textsuperscript{52} As the paparazzi emerged, Wallis Simpson “quickly became the most coveted photographic subject on earth.”\textsuperscript{53} This may partially be due to the fact that pictures of Edward and Wallis were even more valuable because Edward was

\begin{figure}[h]
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\caption{In 1936, the British press had become much more invasive into the lives of royals.}
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\begin{footnotes}
\item[51] Peter Clarke, \textit{Hope and Glory}, 164.
\item[53] \textit{Ibid.}, 285.
\end{footnotes}
such an uncooperative subject.\textsuperscript{54} To the people, the pictures confirmed rumors about Edward’s liaison with Wallis, which hastened the government’s discussion in favor of Edward’s abdication.\textsuperscript{55} The royal family had enjoyed protection from the media, and the monarchy faced a learning curve as they adapted to increasingly invasive reporting. Confronted with the recent dissolution of monarchies across Europe and with political upheaval in the form of fascism, the royal family needed to establish their permanence and stability through characterizing George as a dutiful, family oriented king. However, in hindsight, allowing the nation to rejoice in the wedding of Edward and Wallis would have provided an additional opportunity for royal business to resume as normal, and for the nation to heal and celebrate. The royal family’s failure to do so prevented these positive outcomes and served as an example of how not to depict subsequent royal weddings.

The media shaped people’s views of Wallis Simpson by enhancing the secrecy and thus the forbidden aspect of her engagement to Edward. In the newspaper article “Two Ceremonies at Duke of Windsor’s Wedding,” the author included a quote from the Mayor of Monts, the officiate of the ceremony, describing the “discrete Chateau de Cande” and “the illustrious union many hearts will celebrate secretly today.”\textsuperscript{56} Even if the words are not the journalist’s, the writer still chose to use them rather than omit them because these phrases added to the theme of secrecy. In the article, the author was also careful to mention the couple took photographs outside the chateau for five minutes after the ceremony. The couple was so private that photography and press were important enough to mention in an article detailing all the specifics of the day. The journalist also included the official record of the wedding, which listed all of

\textsuperscript{54} Ibid., 281.
\textsuperscript{55} Ibid., 287.
Edward’s extensive titles for nine printed lines before adding “Mrs. Warfield Wallis, divorced wife of Mr. Spencer, divorced wife of Mr. Simpson.” This provided a stark contrast between the Duke and Wallis, making Wallis seem more like a forbidden bride.

A different official statement in “Duke of Windsor” said, “Invitations to the wedding of the Duke of Windsor and Mrs. Wallis Warfield will be confined to those who have been with them the past months. There will be no members of the royal family present.” Since the couple held the wedding in France and not in Britain, there was an extra element of secrecy. With the censorship surrounding the event, the British people were even more interested in any minor details the press could provide. In fact, F. G. Prince-White reported in “Why I Married the Duke: By Vicar” that British film distributors had decided to respect the couple’s privacy and not release the footage of the ceremony to the British public. Prince-White quoted Mr. Gerald Sanger, British Movietone News producer:

‘It was felt that to release films of the wedding might reawaken painful emotions among patrons and even lead to individual demonstrations. The Duke’s desire for privacy being obviously directed towards the cessation of controversy there was evident a general desire among news reel companies to respect this wish.’

By quoting Sanger, Prince-White highlighted the controversial and potentially upsetting nature of the wedding. Without film, the public had to rely on the minimal reporting in the newspapers

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57 Ibid.
for any information about the nuptials. Even though the happy sentiment “Your Royal Highness, Duchess, we are happy in your happiness” appeared in the article “Duke’s Bride Twice Promises to Obey,” apart from this sentence, the overall reporting in the articles about the wedding did little to enhance or create national excitement for the royal wedding. Even this statement of support emphasized the difference in Edward’s and Wallis’s ranks; the monarchy never granted Wallis a royal title, which greatly upset Edward for the rest of his life. The couple’s happiness could never breach this official gap in rank. Edward was so popular that many people would have wanted to celebrate his wedding, but the press depictions of the nuptials did not encourage these positive feelings. Because the event was so secretive and controversial, the public was less able to support the couple or feel any sense of national pride or happiness regarding the wedding.

After the wedding, the host issued statements on the Duke’s behalf in “The Duke’s Appeal for Privacy” in The Manchester Guardian. The Duke conveyed that he “will always be prepared to supply any news of importance concerning the Duchess and himself.” He continued that they still want “that measure of consideration and privacy which they feel is now their due.” The royal family finally began to understand it must work with the press so reporters do not go to extreme measures to procure stories about them. However, this effort at appeasement was too little too late, and the media had already enhanced the aura of drama and secrecy around the couple, preventing the British from fully identifying with the monarchy and celebrating British culture through the wedding. Fifty years later, the opposite would be true for Diana Spencer and Prince Charles in 1981.

The emphasis on class and morality in the 1980s – in addition to the royal family’s increased awareness of how to work with the press – contributed to Diana’s popularity. The

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world had waited years for the Queen’s eldest son and heir to marry. The British people finally got the wedding they had been waiting for when Prince Charles, 33, married Lady Diana Spencer, 20, in a huge, glamorous, televised ceremony on July 29, 1981.\(^{62}\) Several factors in Britain contributed to Diana’s popularity, apart from her charming personality. Although class distinctions were slowly declining throughout the twentieth century, this trend reversed slightly in the 1980s when politicians began paying more attention to class again.\(^{63}\) Thus, Diana’s aristocratic background helped her seem more suitable for Charles than any other girl romantically attached to him. Around the same time, Margaret Thatcher promoted a return to “Victorian values.”\(^{64}\) As such, Diana’s status as a virgin was an important factor in her engagement to Charles. With a reputation to uphold, the royal family needed Charles’ bride to be perfect since she would one day sit beside him when he became King.

Since Diana had so many positive traits, the monarchy had learned they could emphasize her good attributes in the newspapers if they worked with the press to spin the news. The question of privacy had changed since 1936. Although Edward and Wallis were somewhat of a sensationalist story, the journalists who reported on their wedding were significantly tamer than those who reported on Charles and Diana’s wedding. The press scrutinized Edward and Wallis partially because of the political upheaval the abdication created, but the media simply presented Charles and Diana, on the other hand, as the embodiment of fairytale dreams come true. Although the paparazzi had become much more invasive, the royal family did understand they had a certain amount of power over how the press represented the royals. This change in understanding how to work with the press demonstrates the monarchy’s adaptability and why this institution has lasted for so long.

\(^{62}\) Clarke, *Hope and Glory*, 388.
\(^{63}\) David Cannadine, *The Rise and Fall of Class in Britain* (New York: Colombia University Press, 1999), 165.
\(^{64}\) Clarke, *Hope and Glory*, 379.
Charles helped the monarchy work with the press by controlling what Diana said and did to prevent her from making an error. With hindsight, Diana’s answers in her interview “Public ‘a Great Boost’ Says Diana” seem terse and rehearsed. When the interviewer asked which charity projects she hoped to take on, she initially responded with her current interests concerning children and ballet. However, she quickly continued, “But my interests will obviously be widened over the years. Many opportunities will arise, and I look forward to considering these.”

Many of Diana’s early interviews sound almost painfully practiced and stereotypically political and noncommittal. The crown realized they needed to start to prepare new members of the royal family so they would not disgrace the monarchy. This proved important as the press’s influence grew.

As soon as the media broke the news that Charles was dating Diana, the worldwide press followed her every move. In “Princess Diana’s Celebrity in Freeze Frame,” Lydia Brauer and Vickie Rutledge Shields studied how the press constructed and reproduced Diana’s celebrity factor. They argued Diana projected her personality best through pictures and videos, even if it can be difficult to determine which photographs were “real” and which ones were staged.

Diana certainly learned how to use the newspapers to publicize her messages, whether it was to raise awareness for a charity or to upstage Charles with a glamorous dress when he admitted his infidelity to the press. The royal family’s attention to the press, as well as Diana’s suitable qualities, served as a starting point for her popularity.

The public responded to Diana Spencer so positively, partially because the royal family used the press to enhance all of Diana’s desirable attributes such as her charming innocence, her

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overall perfection as a royal bride, and the fairytale element of her wedding. The staff reporters of *The Observer* emphasized her childlike innocence in “Wedding Nerves for Lady Diana” when reporting Diana’s tears during Charles’s polo match. The reporters portrayed her as a child having a tantrum due to exhaustion and fear. The press also noted her shyness by describing her blush at the Royal Marines band’s rendition of “Isn’t She Lovely?”

In “My Prince and I…by Lady Diana,” John Hamshire reported that Charles believed Diana would need time to think about his proposal. Hamshire wrote, “At that point Lady Diana chipped in: ‘Oh, I never had any doubts about it.’” The phrase “chipped in” made Diana’s other quotes in the article seem irrelevant and juvenile, as if she was only at the interview to smile and look pretty. And yet Diana seemed more appealing because of the reemphasis on Victorian values and praise for demure women. In “I Never Had Any Doubts, Says Diana,” the journalist noted, “During the interview, Lady Diana maintained a shy poise and let her husband-to-be do most of the talking.”

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themselves to the media is important and so had the more experienced Charles dominate interactions with the press. Jane Ellison continued the emphasis on Diana’s innocence in “The King and Di – or Much Ado about Nothing” including her nick name “Shy Di.” Unlike the controversial and polarizing “Iron Lady,” who received many threats during her time as Prime Minister, Britain’s other famous female “Shy Di” was a model of passive, innocent, feminine beauty and seemed to have no faults. She appeared to epitomize stability by not posing a threat to the British monarchy, gender roles, or British national identity. Of course, once she understood how she could use her celebrity factor, the world would understand just how much power Diana had, but in the early 1980s, she was a demure, perfect, fairytale princess-to-be.

