

On Harry and Meghan, the Netflix Docuseries, *Spare*, and the Haters

Harry and Meghan, the Duke and Duchess of Sussex, are a Rorschach test for the world. What we think about the couple reflects who we ourselves are, what our experiences have been, who and what we believe. This is a key concept in the art and science of text interpretation, of hermeneutics. Since most of life requires interpretation, from a wink and a smile, to silence, the lessons of hermeneutics can help us. One lesson is that not all of a thing can be perceived all at once. Our attention goes to one part of the thing, and we consider the part we see as the most important part. The second lesson is context. Everything that requires interpretation happens at a particular moment in time and space. Events came before, and events will come after. Very often, the meaning that the thing holds for us depends upon our own past and our own imagination of what the future can be and ought to be. The wisdom that teaches that we do not see the world as it is, but rather we see the world as we are is correct.

I support Harry and Meghan. I have written open letters of support to both of them.

(<https://www.tikkun.org/to-her-royal-highness-meghan-duchess-of-sussex/>

<https://www.tikkun.org/an-open-letter-to-harry-duke-of-sussex/>)

When I see them, I see two young people who are in love and who want to do something good in this world, who want to make it a better place. I enjoy listening to Meghan's podcast, and I believe that she is doing a service by exploring the various stereotypes of women. I have learned about women who I did not know, and learned more about those who I already knew. I get to know her guests better as they share how they navigate a world that wants to confine women within various stereotypes. I think she does a service by allowing us to hear the voices of scholars who tell us the origins of various stereotypes. As a womanist thinker who has written about various stereotypes of Black women, I am happy that Meghan is carrying this work forward. (See: "Michelle Obama, a Womanist Woman" at <http://www.justpeacetheory.com>) She also did an episode with men where she asked them about their interactions with women. *The Guardian* newspaper, in an article written by Laura Bates, describes "The State of UK Boys", a report issued by the Global Boyhood Initiative. It says, among other things, that when boys are taught to see women as allies, it leads to "better mental health and educational attainment among boys." So, Meghan is doing a valuable service.

I think Harry does a service to the children he talks to about the grief of having lost a parent. I appreciate his work on mental health along with his work with the Sentebale charity and the Invictus Games. It is important to hear his perspective about implicit bias, especially since he recognizes it in himself. One cannot solve a problem if one does not admit that a problem exists. He also does a service when he writes about how he had to think about killing human beings in war. Moral injury among war fighters is a real phenomenon that does not get nearly enough attention. I think there is something that we all can learn from the discourse around this couple, something beyond the epistemology of solipsism. I think it is interesting to see this moment within the context of communication technology and its relation to the rise and fall of monarchy.

We know that the British monarchy is a thousand -year-old institution. This means it existed before the printing press in Europe and still exists today in the age of social media, streaming services, podcasts, and a saturation of information and opinion. We know that the monarchy depends upon the good will of the people to continue to exist and in what way it will exist. The power that the monarchy holds is soft power, the power to influence and to persuade. However, this power depends upon whether or not the members of a royal family are liked or respected. It depends upon whether or not people outside of a particular country even know or care that they exist. History shows us that the British are famously xenophobic as demonstrated by their unwelcome of various outsiders into the royal family. In the Netflix docuseries, Meghan speaks about a conversation she had with a woman working as her private secretary, who had also worked for the Queen for many years. She said the UK and the monarchy are like a fish swimming along in the current doing just fine, then a foreign organism comes along, and the fish thinks: "What is that? What is it doing here? It doesn't look like us. It doesn't move like us. We don't like it. Get it off of us. . . . They'll soon see that its stronger, faster, better with this organism as part of it." Meghan hoped that things would get better after a difficult start. Sadly, as of this writing, it has not yet.

When Queen Victoria married Albert of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, he was not warmly welcomed at first in the British press. However, he was the consort to the queen whose love for him ran deep. He brought many innovations to Britain, including the use of the new technology of photography to bring images of the royal family to the people. He wanted people to see the family as less distant. Later, George V would employ the new technology of radio to speak to his subjects. The movie *the King's Speech* is about how George VI, who stuttered, worked to conquer the condition enough to speak to the British people at the start of and during World War II. When Princess Elizabeth married Philip Mountbatten, he too was an outsider who faced suspicion from the British public and from within the royal family. He encouraged the royals to use the relatively new medium of television to allow ordinary people to see the pomp and pageantry of royal ceremony and to allow them to get to know the royal family as a family.

