Gossip and drama: a royal curse

I knew once hearing that it life is like a football game your friends are the people that you go to the game with and your family is the drunk people sitting behind you that spill beer down your back.

Every family's dynamic is unique and dysfunctional in its own way. Now, what if that same level of dysfunction was projected on an international scale? What if audiences around the world were aware of every time your dad left the toilet seat up or every time your sibling stormed up to your room to pout? Well, you wouldn't just be dysfunctional, you'd be the House of Windsor.

Even since (and preceding) Elizabeth II's coronation as Queen of England in 1953, the British royal family (the House of Windsor) has been a popular cultural export. Even in a time of new trends and mediums of communication, gossip, drama, and scandal surround the family, contributing to headlines for decades.

It's pretty widely understood that monarchs are a highly outdated form of government by modern standards; if you don't agree, you clearly need to read more bomb pops and Budweisers down your throat until you see the red, white and blue light.

The title of "Queen of England" may have certain connotations in our heads, but according to the royal family's official website, the Queen and the rest of the family don't possess any true political power and serve more of a ceremonial and formal role in government.

That seems a little silly, sure, but in all fairness, the U.S. does have its fair share of non-sensational traditions that serve no purpose, such as the presidential turkey pardon, the White House Easter egg roll and the Office of the Vice President.

The royal family does, however, serve another purpose altogether: they are the stars of their very own 24/7 reality show. Now, the Windsors' worldwide notoriety isn't exactly a secret. In my experience, there are two firm camps when it comes to the royal family: people who follow news and gossip surrounding the royal family religiously and those who are completely uninterested.

Given this experience, I've picked up several things. For one, children of the royal family are essentially bound into becoming celebrities themselves for the rest of their lives. Even though, in theory, they belong in the second group, I did, in fact, sit through all six seasons (and one cash-grab movie) of "Downton Abbey" and groaned miserably through roughly half of "The Crown." 

The royals may not be my favorite people in the world, but they deserve better than to live life simply in order for the media to cover them. It would be nice if the royal family was a relic of the past, but until then, it seems like the ordinary people may just have more serious things on their minds than the "royal family equals bad." 

Earlier this year, that included their mental health depleting to the point of suicidal thoughts in the case of Meghan, according to insiders. When she spoke to others in the family, Meghan said that she was told to keep quiet and not seek professional help out of a fear of hurting the family's image.

And keep quiet she did, until the couple decided to leave the royal family in early 2020 to focus on their health and raising their children.

Now, I'm not arguing that Queen Elizabeth and the rest of the family are to blame for this treatment of the couple—not by a long shot. In fact, I would argue that the rest of the family is just as victimized as Harry and Meghan.

The true cause of the problem, as in most scenarios, is obvious: ubiquitous British people. In this case, the roots of the problem lie with those who write for the endless drivel of tabloids that follow British and American newswomen.

According to CBS, the royal family essentially relies on the media to make them look good and justify their existence (which is paid for partially by taxpayer money), and that's why they're in, give no access to the drama and intrigue in order to build their public appearance. Each year, the Queen gets a Sovereign Grant equal to 25% of the profits the Crown's estate makes that year; the grant was roughly £50 million in 2020, according to The Independent.

And you can bet the farm that being a routine topic of everyday daytime talk shows on the planet is sure to increase said profits. In addition to single-handedly monopolizing the cover of "People," the royals also provide the livelihood for sleazy magazines and tabloids as well.

If you need further proof of the slums, look no further than the Daily Mail. According to CNN, the paper ran the headline "KATE MADE ME CRY" just hours after Harry and Meghan's tell-all interview while also flaunting a banner on its website that read "I WANTED TO KILL MYSELF."

Not to mention, while I was researching for "weekly updates on the Windsors."

The Tyndall Report, a site that tracks the nightly news coverage of the major news networks, the British royals were reported on for a total of 97 minutes in the last decade. For perspective, that's more than Iraq, North Korea, Israel-Palestine and gun control all combined.

In all truth, much of my opinion about the royals comes from this distasteful coverage; I am genuinely baffled by the idea of people reading a tabloid and decrying Meghan's worsened mental health while being completely unaware the very magazine they're holding is the very source of the problem.

If magazines and newspapers are actually upset about the situation and want Meghan, Harry and the rest of the royals to be free from the constant scrutiny, then why are they still reporters and page or articles on them? The answer, of course, is that coverage of the royals brings in money, and like any sensible modern-day celebrities. We might think that we would never lead our favorite celeb to thoughts of suicide, but how well do we really know that person?

The royals may be antiquated, but they're still people, people trying their best to survive in a world where their every action is liable to be reported on and misconstrued.

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