In addition to Diana’s innocent persona, the press acknowledged her suitability for Charles and the royal family. In her article, Ellison also asserted, “She is a virgin and seen to be one. She is untarnished, unblemished.” Diana’s purity and virginity were important factors in her eligibility to marry Charles due to societal and royal expectations. Along with her other childlike qualities, this helped endear her to the people. Diana’s noble status was also an important factor in her suitability for Charles. In “The Palace Stays Mum on ‘Delightful’ Diana” Martin Walker explained, “Although noble (the Earldom of Spencer dates to Georgian times), Lady Diana is not of royal blood, which disturbs some traditionalists.” Class was clearly important to British society at this time, and Walker was careful to note that Diana was not completely common. Again, her noble title helped her seem more appropriate for a role in the royal family, adhering to royal traditions and thus making the monarchy seem like a stable institution.

71 Ibid.
In addition to her innocence and perfection for the role of a royal bride, Diana and Charles also had a romantically idyllic element to their engagement. In “Charles ‘Amazed’ by Diana’s Yes,” the writer said Diana “was ‘absolutely delighted, thrilled, blissfully happy’ to be engaged.” Diana’s flat mate also reported that Diana sat on the bed next to her to tell her with a big smile on her face that she was going to marry Prince Charles. Diana seemed like a normal girl in love, only she was marrying a prince she had known since her youth. This real life fairytale captivated the public, especially in conjunction with Diana’s childlike innocence and ability to fulfill the requirements of a 1980s royal bride. Furthermore, people fell in love with these depictions of Diana, increasing their support for the institution of the British monarchy.

Unlike the stereotypically perfect Diana, before Camilla Parker Bowles could marry Prince Charles, she had to overcome many obstacles and face a media overhaul to gain public approval. Charles and Camilla met at a polo match in 1970, and their continued affair led to problems in Charles and Diana’s marriage. Beloved Diana won much public sympathy, especially when she famously said, “There were three in the marriage so it was a bit crowded.” Charles and Diana divorced in 1996. After Camilla and her husband separated in 1995, she and Charles slowly became a public couple until Diana’s death in 1997 when Camilla once again retreated from the public eye. They still continued their relationship, giving Camilla an increasingly public role. Charles and Camilla announced their engagement on February 10, 2005 and were married April 9, 2005. Although divorce rates had increased from 4,886 in 1937 to 141,322 in 2005, Camilla’s status as a divorcée still made her unpopular. However, the

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74 Ibid.
76 Ibid.
77 Sedghi and Rogers, “Divorce Rates Data.”
growing number of divorces, as well as new legislation that allowed Charles to remain an heir to the throne, made Camilla appear less of a problem than Wallis had been in 1936. Even so, the press continued to make comparisons to Edward’s abdication in an effort to problematize the engagement and reveal the lack of transparency in the arrangement. The people saw Camilla as worse than Wallis Simpson due to Camilla’s affair with Charles, a married man with two children. The British did not want Camilla to become Queen by marriage so were adamantly against the couple’s relationship. Camilla needed the support of the people; otherwise, her unpopularity could endanger Charles’ future as King of England and thus the future of the monarchy.

Although her status as a divorcée was controversial, Camilla’s biggest obstacle was comparisons to Diana, especially in light of Diana’s tragic death which inspired what the press described as an “outpouring of grief.” After Diana’s death, there was a “feeding frenzy” among the press during which a flurry of journalists wrote articles and tributes for Diana to fill the week between her death and her burial. These stories spurred people to act as if Diana’s death was a huge calamity affecting everyone, even if the entire nation was not as united in grief as the stories made it appear. Thus, the palace, wanting to avoid another crisis, had to take care when introducing the people to the idea of Charles marrying Camilla because the British people were so sensitive to all things regarding Diana. Starting in 1990, the press began trying to rebrand

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80 Ibid., 128.
81 Ibid., 131.
Camilla and create a love story for her and Charles. The media staged their wedding to garner the most public support for the couple.

Camilla underwent a transformation in the press from a hated witch to a beloved woman. Stefanie Marsh portrayed Camilla and Charles as having a true love story in “‘There Were Three of Us in This.’” When describing the beginning of Charles and Camilla’s affair, Marsh wrote, Charles’s “uncle, Earl Mountbatten of Burma, has been blamed for having persuaded his nephew that the ‘bedded-can’t-be-wedded’ rule still applied to the Royal family.”

By placing the blame of the affair on someone other than Charles and Camilla, the couple seemed more innocent, which meant the public would be more willing to support them. Marsh continued, “Over the next three decades, their emotional and sexual bond was ruptured only temporarily – for five years – when in 1981, the Prince finally married an 18-year-old nursery school teacher, Lady Diana Spencer.” In this sentence, Diana seemed like the intruder who ruined a happy relationship, not Camilla. Furthermore, the title alluded to Diana’s famous quote about Charles’s infidelity, only now Diana was the third, unwanted person in the happy relationship. This reversed the traditional narrative of Camilla the witch breaking the beloved Diana’s heart. Marsh

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also characterized Diana as an immature, mildly insignificant youth unworthy of marrying Charles.

Emma Wilkins continued the positive portrayals of Camilla and presented her as unselfish in “Camilla ‘laughs off Troubles.’” According to the article, Camilla did not tell Charles of all her terrible interactions with the press because she did not want to worry him excessively. She also chose to laugh at the press when they included vicious nicknames and terribly unflattering pictures of her. In this situation, Camilla became the victim, and the press became the villain.\footnote{Emma Wilkins, “Camilla ‘Laughs off Troubles,’” The Times, August 19, 1997, http://find.galegroup.com.} This further gathered her support from the people. Damian Whitworth in “Camilla, I Love You,” built upon this line of thought by suggesting she is improving Charles. He noted, “She has already transformed his life. The Prince of Wales seems to be a happier man and his contentment in his home life is beginning to show in public.”\footnote{Damian Whitworth, “Camilla, I Love You,” The Times, April 3, 2006, http://find.galegroup.com.} Though Whitworth wrote this article one year after Charles and Camilla married, the article still showed public opinion turning in Camilla’s favor. He did not find her status as a divorcée to be pertinent and did not unfavorably compare her to Diana. The monarchy’s acceptance of a divorcée showed it was adapting as an institution in order to stay relevant. Furthermore, Whitworth’s depiction of Camilla as a warm, funny individual helped win her public favor.

Journalists began highlighting the love story between Charles and Camilla to make them appear to be a suitable match. The article “Charles should marry Camilla says Carey” quoted George Carey, a former Archbishop of Canterbury. Carey explained, “[Charles] is heir to the throne and he loves [Camilla]. The natural thing is that they should get married.”\footnote{“Charles should marry Camilla says Carey,” Daily Mail, June 2, 2004, http://www.dailymail.co.uk.} Carey’s stature as a former Archbishop of Canterbury lent his statement more weight and validity, further encouraging readers that this was a suitable match. He went on to say, “The Christian faith is all
about forgiveness. We all make mistakes. Failure is part of the human condition and there is no
doubt that there has been a strong loving relationship, probably since they were very young, that
has endured over the years.” Citing Christian doctrine added an air of propriety to Charles and
Camilla’s relationship and morally encouraged the readers to forgive Camilla and accept her as a
future member of the royal family. This forgiveness could start a period of reconciliation that
would allow the couple to truly be happy without worrying about the public’s opinions.

In addition to showing the transformation of Camilla from a despised woman to a
beloved figure, journalists also highlighted how relatable Camilla is. Rebecca Tyrell emphasized
this quality in “‘If She Has a Problem, Rather Than See a Therapist, She Will Go Foxhunting,
Come Back and Pour Rum in Her Tea.’” Tyrell used the phrase “People like Camilla” several
times, which acknowledged how similar she is to the average British citizen. She also described
Camilla as “wretched with love” for her first husband, making her seem more relatable to people
who have been in the same situation. When Tyrell did compare Camilla to Diana, she made
Diana seem distanced from the average citizen because she was impossibly perfect and kind
whereas Camilla “cheers people up just by being herself…she is good old, bad old, Tiggerish
Camilla.” By having the reader identify with Camilla, Diana seemed staid, old-fashioned, and
more unreachable. Once again, this curried public support for Camilla and for the increasingly
modernizing monarchy.

The article “Long Live Queen Camilla” began with “We have a new princess – a princess
for the 21st century.” It continued, “Our fag-puffing princess…mucks out horses, dresses for

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87 Ibid.
88 Rebecca Tyrell, “‘If She Has a Problem, Rather Than See a Therapist, She Will Go Foxhunting, Come Back and
comfort and slaps the baked beans on the table at tea time… Our princess reflects the nation.”

Again, the writer signaled that Camilla is ordinary, but not in a bad way. The journalist said, “If Camilla were to become queen, she would be a very contemporary role model… Camilla was not bombed out in the blitz or exiled from India. She is separated from the person she loves, a single parent, just a plain mum.” This acceptance of Camilla as a possible future Queen shows the success of her media overhaul. Additionally, the newspaper article noted divorce is becoming more acceptable and that people want to see real love and not just a fairy tale. In the 21st century, the British want their royals to seem more accessible, and this portrayal of Camilla played off of that to gain her support. Because Camilla was a modern royal, the monarchy seemed more modern by accepting her and by starting to destigmatize divorce.