Using the various communications technologies, however, is a two-edged sword. Since the invention of the printing press, opinion cannot be molded to fit one narrative. Various revolutions, including the American Revolution, were fueled by ideas disseminated through print. Once the royal doors were opened to print, photography, radio, and television, the royal family could not control what would happen. Princess Diana used television and book publishing to tell her own story about life in the British royal family (BRF).

Now, her son, Harry, and his wife, Meghan, are using this media moment to tell their story. If the royals thought for a moment that they could shape the narrative of Harry and Meghan, they were seriously mistaken. The couple have their own fan base of people who follow them on Instagram, Twitter, and through their Archewell Foundation. There is a group, the Sussex Squad, dedicated to defending the couple from haters, and their distortions of reality. In the Netflix docuseries, the couple focusses on the toxicity of the UK tabloid press and the devil's bargain that the royal family has made with the media. Both the docuseries and in his book,

Spare, Harry speaks. about and writes about how the royal family feeds negative stories about each other to serve the agendas of the various family members.

This is not a new phenomenon, and this particular moment, given the way this institution has evolved, was inevitable. In a documentary – *Harry & Meghan: A Very Modern Romance* (2018) - several authors who have written about the BRF commented on the significance of Meghan, a woman of color, a feminist and an activist in her own right, marrying into the family. They all saw it as a positive. Penny Junor, an author of several books about the BRF, including one about Harry, thought Meghan's presence would allow the BRF to reflect more of British society as it is today. She said:

"The monarchy must be relevant to the people. If the people do not feel that the monarchy is relevant, we will no longer have a monarchy. The great thing that I feel about the marriage between Meghan and Harry is that Meghan is, she's representative of a great many people in our society today."

A Black girl in the UK seen in the Netflix docuseries says a similar thing with hope that Meghan's presence in the BRF would take a bite out of racism. "I think it will make a difference slightly because like some people are really racist to other people because of their color, and because Meghan Markle is joining the royal family, I think it might make them change their minds." Meghan Markle's presence in the BRF made some people feel seen.

In 2018, Junor understands that Meghan will cause people who would not ordinarily care about the BRF to be interested. She says:

"Having a woman like this as a member of our royal family, a senior member of the royal family, will make a whole lot of people who weren't that interested in the royal family suddenly become interested in them."

In the 2018 documentary, the myth of the two brothers, William and Harry, with an unbreakable bond persists. At the same time, Junor recognizes that the two brothers are very different men:

"They are two very different people. William is a very measured, careful, controlling sort of man. Harry is very instinctive and bristling with ideas and get up and go and he makes instant decisions." I say: clearly, William cannot control Harry and Meghan. Junor had the foresight to see that Harry and Meghan were a force that could not be contained. "But, I do think there is a danger that Harry and Meghan could overshadow William and Kate," she said.

We can see the battle that Harry would fight with the UK press from the very beginning of his and Meghan's relationship. Junor says:

"But Harry did shoot a warning shot over the bows of the media very early on. Six months after they had been seeing one another, news got out, and nasty stories started appearing, and Harry at that point, issued a statement that is completely unprecedented. He just said: 'back off.'"

Further, in the 2018 documentary, Andrew Morton, an author who has written books about both Diana Spencer and about Meghan Markle, predicted that Harry and Meghan would be the foreign branch of the BRF, that they would probably end up living outside of the UK. No one predicted how toxic the atmosphere around the couple would become, aided and abetted by the BRF according to Harry.