Not all royals need to undergo a media overhaul, and Kate certainly did not. William and Kate have a very different story from Charles and Camilla, although comparisons to Diana and the royal family’s long list of recent divorces shaped their engagement and marriage. Prince William and Catherine “Kate” Middleton became friends at Scotland’s University of St. Andrew’s and began their relationship in 2002, allegedly after William saw Kate model a revealing dress in a charity fashion show. The country was surprised at Kate’s status as a commoner, albeit one from the upper-middle class. The couple split temporarily in 2007 due to strains on their relationship caused by the media, but they were together again by 2008. On November 16, 2010 the pair announced their engagement, Kate sporting the iconic sapphire engagement ring Charles had given Diana. They were married on April 29, 2011.

Recessions cause people to debate the utility and cost of monarchy, and, after the recession in 2008 and

90 Ibid.
91 “A History of Royal Weddings.”
2009, the British monarchy knew they had to use William and Kate’s wedding to prove the royal family’s utility by putting on a spectacle that exhibited the monarchy’s traditions and permanence but also its modernity. Entering the twenty first-century, Britons experienced increased connection via social media, and they expected to also feel connected to and invested in their royals. William and Kate’s wedding provided that opportunity to link the royals and the people. This ritual was popular for several reasons. Although Kate and Diana have many significant differences – such as their age when they married, their level of education, and the length of time they dated their grooms before engagement – people consistently compare Kate to Diana. Additionally, the British public had been aching for a true love story after the press overexposed the breakdown of the marriages of three of the Queen’s four children.\(^92\) The people wanted another love story like the one that surrounded Charles and Diana’s wedding, only this time they wanted it to be authentic and long lasting.

The press characterized Kate as accessibly ordinary through her lifestyle and class. One example of this is Stephanie Marsh’s “The Face.” The article began,

> Twenty five years ago, when the Prince of Wales was looking for a wife, everyone agreed she had to be a virgin. Now we read that Kate Middleton, Prince William’s live-in girlfriend, has been invited to dinner with the Queen – twice. And the Queen loves her.\(^93\)

\(^{92}\) Clarke, *Hope and Glory*, 388.

Marsh also openly called William and Kate “lovers.” With society becoming more permissive of pre-marital sex, it was logical to allow Kate the same freedoms a “normal” woman would have. Unlike the 1980s, people generally do not regard cohabitation before marriage as a particularly scandalous activity, so the royal family would seem antiquated for forcing William to choose a bride simply because she was a virgin. Emphasizing that William and Kate lived together and slept together made them seem like a more modern couple, which helped the royal family appear more relatable and Kate more popular. This further showcased the monarchy’s adaptive nature which allowed it to continue as a source of British national identity.

In Alan Hamilton’s “Pardon! How the Class Struggle Stills Rules in Royal Press Coverage,” Hamilton minimized the issue of Kate’s class – one of the few reasons any British citizen could have claimed Kate is unsuitable for William – by noting the British obsession with it. Hamilton called it “malicious snobbery.” He pointed out, “Few commentators have given the Middletons credit for their solid English bourgeois qualities. They have made a lot of money entirely through their own efforts…, and they appear to be a close and stable family.” By victimizing the Middleton family, Hamilton allowed the public to empathize with them and realize how similar many of their backgrounds are to Kate’s. Fairytales such as Cinderella have instilled a societal dream of a “rags to riches” love story, and some working-class girls aspire to marrying into a higher class family. Thus, these girls would be able to empathize with Kate and would understand how terrible it would be for class to prevent her from marrying the love of her life. Oliver Marre studied the connection between Kate’s popularity and her class in “Girl, interrupted,” and quoted the organizer of a Kate fan club who said, “Kate, with her resolutely

94 Ibid.
96 Ibid.
bourgeois origins, can truly be said to be one of us.”

Here, the British public are able to claim Kate as their own, making them more invested in the couple and thus in the monarchy. Kate’s lifestyle and class made her seem more relatable and modern and thus more popular with the British. However, the public did not like her just because she shared many commonalities with them; they also liked her because the press made her seem flawless.

The press created the fantasy that Kate is perfect. Marsh said in “The Face” that “The fact that she is so perfect makes it very difficult for tabloid reporters to say very much about her.”

Another example is Richard Price and Rebecca English’s “The New Diana and Fergie?” They noted Kate’s life “is perfect preparation for being a princess” and her sense of style is modest enough to be “more in step with the Royal Family” than the skin-tight and revealing ensembles of Prince Harry’s girlfriend at the time, Chelsy Davy. The title even alluded to the comparisons to the saintly Diana. Kate’s behavior and similarities to Diana make her even more popular with the British people. Of course, a future princess has to be stylish, as the article title “The making of a princess: How Kate Middleton’s style has evolved” clearly explained.

The press also heralded Kate’s discretion and behavior. Damian Whitworth reported in “No Alcohol and Lots of Control” that Kate “displays remarkable poise in public.” She does not drink alcohol when she is out because there will invariably be photographers waiting for her outside the nightclub. By highlighting her self-control and discretion, Whitworth reassured the people that Kate is perfect for William and for Britain; if she becomes Queen, she will not embarrass the country.

98 Marsh, “The Face."
102 Ibid.
Throughout the course of William and Kate’s relationship, the press also showcased the modern and fairy-tale elements of the royal family. In “William and the Fairytale Girl,” the author commented on how William had been dealing with the press. One year earlier when the paparazzi first took pictures of William and Kate on the ski slopes, the prince was furious. However, “this year, new images have appeared without any fuss.”\(^{103}\) Although William is fiercely protective of his and his family’s privacy, he too had learned that the royal family must work with the newspapers. Additionally, the article mentioned again Kate’s impeccable behavior and track record. The writer also said, “Significantly, there is no attempt [from Clarence House] to dampen the rampaging speculation, with headlines describing Miss Middleton as a ‘modern princess.’”\(^{104}\) Another reason the press thinks Kate is perfect is because of the romantic nature of her story, as the author referenced in the title of the article. However, the author was quick to assure readers that Kate is a modern princess, one who understands the people. Like Diana before her, Kate breathed some new life into the monarchy, allowing it to continue to be a pillar of British nationalism.

Coverage of royal weddings tends to focus on the brides, who bring the potential for change in the monarchy as the newest members of the royal family. The press created specific tropes and characterizations for each royal bride to either show the monarchy as stable and

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\(^{104}\) Ibid.
traditional or as modern and adaptive. With the notable exception of Wallis Simpson, these cultivated media images allowed the nation to more fully unite in celebrating the royal wedding, further solidifying the monarchy’s place in national identity.

**BIRTHS & CHRISTENINGS**

As the saying goes, first comes love, then comes marriage, and then come the parents with a baby carriage. After being so invested in the royal wedding, the press can extend that investment to the birth of the royal couple’s first child. Royal brides understand their primary job is to produce “an heir and a spare” to ensure the continuity of the royal line. Even today, royal brides live under constant surveillance until the birth of at least one child, with people analyzing every word, stomach pat, and declined alcoholic beverage in the attempt to anticipate the next royal birth. Thanks to centuries’ long anxiety about royal succession, reporters take great interest in the births and christenings of heirs to the throne.

According to tradition, a proclamation signed by the doctor and placed on an easel in the Buckingham Palace courtyard announces royal births. Several days later, the parents will reveal the names they have given to their baby, and newspapers analyze the symbolism of each name. The next step is the baby’s christening. Since the monarch is head of the Church of England, he or she must be christened in order to sit on the throne. Thus, Britain celebrates the christening of royal babies, especially the heirs to the throne. Throughout the birth and the christening, the royal baby becomes the nation’s baby, reiterating
the royal family’s status as the national family. Royal births have been fairly standard until the past several decades. Starting with William’s birth, the newspapers have become increasingly interested in the mother’s pregnancy and the couple’s parenting styles. Ultimately, as the coverage of the births of Charles, William, and George suggest, newspapers can draw on popular parenting expectations to create more support and joy for the birth of the newest heir.

Charles Philip Arthur George was born on November 14, 1948 to Princess Elizabeth and Prince Philip and christened on December 15, 1948. Just three years after the end of World War II, his status as heir to the throne produced the reassurance that the British monarchy would continue, and his birth provided a happy occasion for national celebration. Although the Olympics occurred in London in 1948, a potential cause for national unity and rejoicing, people nicknamed them the “Austerity Games” because rationing was still in place. Thus, the nation needed another event to celebrate national unity. Charles’ birth provided just that. Charles’ christening and birth not only reflected older values of British society with greater privacy from the media and an attention to tradition but also created an aura of prestige and exclusivity, which would have garnered support and attention from the more conservative British public of the late 1940s.

Charles’ birth was much more old-fashioned compared to modern births, keeping the occasion in line with British values of the day to garner public celebration for the monarchy. Unlike other recent royal births, the papers did not announce that Princess Elizabeth was pregnant. However, newspapers did later report on the preparations for the royal baby. In “Everything is ready for the royal baby,” a Daily Mail reporter announced, “The Princess and Lady Mary also examined the 55-piece layette. Most of the garments are pure white. All
preparations have now been made for the birth at the Palace.” The assembly of such a large and pure white layette received much more importance than it would today, especially with rationing in place, and readers in 1948 would have found such a layette noteworthy and appropriate. An article entitled “Our London Correspondence” remarked on the old-fashioned nature of Charles’ birth, saying, “The old and obsolescent phrase ‘happy event’ (it was also used by Mr. Attlee in the Commons) is well chosen. The news has made people here extremely happy.” Even in 1948, the phrasing seemed antiquated, and this sets Charles’ birth apart from the births of more recent heirs to the throne which seek to appear more modern. The article continued, “The most important news of the event to-day was the weight of the baby, which was given as 7 lb. 6 oz. Women say that this is just about what the weight of a boy should be.”