Some people criticize Harry for making the claim that members of the family, himself included, have been used as scapegoats in a campaign to make Camilla Parker Bowles acceptable as Queen Consort to the British public. Yet, Harry is not the first to make this observation. In her book, *The Firm: the Troubled Life of the House of Windsor* (2005), Junor writes about the effort as well as the bullying tendencies of both Prince Philip and of Charles. She describes the Duke of Edinburgh as a bully. She says Charles was hard on his staff writing: "His staff work all hours and are expected to jump when they are called whatever the time of day with little apparent thought for their families." I say: this sounds like the accusations of staff bullying made against Meghan. Junor says the Queen considered Camilla to be the source of the trouble within the BRF:

"But the Queen, like her former private secretary Robert Fellows, believes that with few exceptions everything that has gone wrong for the monarchy in the last twenty years has been attributable to Mrs. Parker Bowles. It is hard to disagree." Junor writes in chapter 10 of her book that "There was an attempt progressively to inch Camilla out of the closet and make her acceptable to the British public." Charles wanted his staff to make the change happen, and they did so at the expense of relationships inside the family. "They did," Junor writes: "but in their zeal to make Camilla acceptable to the British people they drove a wedge between St. James's and Buckingham Palace and employed methods that the Queen and her courtiers felt did not belong in either royal household." Junor pins much of the blame for this on Mark Bolland who worked for Charles.

"One of the most damning charges levelled against Mark Bolland during his time with the prince was the accusation that he briefed against other members of the family in his quest to portray his boss in a good light." According to Junor, his targets were the Queen's husband and her youngest child and his wife, the Wessexes. In fact, the Wessexes wanted to step back from royal duties and earn their own money. The experiment did not go well, and the couple was forced to return to the family's control. I say: the powers that be inside the family may have thought that Harry and Meghan's exit would also end in failure, but the Wessexes have neither the star power nor the friends that Harry had because of his marriage to Meghan.

Harry and Meghan have been criticized for speaking about implicit bias within the BRF. However, long before Meghan gave her interview to Oprah Winfrey, Junor commented on the absence of people of color in the royal households. She writes:

"The Queen doesn't notice colour. . . .The Prince of Wales is the same – although their joint record of employing black people within their households has been a wasted opportunity to take a lead on race. . . . coloured faces are not a noticeable feature of life in either palace."

Let us be clear. To say that one does not notice color is in itself an insult. To not see color is a kind of erasure. Imagine a bouquet of various kinds of flowers of many different colors. Would it make sense to say that one does not see color? The goal is to see humanity in all of our beautiful and interesting variety and to give each individual their proper respect. This is difficult when people from various backgrounds, including various class backgrounds, are not a part of one's daily life.

Some critics have observed that Harry has broken fidelity to his family by sharing private conversations, but in the Oprah interview, the Netflix docuseries, and in *Spare* Harry has not given details. On the question of which family member commented on the skin color of Harry and Meghan's children, Harry said he would never share that information. However, another royal author has given an account of such a conversation about which Harry could not have had first-hand knowledge. In the book *Brothers and Wives: Inside the Private Lives of William, Kate, Harry, and Meghan*, Christopher Anderson writes about a conversation between Charles and Camilla. "'I wonder what the children will look like?' Prince Charles mused to his wife over breakfast at Clarence House." Unless Anderson is writing fiction, someone privy to that conversation told him about it. There were household staff members within listening distance, but the question of the color of Harry and Meghan's children was the topic of more than one conversation, according to Anderson.

"It did not take long for Harry to be told by one of the Men in Gray that there were 'apprehensions' about how dark a baby of his and Meghan Markle's might be – that if he or she was 'too brown,' it might look 'strange.' Soon, what might have begun as a benign question became the subject of intense conversation between Charles and Harry. 'At the time,' Harry later recalled, 'it was awkward. I was a bit shocked.' The Prince of Wales said that his son was perhaps being 'overly sensitive about the matter,' said a St. James Palace staffer, 'and when Harry went to his brother for help, William stood up for their father. The whole thing just got out of hand.'"

I say: that the whole thing, at the very least, was an example of implicit bias. What did "strange" mean in a moment when many families from many different classes in many different countries are living with the reality of interracial marriages and mixed-race children? There are other families having to navigate these waters. Had the BRF been better advised, the move would have been to learn from Harry and his plea to know about implicit bias and racism and to show families how to see the problem and eradicate bias and racism from their thinking. When William was asked after the Oprah interview if the BRF was racists, a better answer than the one he gave, an absolute denial, would have been "not on purpose." It does no one any good to pretend that implicit bias does not exist. Still, the details of these conversations did not come from Harry.