Today, one would not expect an article to report with such rigid and blatant gender roles, but this style of reporting was more appropriate and common in the 1940s. The country was better able to rejoice in the birth of a new prince because he was healthy.

Fitting with the old fashioned nature of his birth announcements, Charles’ birth and christening were very traditional, continuing an aura of prestige and majesty to appeal to the interests of readers. Most British citizens in the 1940s were not looking for relatable monarchy as much as people today so the reporters did not try to depict the royal family as ordinary or down to earth. Instead, articles relied on referencing royal tradition as well as placing Charles on a pedestal. “Prince Charles of Edinburgh” analyzed all four of Charles’ names to trace them in his family history. The article remarked, “In giving their son four names Princess Elizabeth and her husband have followed recent customs in the Royal Family, although Princess Elizabeth

107 Ibid.
herself has only three – Elizabeth Alexandra Mary.”

This suggested a return to British royal traditions, but it still created a way to differentiate Charles from other common babies who typically only have a first name and a middle name. In “Prince Charles Slept, the King Looked Well,” the reporter commented, “Prince Charles wore the historic christening robe of white silk and Honiton lace that was made for Queen Victoria’s children.”

This attention to his christening attire explicitly drew connections to the past, especially to the esteemed relationship with Queen Victoria. This detail added importance to Charles and his christening by further setting him apart from the christenings of other, common babies.

The article “Fairy-tale baby comes to Palace” added to the emphasis on tradition and stature by commenting, “Lovers of tradition will, it is certain, delight in the fact that once more a child of royal blood has conformed to fairy-story-book requirements by making an initial appearance in a palace.”

The idea of a fairytale royal contributed a magical element to the christening, making the ritual sound more noteworthy and special. The article also debated the site of the christening: “By tradition the baby should be christened in the private chapel at Buckingham Palace. But the chapel was destroyed by bombs during the war. The possibility is that the Princess will choose the small church of St. Mary Magdalene at Sandringham, where the

King was baptized.\textsuperscript{111} This detail illustrated that the country, and even the royal family, was still healing from the war, and Charles’ christening could facilitate celebration in light of this destruction. Though unable to subscribe to the exact tradition of a christening at Buckingham Palace, the article suggested following a different royal precedent. In future generations, royal parents would be more encouraged and able to create new traditions instead of picking among old traditions. The sites listed are also more exclusive christening locations. Since the monarchy seemed more universally accepted and supported than it has been in later decades, rituals could appeal to the public while maintaining the aura that these rituals were special, set apart, and exclusive. During Charles’ birth, the press and the royal family portrayed the monarchy as stable and very traditional to continue its existence as a source of national identity.

William Arthur Philip Louis was born on June 21, 1982 to Prince Charles and Princess Diana, and he was christened on August 4, 1982. Newspapers announced Diana’s pregnancy, saying,

\begin{quote}
The announcement at 11 am yesterday said: ‘It is announced from Buckingham Palace that the Princess of Wales is expecting a baby in June next year’ – a contrast from 1947, when the announcement simply read: ‘Her Royal Highness, the Princess Elizabeth, Duchess of Edinburgh, will undertake no public engagements after the end of June.’\textsuperscript{112}
\end{quote}

William’s birth and christening reflect an era of a more intrusive press as well as more modern roles and expectations for parents, catering to the British public who wanted to see the monarchy begin to modernize.

\textsuperscript{111} Ibid.
The press related expectations for William’s parents to be more modern and involved than previous royal parents. Reporters noted that Prince Charles would be more participative than his father was. “Princess of Wales Expects Baby in June” revealed that “Prince Charles said it was a ‘very good thing’ for fathers to be present at the births of their children.” While this may seem obvious to readers today, previous royal fathers were generally not present for the births of their children, marking Charles as more modern than his royal predecessors. This change made the monarchy seem more adaptive and thus more relatable for people who wanted to celebrate the birth of a new heir. Of course, most articles focused on Diana and her pregnancy. Diana, already a fashion icon, had people following her every style move, even when she was pregnant. In “Designs for a Princess in waiting,” Jean Dobson explored the topic of her maternity wear, saying, “Where will the Princess buy her maternity clothes? Judging by her ability to buy the best of British designs and put London fashion back on the map, she will be going to her favourite designers and asking for larger sizes for the first few months.” Although reporters often detailed Princess Elizabeth’s attire, they did not comment on her maternity clothes and did not place judgement on her attire even when she was not pregnant. However, the theme of reporting on royal women’s clothes, combined with Diana’s celebrity status and more invasive press, meant that newspapers understood people

113 Ibid.
wanted to know every detail of these modern royal parents’ lives. Diana was already so popular that highlighting her maternal role made the public even more excited for the royal birth.

Coverage for William’s birth was much more invasive than for previous royal births, reflecting a more modern age of paparazzi. The article “Prince William – Traditional but Low on Sex Appeal” analyzed the attractiveness of William’s new name in a somewhat shocking way, claiming the future King of England’s name could be shorted into “Silly Billy” and that the name “also has the possible modern drawback of being rated – according to research – decidedly ‘unsexy’ by London women.”115 Reporter John Ezard quoted Mr. Dunkling, author of First Names First, who declared, “William is not seen as sexy at all. There is no doubt that for women the name has the image of a pipe-smoking, solid, tweed-jacketed kind of person. Of course that may be no bad thing.”116 Previous reports on the names of royal babies focused mainly on the origins of the names within the family, but calling William an unsexy name was a much more invasive analysis of the royal heir’s name. It also showed the people felt they were entitled to comment on the lives of the royals, indicating a type of public ownership of the monarchy, especially Charles and Diana.

The new royal parents also faced more invasive press and public, as John Ezard and Angela Singer highlighted in “Thorn among Royal Bouquets as the Baby Leaves Hospital.” They wrote, “Charles emerged in merry form to say that the baby was ‘looking more human’ than the previous night. Diana was very well and recovering strength. Asked if the birth was a painful experience, he said, ‘Have you ever had a baby? No? Well, you wait and see.’”117 Printing Charles’ quip to a somewhat nosy subject served as a break from the privacy afforded to

116 Ibid.
the previous generations. The conversation in the article also suggested an increased dialogue between the people and the younger members of the royal family, which the monarchy would continue to build in order to appear relevant, modern, and thus sustainable. Furthermore, Ezard and Singer printed the harsh words of Labour MP Mr. Willie Hamilton who “announced that the boy’s future was ‘going to be one long story of nausea, deference, and Land of Hope and Glory rubbish for many years.’”

Although anti-royal sentiments have been increasing in recent years, Hamilton’s words seem unnecessarily grim, especially on such a happy occasion. This bitterness contributed to the intrusive reporting and commenting on William’s birth, and it would also increase the sympathy the public had for Charles and Diana.

Although aspects of William’s birth and christening were modern, his parents still adhered to tradition, reflecting that slight return to Victorian values Margaret Thatcher had advocated. Of course, William wore the same christening gown as his father had in 1948, and other aspects of his christening were traditional as well. William Greaves in “A Prince’s first pageant” listed some of these traditions. Greaves reported, “Inevitably in a ceremony encompassing 2,000 years of tradition, superstition will walk hand in hand with genuine religion. Prince William will be expected to cry, which has become associated with driving out the devil and purging original sin.”

Although this was superstition, it was a superstition with a long history and high expectations. Thankfully, as Martin Wainwright noted in “Prince William Falls

\[118\] Ibid.

in with Tradition,” William “squeaked three times to the delight of the superstitious, who consider this a sign that the devil has left the body of the new Christian.”  

William’s squeak satisfied the expectations of the superstitious, but his christening fulfilled the people’s expectations in other ways as well. The setting for the christening seemed perfectly traditional because “the ceremony in the music room coincided with the Changing of the Guard, hot sunshine and all the traditional accoutrements of royal occasions.”  

Because the press highlighted that the christening fulfilled the people’s expectations, the nation was better able to unite in celebration during the ritual.

Thirty-one years later, the world would see another christening of the newest royal heir. When the Palace announced Kate was in the hospital for acute morning sickness, the world discovered William and Kate would be parents. People eagerly awaited the birth of the child popularly referred to as Baby Cambridge. The 2013 Succession to the Crown Act outlawed male primogeniture just in time for the birth of Baby Cambridge. The possibility that, if William and Kate’s first born child was a female, she would inherit the throne before any of her younger male siblings, excited people.  

However, William and Kate’s first born child was a boy. George Alexander Louis was born on July 22, 2013, and he was christened on October 23, 2013. Support for the monarchy was at a high in 2013, thanks to William and Kate’s marriage, the Queen’s Diamond Jubilee, and the 2012 London Olympics, and newspapers capitalized on the popular royal family when George was born. George’s birth and christening appealed to the public because they were the most modern, with the outlaw of male primogeniture, even higher.

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121 Ibid.

expectations for Kate’s appearance, and the emphasis on William and Kate adapting tradition to suit their needs and desires.

One reason why George’s birth and christening was the most modern was the law outlawing male primogeniture, which helped characterize reporting on his birth. “Duke and Duchess of Cambridge announce they are expecting first baby” looked at this new law. Reporter Caroline Davies said, “A proposed radical shakeup to the monarchy's rules of succession means this latest member of the royal family will become third in line to the throne regardless of its gender or that of the duchess’s future children. Until such changes, a female heir could have been superseded by a younger, male heir.”

Male primogeniture is still a dreadfully outdated practice, especially with famous monarchs such as Elizabeth I, Victoria, and Elizabeth II who demonstrated that women were extremely capable of running a country by themselves. The potential for a female Baby Cambridge to inherit the throne made the occasion of this royal birth seem more momentous and historically important. Furthermore, it supported the monarchy’s place in national identity because the monarchy was modernizing to adapt to the demands of the twenty-first century.

In addition to the outlaw of primogeniture, the even more intrusive reporting on Kate’s pregnancy made George’s birth the most modern for royal heirs to the throne. Esther Addley in “Pregnant Kate: after months of gossip and false claims, this time it’s official” highlighted some of the intrusive reporting. Since William and Kate waited longer than Charles and Diana did to start their family, newspapers and tabloids became impatient. Addley noted this waiting period caused problems for Kate: “For the former Ms Middleton that has meant 20 months in which every morsel to cross her lips, every polite response offered to impertinent questions about her

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fertility and sex life has been scrutinised by the tabloid press at home and overseas for signs of an imminent heir.” 124 Furthermore, “her 30th birthday in January led to barely concealed mutterings that she had better get on with it.” 125 Though Addley did not necessarily espouse the ideas in her article, this article revealed how the media picked apart Kate’s every move, especially during her pregnancy.

Keeping in line with the constant comparisons to Diana, reporters also commented on Kate’s fashion choices. One Daily Mail article referenced Diana’s stereotypically 1980s maternity style and proclaimed the title “Don’t hide your bump inside a frilly tent!” because even when pregnant, Kate must look perfect and modern. 126 The article “Despite her ordeal, Kate looked like Snow White with lashings of Middleton Woman eyeliner” analyzed the image of perfection and beauty Kate radiated after giving birth to George. Jan Moir said, “Her frosted petal charm remained undented by the rigours of birth, while as she flicked her glossy chocolate hair around, it was clear that it had been coiffed to perfection. We had expected nothing less.” 127 This article focused more on Kate’s appearance than on Baby Cambridge, showing a shift in traditional reporting on the births of heirs to the throne. This

125 Ibid.
style of reporting continued the emphasis on stylish royal mothers and added additional
expectations that Kate should look perfect at all times, even after just giving birth.

The newspapers stressed in their reports of George’s christening that William and Kate
wanted to follow some traditions but adapt other traditions to fit their needs and wants, which
allowed the public to better identify with the royal couple. Gone are the days where subjects
wanted to ogle at their monarchs; now, the people want to relate to and connect with their
royalty. William and Kate are so popular, in part, because they seem more down to earth and
accessible to common people. Reporters highlighted the new royal parents’ approachability in
the plans for George’s christening, and the press played up this method. Caroline Davies clearly
stated in “Prince George christened by archbishop in London” that “Royal officials have
emphasized that the Cambridges are keen to do things their own way, but the service remained
largely in line with tradition.”128 This quote explicitly showed the theme of William and Kate’s
marriage thus far: doing things their own way. Robert Hardman touched on that theme in “Boy
who will be King George VII: Traditional…but with a touch of the modern.” He said,

Traditional, loyal, respectful but with a modern touch. That certainly sums up the
choice of George Alexander Louis. But it is also a pretty good description of the
parents who chose these names. In doing so, the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge
have told us rather more about themselves than their two-day-old son.129

Perhaps this is why the christening went so well compared to previous years, as Rebecca English
discussed in “31 years ago it was all so different.” She said, “Prince George’s christening went
perfectly, by all accounts, with a smiling baby and a mother who could barely contain her joy.

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What a contrast to the christening of George’s father William 31 years ago.\textsuperscript{130} Whereas baby William fusses throughout his christening because no one consulted Diana regarding his schedule when planning the christening, William and Kate were both involved in the details of George’s christening. This allowed them to continue to be a more modern royal couple, letting the people relate to them more.

The birth of a new heir is tremendously important for the continuation of the British monarchy, and the baby’s christening solidifies the infant’s place in the royal succession. The nation can unite in hope and in celebration for the baby who will one day become King of England, and the press highlighted the monarchy’s ability to either appear as an integral part of British history and culture or to seem modern and adaptive to the changing needs of the British people. The journalists’ coverage of the births and christenings emphasized the importance of the occasion and rallied public support for the royal family, sustaining the monarchy’s place in national identity.

FUNERALS

In the great circle of life, funerals are inevitable. Of course, British royal funerals are full of the pomp and circumstance associated with other royal rituals, and they have become very

\textsuperscript{130} Rebecca English, “31 years ago it was all so different,” \textit{The Daily Mail}, October 23, 2013, http://www.dailymail.co.uk.
effective tools for harnessing the people’s emotions in support of the monarchy. The deaths of King George VI, Edward VIII, Princess Diana, and the Queen Mother were all notable and worthy of study since each funeral filled a different function and created national unity in different ways. Although other members of the royal household such as Princess Margaret have died in the past century, these four funerals are the most significant. Newspapers used the deaths of royal family members to create a sense of unity through national grief; reporters eulogized King George VI, Edward VIII, Princess Diana, and the Queen Mother by playing up the positive aspects of their lives as well as their deep love for and ties to Britain and its identity.

King George VI died suddenly on February 6, 1952 at age 56 while his daughter Elizabeth was out of the country. Now Queen of England, she rushed home in order to attend his funeral on February 15, 1952. Newspapers created the impression of universal grief over George VI’s death by recalling the theme of his sense of duty that defined his reign. At the same time, the reporters highlighted that Elizabeth was the new queen, making George’s funeral more bittersweet than the funerals of Edward, Diana, and the Queen Mother.

Echoing the theme of George’s duty, articles covering his funeral reemphasized his sense of duty and loyalty to Britain. In “A Christian King,” the reporter explained, “Duty was his star. Had he swerved from it the nation would have been split at the time of the Abdication and would thereby have been weakened for the awful trial of the Second World War…. We owe the late King more than we perhaps realize.”131 Upon his death, Britain was even more grateful for George’s service during the tumultuous abdication crisis and World War II, and the reporter created the impression that the people now had to honor George’s memory since he had so dutifully served them. The reporter had not forgotten how many other countries had lost their monarchies earlier in the twentieth-century, and his gratitude for George’s service implied that

Britain would suffer without a royal family. “King George the Dutiful” expressed a similar sentiment, noting that Canon William Musselwhite of Wolferton wanted George VI to have the title of “George the Dutiful.” He also predicted “that the new Queen, if she be spared long enough to reign over us will be known as ‘Elizabeth the Servant – servant of God by Whose providence she reigns and servant of the peoples now committed to her care.’” This article showed duty defined George VI and his reign, but it offered a glimmer of hope that Elizabeth would be known as a servant of her people, thus continuing George’s legacy. Since George was king, Elizabeth automatically replaced him as monarch as soon as he had died. This seamless transition added a bittersweet note, especially with the insinuation that Elizabeth had learned the importance of service from her dutiful father. The continuation of George’s dutiful legacy emphasized the longevity of the monarchy and the monarchy’s traditions, confirming its status as part of British national identity.

George’s duty characterized depictions of his funeral in the media, but the newspapers also claimed this grief over George’s death united the entire empire. “Tears as Cortege Goes by” clearly captured the grief of the nation, reporting, “A thousand caps and hats came off as the coffin appeared from beneath the canopy,” and that one could hear “only the crunch of feet.” The Daily Mail reporters even called it “a procession of mighty grief.” These reporters created the impression that the funeral was a momentous occasion where thousands of witnesses were silent with grief and respect.

133 Ibid.
135 Ibid.
Other articles articulated the grief of the empire. “Duke Walks behind Bier” quoted Rev. H. D. Anderson’s morning homily at Sandringham, saying, “It is not only the King we mourn today. Although we do mourn him as deeply as any village in the Empire, we also mourn him as our well-loved friend and master.” Rev. Anderson spoke on behalf of the rest of the empire and claimed all the citizens of the empire mourned George equally. Some articles, including “Sorrow in the Commonwealth” listed the regards of the empire’s various parts. The Prime Minister of New Zealand cancelled his trip to Germany in order to return to London, saying, “His Majesty will go down in history as a good and great King, as one who stood as a tower of strength to his peoples of the British Commonwealth and Empire.” The South African government said, “The universal sorrow in South Africa was deepened by the fact that the people had been looking forward to the King’s visit and to his recovering in health after a stay on Natal’s south coast.” Quoting prominent governments around the Commonwealth allowed reporters to claim everyone loved George VI and mourned his death, even as the empire itself began to fall apart.

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138 Ibid.
Though newspapers reported that sadness united the empire, George’s death included a poignant element because Elizabeth became queen, bringing hope to Britain. Consequently, the newspapers frequently reported on her whereabouts and her attire in the days after George’s death. “The Queen Flying Home” quoted a member of Elizabeth’s household who said Elizabeth “stood it bravely – like a Queen” when she heard the news of her father’s death. Her strength appeared to indicate her character and resolve as Queen of England. The article went on to say, “The Queen, wearing a simple beige dress and blue hat, has flown to Entebbe from Nanyuki, the nearest airfield to Royal Lodge, Nyeri, at 3:57 p.m. British time. Not a single photographer, nor a civilian, saw her go.” This attention to fashion generally does not occur for male members of the royal family, but it helped characterize the beginning of her reign, as well as her father’s death. Another article, “The Queen Dowager,” reported on the females in George’s life to elicit more sympathy. The reporter explained, “Never before in all our annals have there been one sovereign Queen and two Queen mothers. Never has Parliament addressed messages of loyalty and sympathy to three Queens in the same afternoon.” This article set this death apart from other royal funerals through emphasizing the surviving female relatives. The image of a grieving mother, a wife, and a daughter created more sympathy for the death of George VI and allowed the nation to mourn the king more fully.