Another event that some people seem to wish Harry had remained silent about was the incident where William assaulted him in his own house. Again, that William has an explosive temper often leading to yelling has been reported by people other than Harry. In most of the

books written about the BRF, Philip, Charles, and William have anger management issues. They can all become quickly and loudly angry. In his book, *William at 40: the Making of a Modern Monarch* (2022), Robert Jobson writes that William shouts at Kate and she shouts back:

“As in any marriage, he and Catherine, whom he married in 2011 but has known since the pair became a couple as undergraduates in 2003, are known to have heated exchanges from time to time. ‘He can be a bit of a shouter when he loses it,’ one close aide admitted. ‘It’s fair to say that the duke and the duchess give as good as they get if their disagreement results in raised voices, but they know each other so well it usually blows over quickly and she is, on the whole a major calming influence on him.’”

Harry did not reveal this fact. When he spoke about William’s rage at the Sandringham Summit where he discussed the terms of his and Meghan’s status in the BRF, he did not give the details of the discussion. He did not show the email he received from William after the Oprah interview. Harry has said less than the aids who work for the BRF or the family itself. According to Jobson, in a 2021 article published by the *Express*, the members of the BRF leaked information about Harry and Meghan. He said:

“Without a doubt, I mean yeah, absolutely, I mean, they can deny all they like until they are blue in the face nut (sic) there’s been an awful lot of leaking from. . . particularly from Kensington Palace about how things were developing.” Jobson has covered the BRF for years and his book about William is an encomium to William and Catherine. He cannot be accused of being an anti-royalist.

Beyond bogus complaints that Harry has violated the privacy of his family, some people question why he and Meghan show so many intimate moments when they have asked for privacy. First, they never said that they were going to stop being public people. They want to share what they want to share on their own terms. Also, it is important to understand that Harry and Meghan know they are members of a historic family. They are keeping a video journal of their lives that will be available to their children and perhaps one day to future historians. Just as we read through letters and diaries for the details of the lives of historical figures, future historians will know about Harry and Meghan through their own words and images.

At the same time, both the Netflix docuseries and Harry’s book give us food for thought on phenomena beyond the story of their lives. From the Netflix docuseries, two things commanded my attention – the phenomenology of prayer and the soundtrack of their lives entwined with my own. First, prayer. In the docuseries, Meghan speaks about how calm she was on her wedding day. She does not know why she was so calm. When I was a young woman, elders in the Black church tradition would talk about how it was possible to feel prayers that others prayed for us. “Yeah, right”, I thought. “What is the physics and the physiology of that?” Time passed, and over the years as I have faced difficult moments in my life, the calm that brought me through was a mystery. It was experiential, yet inexplicable. I could feel the truth of

the elder wisdom. I could feel the prayers of the people who cared about me. It was a connection to something beyond myself. At the same time, it was transrational.

I submit that this was the reason why Meghan was so clam. There were people all over the world, people who know the worth of prayer, praying for her and for Harry. I know I prayed for her that day because I knew she was marrying into a lion's den. I was a full-grown adult, married with children when Lady Diana Spencer married into the BRF. We know how that ended. Tyler Perry also prayed for Meghan, and when we pray for people, we have a spiritual obligation to do what we can to help them or to help the situation. Perry honored that obligation when Meghan called.

The second surprise of the docuseries, is the soundtrack, the list of songs that helps to tell the couple's love story. I do not know the extent to which Harry and Meghan chose the music, or if the playlist is primarily the work of the producers, but I love it. So many of the songs could be part of the soundtrack of my own life. I love the love songs from the great American songbook such as "Anything Goes" and "I'm in the Mood for Love" and the Motown Marvin Gaye, Tammy Terrell classic, "You're All I Need to Get By" and the High Priestess of Soul Nina Simone singing "Exactly Like You" and the beautiful rendition of Otis Redding's "Stand By Me" sung by the Kingdom Choir at their wedding and the gospel song "This Little Light of Mine". I danced to "Land of a Thousand Dances" when I was a girl growing up in East St. Louis, Illinois. It brings back memories of a block party in front of my house on a hot summer night. We listened to Roberta Flack as undergraduates at Northwestern University, long before Meghan was a student there. "Everybody's Talking at Me" comes from the movie *Midnight Cowboy*, part of my teenage movie experience. And, the incomparable storyteller through song, Nancy Wilson, was my teenage idea of sophistication, and she remains so to this day. The songs that were not already a part of the soundtrack of my life hold a place there now. As human beings, we are connected.

Just as the docuseries demonstrated to me a way that human beings are connected to each other and to a Cosmic mystery, the book *Spare* by Prince Harry, showed me how we are connected to history and how the toll that war takes on war fighters is beyond the physical and the psychological. The book has broken records for the number of books sold on the first day of its release. Many people across the globe find a kinship with Harry who has faced his own demons and is now telling his own story. Many people who have experienced grief can understand his struggle to come to terms with his mother's death. Many who have complicated relationships with their siblings can understand the friction between him and his brother. I found these parts of the book interesting and informative, but the part that fascinated the scholar in me was his description of his learning to hunt.

He describes killing his first rabbit, after which his nanny and friend, Tiggy Legge-Bourke blooded him. He writes:

“She dipped her long, slender fingers into the rabbit’s body, under the flap of smashed fur, scooped out a dollop of blood and smeared it tenderly across my forehead, down my cheeks and nose. *Now*, she said, in her throaty voice, *you are blooded*.”

I am familiar with this ritual, not from my own experience, but from movies and television, most recently from the television show, *Yellowstone*. Harry explains: “Blooding – a tradition from the ages. A show of respect for the slain, an act of communion by the slayer. Also, a way to mark the crossing from boyhood into . . . not manhood. No, not that, But something close.” What he described next was at once more interesting and more shocking. When he was around 15-years-old, an elder guide, Sandy, took him out hunting for red deer on the Balmoral estate. They stalked a stag, and when the time was right, Harry shot and killed the animal. He writes:

“As its eyes turned more and more opaque, Sandy knelt before it, took out its gleaming knife, bled it from the neck and slit open the belly. He motioned for me to kneel. I knelt.”

Harry thought they were going to pray, but rather Sandy pushed his head inside the carcass. He says further:

“I tried to pull away, but Sandy pushed me deeper. I was shocked by his insane strength. And by the infernal smell. My breakfast jumped up from my stomach.” Harry prayed he would not vomit into the dead animal, and he did not. The elder hunter guide held his head inside the animal until his “nose and mouth were full of blood, guts, and a deep, upsetting warmth.” When the elder finally let him out of the dead animal’s body, he told Harry to allow the blood to dry on his face. As they completed the tasks of the hunt, leaving the stag’s entrails for the animals who dine on carrion, Harry says he started to feel pride. He had killed the stag with a clean shot to the heart. He had been good to nature by keeping the deer population in check, and good to the community. He said: “A bog stag in the larder meant plenty of good meat for those living around Balmoral.”

Harry felt as if the ritual had been a kind of baptism. He writes: “if you loved Nature, Pa always said, you had to know when to leave it alone, and when to manage it, and managing meant culling, and culling meant killing. It was all a form of worship.”

I could see traces of the feudal system of lords and peasants in this episode. The debate among historians regarding the explanatory power of the term “feudal” notwithstanding, I could see the distant past where hunting was a way to train warriors. They became the lords of the manor whose responsibility was to defend the local community from wild animals and invaders intent on pillage. Alfred Lord Tennyson romanticized this time in his poem “The Coming of Arthur”.

For many a petty King ere Arthur came.
Ruled in this isle and, ever-waging war
Each upon the other, wasted all the land;
And still from time to time the heathen host

Swarm'd over-seas, and harried what was left.
Ad there grew great tracks of wilderness,
Wherein the beast was ever more and more,
But man was less and less, till Arthur came.
For first Aurelius lived and fought and died,
And after him King Uther fought and died.
But either fail'd to make the kingdom one.
And after these King Arthur for a space,
And thro' the puissance of the Table round,
Drew all their petty pryncedoms under him,
Their king and head, and made a realm and reign'd.