140 Ibid.
George’s brother, Edward VIII, Duke of Windsor, died on May 27, 1972 at the age of 77. His body returned to England for his funeral on June 5, 1972. Edward’s 1936 abdication caused a crisis in the nation, and his death came during a decade of political, economic, and cultural unrest and change. In the 1970s, British and Northern Irish relationships were extremely tense, especially after Bloody Sunday in January of 1972. Apart from this political turmoil, Britain was also facing economic crises. Unlike the rest of Europe, the British economy was still recovering from World War II, and British politicians spent the 1960s and 1970s attempting to reverse the country’s economic decline. The monarchy’s status as a constitutional figurehead instead of a policy maker helped insulate it from the people’s discontent, but people still often question if the monarchy is worth the cost during recessions. However, during Edward’s funeral, the monarchy was able to become more popular and sympathetic. Another reasons for the turbulent decade was the changing culture. The culture in Britain had changed dramatically during the 1960s, most famously with the advent of rock music, which disrupted the social continuity that had been in place since the beginning of the century. Edward simultaneously represented a counter culture figure who had defied the governmental institution for love while also portraying a link to the nation’s more traditional past. Edward’s death presented a moment for the nation to reflect upon the older, stereotypically simpler, days while rallying around the monarchy that had survived throughout all the change and economic turmoil. His funeral allowed for the connection between the turmoil in the 1930s with the problems of the 1970s, implicitly showing the monarchy’s permanence throughout this time period. Newspapers enhanced the nation’s grief over Edward’s funeral by emphasizing how tragic his abdication and exile were as well as recalling his love for Wallis to create more sympathy for both Edward and Wallis.
One theme in the reporting of Edward’s funeral was that he could have been a great king, and that the country and government wronged him by forcing his abdication, appealing to more modern, younger readers. “How polities and public opinion broke the reign of Edward VIII in 325 days” praised Edward, saying, “Proclaimed King Edward VIII in January 1936, he was a symbol of renewal and promise in a time of depression.”142 Daily life had changed drastically since 1936, but the people could still appreciate the hope Edward provided during difficult economic conditions. This identification with and appreciation for Edward would have made his short reign seem even more tragic. *The Guardian* expressed similar regrets when summarizing Edward’s memoirs. The reporter explained, “He himself wanted to take some of the stuffiness out of the monarchy, and out of the court that surrounded it…. He thought he might have had a role as Edward the Innovator.”143 Stating the Edward had a vision for Britain that he never got to live out added a further sad note of unfinished business to the reports of his death. Readers could try to picture how Britain would be different if Edward had not abdicated. The title “Edward the Innovator” would have appealed to younger readers who had been more involved with and supportive of Britain’s cultural shift during the 1960s.

However, even older audiences could still mourn Edward and feel guilty for his forced abdication. In “They came in thousands as if to say ‘Sorry,’” Vincent Mulchrone described the crowds coming to pay their respects. He wrote, “The theme was constant. They weren’t fair to him. He would have been a good king. He felt for the poor.”144 The short sentences added more impact to each sentiment, really emphasizing the fact that Edward could have been a

compassionate, good king. This nostalgic tone contrasted the cultural shifts that had been occurring in Britain during the past decade, appealing to more traditional readers. Furthermore, the article ended by describing the three red roses someone had left with the note “God rest his noble, royal soul. His exile is over.” Underscoring his exile created more sympathy for Edward upon his death. This public support for Edward supplied healing from his abdication during a time of modern upheaval, further boosting public support for the monarchy and suggesting the monarchy could last as a source of national identity through the current problems as well.

Reporters also commented on Edward’s exile in their articles about his funeral to further create sympathy for him. One article’s title, “The Duke Comes Home,” highlighted the idea that Edward belonged in Britain but his country forced to live away from his family and his homeland. “Why he was an exile” was an interview from Lord Boothby, a “lifetime friend of the Duke.” Boothby said, “After the abdication [Edward] was exiled – there is no other word for it – but he could have returned and been able to render so much public service. I always thought it a pity that they did not break with precedent and give [Wallis] the title HRH.” This quote combined the theme of a wronged king with the theme of exile for further emotional impact. He later noted, “He wasn’t happy in France. He was happy to be with [Wallis] – but would have

145 Ibid.
been happier here doing a job, supporting his brother and his niece, and doing it well.” 148 The readers could have previously thought Edward was content abroad, but this article, from a reliable source who claimed to know Edward well, countered that impression. This quote created the picture of Edward as a family man, closely connected with his now deceased brother and his niece who had become queen, and the audience could empathize with the man whose country kept him away from those he loved. Their empathy would increase the collective mourning for Edward’s death. Sympathy for Edward indicated that the public regretted his forced abdication and wanted the monarchy to continue modernizing in order to not only prevent a similar crisis from happening again but also to survive the nation’s current political, economic, and cultural problems and changes.

While Edward’s death was important because of its connection to the abdication and creation of a guilty grief, perhaps the most famous recent royal death was that of Princess Diana.

Diana died in car crash in Paris on August 31, 1997, and the country seemed to be in turmoil until her funeral on September 6, 1997. Scholars Lucy Biddle and Tony Walter worked to understand why a generally stoic nation became so distraught upon the 36-year-old princess’s death in their article “The Emotional English and Their Queen of Hearts.” They explained there are two major grief norms: private grief – the dominant form for the British where people hold themselves together in public but give subtle signs they are sad –

148 Ibid.
and expressive grief. Both of these types of grief appeared at Diana’s death, and they caused tension in Britain.\textsuperscript{149} While the press validated expressive grieving for the first time by showing a nation drowning in grief, the Windsors stayed at Balmoral, practicing the traditional private grief.\textsuperscript{150}

The media was crucial in depicting Diana’s death. Diana’s death became a “media event” because the media was so integral to her death and how the public perceived and remembered her death.\textsuperscript{151} Because of the intensive media presence during Diana’s death and funeral, “grief police,” who insisted upon public mourning, patrolled the nation.\textsuperscript{152} In fact, “To fail to mourn in that week was, therefore, to fail to be a part of the nation: it was a loss of citizenship itself.”\textsuperscript{153} Even though television coverage was important in the media’s portrayal of Diana and her funeral, the British newspapers’ reporting of the event still offered a thorough representation of how reporters talked about Diana’s death in order to unite the nation. This royal funeral called the monarchy’s adaptive nature into question, and the royal family had to work to prove their modernity to the people again. Diana’s sudden death elicited shockingly deep, expressive grief from the British people, and the newspapers created a picture of universal grief and ownership of Diana as the People’s Princess. Reporters also tracked the British people’s anger toward the media and the seemingly unaffected royal family before showing the people’s wholehearted acceptance of the royals as soon as the royal family publicly grieved with the nation.

\textsuperscript{150} \textit{Ibid.}, 97.
\textsuperscript{152} \textit{Ibid.}, 51.
\textsuperscript{153} \textit{Ibid.}, 52.
After Diana’s death, newspapers worked to unite the nation though creating a picture of universal, overwhelming grief. Mark Lawson’s “A New Divine Cult Starts Here” began with a rephrased quote from the *Wasteland*: “Who in Britain – until this week – had believed that death could undo so many?”.\(^{154}\)

Referencing T. S. Elliot added solemnity and sophistication to Diana’s death, and it also implicitly compared the tragedy of her death to the calamity of World War I. Lawson continued, “The public emotion at the death of the princess has been so extreme – and the gulf is now so great between those who instinctively share it and those bemused or appalled by it – that it seems increasingly clear that the phenomenon reflects more than the death of a 36-year-old princess.”\(^{155}\)

While Lawson mentioned there were people who did not excessively mourn Diana’s death, he very clearly stated that her death was monumentally important. Thus, even if the entire nation did not feel united in collective devastation, he prompted readers to treat Diana’s death as more than just an average celebrity death. Instead, readers were to understand that her death affected the country in profound ways.

Diana earned another title upon her death that increased public mourning: the People’s Princess. “The homecoming” quoted Tony Blair’s now famous statement on Diana’s death:

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\(^{155}\) Ibid.
Tony Blair captured the mood when he said: ‘I feel like everyone else in this country. I am utterly devastated. We are a nation in a state of shock, in mourning, in grief. It is so deeply painful for us. She was a wonderful and a warm human being. Though her own life was often sadly touched by tragedy, she touched the lives of so many others in Britain and through the world, with joy and with comfort. She was the people’s princess and that is how she will remain in our hearts and memories forever.’

Although Blair chose the words and phrases, it was reporters David Williams and Bill Mouland who argued that these words captured the sentiments of the entire nation. Naming Diana the People’s Princess allowed the British to claim her as their own, giving them license to mourn her fully and completely. This title also marked Diana as a part of the national character and not just a member of the royal family. Blair’s recently elected New Labour party had promoted connectivity between politicians and constituents, and the title “the People’s Princess” highlighted the connection between the royals and the people. Thus, the press used this title to help illustrate the monarchy adapting to the people’s changing needs and wants all while discussing the nation’s universal grief over Diana’s death.

In addition to creating the impression of universal grief over Diana’s death, newspapers highlighted the people’s anger toward the paparazzi, blaming the press for her death. “The homecoming” quoted Diana’s brother, Earl Spencer, who bitterly claimed “every proprietor and editor of every publication which had paid for intrusive pictures of his sister had ‘blood on their hands.’” This quote was even more powerful because it came from a member of Diana’s family, creating more pathos for the Spencers and thus more anger toward the paparazzi. Earl Spencer not only blamed the press who stalked Diana at the time of her death, but also blamed every member of the media, giving the ramifications of her death more weight. In “This defining

157 Ibid.
moment for the media,” reporter David Mellor did not even ask for a privacy law but instead simply told everyone to stop paying for intrusive photographs of the royals. He claimed, “The tragic death of the Princess of Wales is a watershed, a defining moment in our attitude to certain aspects of media intrusion.” Furthermore, he argued, “[I]f her death does not mark a turning point in our attitude to the vile excesses of these photo thugs, we should be ashamed of ourselves.” This article extended the sentiments of Earl Spencer’s statement by providing a call to action. The British people could now learn from Diana’s death to protect future royals from a similar fate. With emotions so high after Diana’s death, newspapers could not simply ignore the role of the paparazzi in causing her death. Reporters walked a fine line between criticizing the paparazzi who killed Diana and critiquing their own industry. Mellor’s use of “photo thugs” worked to clearly differentiate Daily Mail reporters from the now-hated paparazzi, protecting the newspaper’s credibility.

Reporters did not shy away from the people’s anger toward the media, and they also tracked the British people’s anger toward the seemingly unfeeling royal family. The public was outraged the Queen did not fly the flag over Buckingham Palace at half-mast right after Diana’s death. The article “Let the Flag Fly at Half Mast” followed this controversial issue. Richard Kay and Geoffrey Levy quoted “an exasperated royal spokesperson” who said the flag “is flown whenever the Queen is in residence. It is never flown at half-mast. Even if the Queen died it would not because Charles would be King and the standard would be his.” However, many people thought this logic was irrelevant, including Labour’s Stephen Twigg who argued, “We are not in a situation that has any precedent. The point everyone is making is that Diana was

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159 Ibid.
unique.” Kay and Levy even called the Windsors “stony-hearted royals,” further characterizing them as insensitive and unfeeling. The issue of the flag at Buckingham Palace became something tangible the British people could rally behind and channel their grief and anger into. This snub also served as a symbol of the royal family’s insensitivity as well as a symbol for their failure to modernize in this instance. “The Protocol of Protocol” tackled the problem of the flag, and the reporter explained, “Among culprits arraigned since the death of Princess Diana, few have taken more flak than protocol. The public thinks the Palace should fly the flag at half mast. If protocol says not, so much the worse for protocol.” He differentiated between old and new protocol, concluding, “The status of protocol has been changed for ever this week.” This reporter assigned further meaning to Diana’s death and called for a change in protocol. The article also suggested Britain would never be the same again since Diana’s death had changed parts of British life “for ever.”

Although the people channeled their anger at the royal family’s perceived unfeelingness into the Buckingham Palace flag, the newspapers clearly showed a turn in the people’s emotions as soon as the royal family grieved publically with them. In “The Queen comes back to grieve with her people,” Paul Harris reported on Queen Elizabeth’s return to London, saying, “It was potentially one of the most difficult days of her reign but in the space of a few minutes, with the Duke of Edinburgh at her side, she lifted the cloud of tension which has hung over the thousands who came to London to pay their respects.” Furthermore, Harris said, “Yesterday, she was allowed simply to be a woman whose family, and, in particular whose beloved grandchildren, 

161 Ibid.
162 Ibid.
164 Ibid.
had been devastated by bereavement.”166 This article humanized the Queen and made her appear more vulnerable and thus sympathetic. The very act of returning to London and seeing the people allowed her to reenter the hearts of her subjects, Harris explained. Instead of being a head of state, this article depicted her as a normal grandmother who naturally needed time with her family to process the tragic news of a familial death. By adapting to this new style of public grieving, the Queen was able to save the monarchy’s reputation among the British people.

“They reached out for hand after hand” turned that sympathetic eye from the Queen to Princes William and Harry. Richard Pendlebury reported, “And if Princes William and Harry did shed a tear then so too did many among the thousands who witnessed their remarkable display of youthful dignity and courage. The two boys won the nation’s hearts yesterday…”167 Though the princes were already popular, the article showed they experienced an outpouring of empathy and sympathy, helping to heal the negative impressions the country had had of the royal family. The article described that Harry “darted between the lines of people, gathering as many proffered bouquets as possible.”168 By using the word “dart,” the reporter made Harry seem even younger, and the image of young children darting around to play contrasted heavily with the fact this child was darting around to
pay respects after his mother’s death. This imagery increased his sympathetic factor. Pendlebury went on to say, “Unseen in Balmoral, this strength had been slandered as emotional impotency. In Kensington Gardens yesterday it was revealed as raw courage, propelled by a sense of public duty.”\textsuperscript{169} Again, the fact the princes were back in London seemed to be all it took for the public to embrace the royal family once more. Pendlebury explained, “The process of reconciliation had begun.”\textsuperscript{170} Diana’s death was tragic, but Britain would, in time, heal.

Less than two months after the death of Queen Elizabeth’s younger sister, Princess Margaret, the Queen lost her mother. Elizabeth Bowes-Lyon, The Queen Mother, was 101 at the time of her death on March 30, 2002. Queen Elizabeth II broke with protocol to address the nation on her loss, a more personal address than the one others persuaded her to give after Diana’s death. A symbol of Britain’s past, the Queen Mother’s death elicited divisive opinions among the British and the newspapers; some articles expressed ambivalence or scorn for a possibly outdated and irrelevant woman while others emphasized her humanity and her contributions to the royal family. This divide showcased the somewhat contradictory nature of the British monarchy because it must appear stable and traditional while also adaptive and modern. Viewed in light of Diana’s death, the Queen Mother’s funeral elicited a much more British form of private grieving.

The \textit{Daily Mail} attacked \textit{The Guardian} for what it perceived to be \textit{The Guardian}’s callous reporting on the Queen Mother’s death. In “Way to go – the way Queen Mum went,” Kevin Waterhouse argued, “Invariably, she was sneered at by the Guardian-reading classes, if only for the mortal sin of being royal.”\textsuperscript{171} Even the title of another article “An outpouring of

\textsuperscript{169} \textit{Ibid}.
\textsuperscript{170} \textit{Ibid}.
pride that proves the snobs wrong” implicitly attacked papers such as The Guardian by not only calling them “snobs” but also by arguing they were wrong in their predictions of the public’s mourning for the Queen Mother. Philip Norman furthered these arguments in “Our nation mourns – but this time with dignity,” saying,

There were always poison pens at the ready to question the Queen Mother’s ‘relevance’ to 21st century Britain and bid her no more than a grudging and patronizing farewell. These pens have been busy in the past few days, creating a vision of a country largely indifferent to her death, with people telephoning in droves to television companies to complain about the interruption of normal programmes. The ringleader has been The Guardian newspaper, which this week published an editorial, disguised as a front page lead story, claiming that Britain was ‘uncertain’ in its response to the Queen Mother’s death, and that this ambivalence revealed what a divided nation we have become.

Norman not only insulted The Guardian but also blamed the paper for further dividing the nation. He also discredited The Guardian’s articles and reporters by calling them “poison pens,” adding to the theme of that particular paper contributing to the decline of Britain and national unity. This article also called The Guardian’s credibility into question when claiming the front page lead story was actually just an editorial. These articles in the Daily Mail highlighted how divisive the Queen Mother’s death was in the newspapers.

While the divide between the views of the Daily Mail and The Guardian was clear, some articles in the publications crossed lines to depict different representations of the Queen Mother. One such portrayal was the Queen Mother as a tie to the past and a symbol of a bygone age. The Guardian reported on her funeral in “Farewell to a Mother, a Queen and a Symbol of a Bygone Age,” saying, “The very space around them seemed to shed years.” After an excessively long

174 "Farewell to a Mother, a Queen and a Symbol of a Bygone Age," The Guardian, April 10, 2002,
listing of her titles, the reporter commented, “It went on like that – not so much a farewell to the past as an attempt to clasp it once more, for a few splendid hours.”¹⁷⁵ In an age of increasing royal modernity, this reporter depicted the Queen Mother as the antithesis of this modernity, as someone who clung onto past British eras. The *Daily Mail*, on the other hand, commented on her ties to the past, but in a much more positive light. Sir Roy Strong explained the Queen Mother’s utility in “What future for the royal family now?” He said,

> The passing of Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother is the end of an age in more senses than one. She was the last link with monarchy as it had existed in Europe before the great deluge of the First World War swept away all its equals…. From the viewpoint of the 21st century, its survival is all the more miraculous. That it was able to survive owes no small debt to the Queen Mother.¹⁷⁶

Strong also reminded readers that the Queen Mother was the last Empress of India, casting the former British Empire as a symbol of Britain’s greatness, and he also called the monarchy “the greatest show on earth.”¹⁷⁷ Furthermore, he recognizes the role of the Queen Mother and King George in perpetuating the monarchy during a period when other monarchies fell. Although this article connected the Queen Mother to the past, it did so in a way that highlighted her great contributions to the nation, reminding readers of the benefits of monarchy.

Another characterization that emerged upon the death of the Queen Mother was her sense of duty and humanity. “Papers Mourn the Queen Mother” complied reactions from various British newspapers. It quoted Peter Ziegler in the *Daily Telegram* who said, “More than anybody else, she humanized the royal family, developed the technique that has preserved the mystery, the other-worldliness of the monarchy, yet made its members accessible to the

This article portrayed the Queen Mother as one who helped modernize the monarchy by making the royal family more accessible. Many reporters seemed to think this was one of her greatest legacies, especially since the monarchy’s adaptability has allowed it to continue as an institution. Strong commented in “What future for the royal family now?” that “The monarchy to her was not only the visible personification of the joys and sorrows of a nation but the embodiment of duty, stability, and continuity.” This quote helped solidify the idea that the monarchy is a source of national identity because it embodies the entire nation and the nation’s feelings. Furthermore, it highlighted the Queen Mother’s sense of duty toward the nation, a notion of duty similar to her husband King George VI’s. Strong continued, “Having seen her so many times in action both publicly and privately, I can vouch that she was far more a Queen of Hearts than Princess Diana. She looked everyone steadfastly in the eye and was concerned only with them, however humble they might be. She was among the least snobbish of people I have ever known.” Strong’s credibility as someone who knew the Queen Mother contributed to his argument that she was a valuable member of the royal family who served Britain faithfully. Comparing the Queen Mother favorably to Diana furthered love and sympathy for the Queen Mother by playing up her positive characteristics.

179 Strong, “What future for the royal family now?”
180 Ibid.
Newspaper reporters compared the Queen Mother’s death to Diana’s, deciding that the Queen Mother’s death elicited a much more British form of grieving. “Our nation mourns – but this time with dignity” reflected on this more stoic grief. Norman compared the two funerals, saying, “And how good to know that the British are not, after all, the over-reacting, manipulated hysterics they seemed to be in 1997; that, in showing our collective love and respect, we can still find some semblance of national dignity.” Furthermore, he said, “The Queen Mother’s death, by contrast [to Diana’s], has probably done more to heal anti-monarchic sentiment in Britain than all the palace’s spin doctors put together. Our hearts went out to the Queen, as never before, for the loss of her mother so soon after her younger sister.”

This increased sense of sympathy for Queen Elizabeth II created a stronger bond between the British people and the monarchy. Norman also differentiated the *Daily Mail* reporters from spin-doctors, seeking to give his paper more credibility. “Way to go – the way Queen Mum went” further reflected on these comparisons between the Queen Mother and Diana. Reporter Waterhouse said, “[The Queen Mother] would never, even in her prime, have attracted the mass hysteria that attended the death of Princess Diana…. So while it would be going too far to say a nation mourns, certainly a nation permitted itself a silent tear. She had our respect, affection and admiration.”

Here, Britain still mourned the Queen Mother’s death, but it was not nearly the same hysterical, expressive grief that greeted Diana’s funeral. Even so, the newspaper’s representations of the people’s grief for the Queen Mother’s death permitted the country to support the royal family and to sympathize with the Queen.

The Queen Mother’s death had larger ramifications and, thanks to the press, influenced the outcome of the Queen’s Golden Jubilee that same year. Claire Wardle and Emily West

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181 Norman, “Our nation mourns – but this time with dignity.”

182 Ibid.

183 Waterhouse, “Way to go – the way Queen Mum went.”
studied the effects of the press on royal rituals in "The Press as Agents of Nationalism in the Queen’s Golden Jubilee: How British Newspapers Celebrated a Media Event.” They used the Golden Jubilee as a lens to discuss the role of the press and the monarchy in national identity, and their arguments apply to other royal rituals as well. Wardle and West discovered that the buildup of talk about the Jubilee created the idea that the success or failure of the ceremony would be a defining moment for nationalism and the monarchy. Regardless of whether the papers projected success or failure, speculating about the Jubilee gave it importance. After the Queen Mother’s death and the public interest in it, the papers reconsidered their stance on the success of the Jubilee. The media began suggesting the public involve themselves in the Jubilee, and the press became facilitators of the Jubilee’s success. Both Queen Victoria and Queen Elizabeth II were hesitant to celebrate their Golden Jubilees due to their unpopularity, but the rituals proved to provide comfort and stability to the populace. The media played a large role in changing public opinion and swinging it in favor of the Jubilee and the monarchy.

Reporters can use positive depictions of deceased royals to unite the nation in grief, emotionally tying them to the monarchy. During the funerals of Edward, Diana, and the Queen Mother, the press reflected the people’s desire for a more modern monarchy to better suit the needs and changing character of the nation while George’s funeral showcased tradition and stability. Funerals such as Diana’s and the Queen Mother’s showcased conflict between the traditional and the modern sides of the monarchy, and the royal family had to adapt to the people’s current demands to continue their place in British national identity.

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CONCLUSION

The press has created media tropes for each member of the royal family to define their respective royal rituals. For coronations, the press often emphasized the best qualities of the new monarch to unite the country in hope. The press portrayed Edward VIII as immensely popular. Upon his abdication, they emphasized his lack of constitutional power and the people’s fear that the nation would suffer if Edward was no longer king. To counteract the turmoil of the abdication crisis, reporters highlighted George VI’s dutiful nature and close family ties to create stability and hope for the nation. Newspapers remarked upon Elizabeth II’s service, youth, and gender to compare her to Elizabeth I and Victoria in the anticipation that Elizabeth II would create another golden age for Britain.

Royal brides of heirs to the throne bring the potential for change and serve as a focal point for the ritual. The characterizations of each bride played into values of the time, and, when done successfully, allowed the nation to rejoice in the royal wedding. The royal family did not manage the press well in the 1930s so the newspapers characterized Edward and Wallis’s wedding as secretive and forbidden. Unlike later royals, the royals in the 1930s did not understand how to work with the press to curry support for the monarchy so this wedding was the one ritual to not showcase the monarchy’s status as a symbol of national identity. As such, it serves as a foil to the successful, loyalty-inducing coverage of subsequent royal events. Press relations had improved by the 1980s, and Diana’s noble, virginal, and innocent fairytale persona captured the hearts of the nation and the world. These positive characterizations complicated Charles and Camilla’s relationship in the early 2000s, and the royal family and the press had to give Camilla a media overhaul. After her transformation, the newspapers showed Camilla as a relatable woman who truly loved Charles. Kate Middleton was yet another “perfect” royal bride;
reporters commented that she was accessible because of her class, but she was also perfect because she was modest, poised, and truly in love with William. These later royal weddings allowed the nation to celebrate with the royal family, thanks to the newspapers’ positive characterizations of the royal brides.

Royal births and christenings ease centuries’ long anxieties about royal succession, and the nation can unite in happiness and hope for the future monarchs of Britain. Charles’s christening and birth reflect older, more traditional British values, and the media afforded his parents much more privacy than royal parents today. Starting with William’s birth, the articles emphasized the royal couple’s parenting style and the mother’s maternity fashion sense, reflecting the changing interests of the nation. William’s birth showed much more intrusive press coverage than Charles’ birth in 1948, and George’s birth was the most modern with the revocation of male primogeniture and William and Kate’s adaptation of royal tradition.

Newspapers emphasize a depiction of national grief during royal funerals and highlight the positive characteristics of the deceased royal. However, the press defined each funeral differently. George VI’s death seemed more bittersweet; reporters commented on his dutiful nature, just like at his coronation, and they also discussed Elizabeth II, who provided hope for a glorious and new Britain. On the other hand, upon Edward VIII’s death, newspapers highlighted the tragic nature of his abdication and exile, and created sympathy for Wallis by discussing Edward’s love for her. Regret was common theme running through the reports of his funeral, and younger, modern readers as well as older, traditional readers could respect Edward and mourn his death. The sudden death of Princess Diana caused an outpouring of expressive grief, which conflicted with the traditional private grief that often characterizes Britain as a stoic nation. The newspapers created a sense of ownership of Diana, the People’s Princess, and
reporters also tracked the people’s anger toward the media and the seemingly apathetic royal family before showing the people’s acceptance of the royals as soon as the royal family publically grieved with Britain. The Queen Mother’s death, on the other hand, was much more divisive, and the *Daily Mail* and *The Guardian* presented different depictions of the Queen Mother. The Queen Mother was, to some, a symbol of a bygone age, while, to others, she represented service to the nation. In light of Diana’s death, the Queen Mother’s death elicited a much more British form of stoic grieving.

What’s next for the British royal family? They will need to continue to adapt to the British people’s needs as well as the rapidly changing world. Perhaps one of the biggest innovations of the past twenty years has been the growth of the internet, and the royal family and the press have had to adapt to this new world of technology. Online reporting has become more prominent, and many people intelligently commented on those online news reports in particular. In fact, many people who read online news view the comments as an important part of the story since the comments are often more informed and more persuasive than the actual story. Even though online newspapers still have an ideological bent, they must dilute their bias some online for particularly controversial topics due to the ability of readers to comment.

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189 Ibid., 296.
190 Ibid., 297.
Thus, if writers are going to create tropes for future royal rituals, they must continue to base these characterizations on the current British values so as to avoid contestation from online commenters. For royals like William, Kate Middleton, or Diana Spencer, online media and its comments would not have a large effect on them due to their popularity. Comments could impact the royal family on more controversial issues such as Charles potentially abdicating the throne for the younger William or discussions about Camilla’s eligibility and popularity. The royal family will need to monitor its online presence and the comments on controversial articles in order to keep up with an increasingly technological and interactive society.

The monarchy has learned they must carefully manage their media presence and portrayal after failure to do so contributed to the scandal of the 1936 abdication crisis. Successfully branding each royal in the press helped increase the popular support for the various rituals. Rituals allow the crown to demonstrate its stability and essential role in British national identity and collective history while also showcasing its adaptive nature. Successfully reporting royal rituals is a hallmark of the monarchy’s status as an unshakeable corporate heritage brand. Although the entire British populace does not completely support the monarchy, the press creates a different story that has significant persuasive power, even for people who know to look for bias in the media. Royal rituals may not literally bring everyone together to the cathedral or venue, but they are certainly a powerful tool that encourages the British people to feel united with the royalty.
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