Harry tells us that he never wanted to be thought of as naughty, rather he wanted to be noble. There is nobility in the desire to share the food from the hunt with the surrounding community. It is noble to want to be a warrior to protect the people in one's family, community, and nation. Be that as it may, when the lords of the manors prevent the lower classes from owning land, when wealth inequality keeps the rich rich and the poor poor, the social organization becomes unjust. The reason for an inherited monarchy to exist, some argue, is to bring unity and continuity to a nation beyond the back and forth of politics. Is this the case now? Has it really ever been? Does a monarchy rooted in a feudal system, but where kings no longer fight to protect the people or hunt to feed the people, where they no longer have political power, still make sense?

Harry became a war fighter in Afghanistan, and he returned from war and retired from the army determined to shine a light on physical injuries of veterans. He started the Invictus Games to encourage them. But, physical injuries are not the only injuries war fighters suffer. In *Spare*, he writes about his thoughts regarding the people he killed in war. I am a scholar of just peace. This means that I study ways to prevent war by establishing justice in all its forms. No justice; no peace is the truth. There are many reasons to prevent war. It is madness. It is organized death and destruction. It is unnecessary. Don't start none, won't be none. It is human stupidity on steroids. However, I know enough history to know that sometimes human stupidity leads to wars that must be fought.

I honor people who fight on the battlefield, just as I honor peacemakers, diplomats, doctors, and aid workers who go into harm's way to serve both the civilian population and military personnel. At the same time, in our haste to honor war fighters, we do not give enough attention to the various kinds of injury to which they are subjected. War fighters not only come home with physical and psychological injury, they also come home with moral injury.

According to Sonya B. Norman, PhD and Shira Maguen, PhD writing about moral injury for the US Department of Veterans Affairs: "In traumatic or unusually stressful circumstances, people may perpetrate, fail to prevent, or witness events that contradict deeply held moral beliefs and expectations." This can lead to psychological, behavioral, social, and spiritual circumstances where people are not able to forgive themselves for what they did or did not do. This can lead

to self-sabotaging behavior that can affect relationships with other human beings and with the person's conception of a Higher Power.

Under normal circumstances, we teach people that killing another human being is wrong, Then, we send them into war and expect them to kill and not worry about the inconsistency. Sometimes, war fighters experience moral injury when they kill another human being and feel nothing afterwards or feel a rush of exhilaration. Moral injury and PTSD are not the same. The two together can lead to suicidal thoughts and actions. Norman and Maguen write:

“Self-sabotaging behavior in therapy or other facets of life such as in work or relationships may be clues to a moral injury that has not yet been disclosed. Thus, therapists should assess for such beliefs and address them in therapy.”

(https://www.ptsd.va.gov/professional/treat/cooccurring/moral_injury.asp)

Harry does not use the term “moral injury”, but he does describe his mental process after killing someone. “Long after returning to base, I did a sort of mental scan. I'd been in combat before. I'd killed before, but this was my most direct contact with the enemy – ever. Other engagements felt more impersonal. This one was eyes on target, finger on trigger, fire away. . . . I asked myself if I was callous desensitized. I asked myself if my non-reaction was connected to a long-standing ambivalence towards death. I didn't think so.” Harry told himself the people he killed were bad people doing bad things in the world. Through his actions, he was saving British lives.

Critics both inside and outside of the military have said Harry ought not to have written about the number of people he killed and that he did not see them as people. He wrote: “You can't kill people if you think of them as people. They were chess pieces removed from the board. Bads taken away before they could kill Goods. I'd been trained to 'other-ize' them, trained well. On some level I recognized this learned detachment as problematic. But I also saw it as an unavoidable part of soldiering.”

He is correct. These are the things civilians need to think about before we advocate war.

After reading Harry's book and listening to all the negative commentary surrounding this part of it, after viewing the docuseries, I am left with the question: why are these two people the subjects of so much hatred?

Jeremy Clarkson is a man who I did not know existed on the earth until he wrote that he hated Meghan Markle on a cellular level. He wrote that he dreamed of seeing her paraded through the streets naked with people throwing excrement at her shouting shame. His vile post was taken down, so I have not read it in its entirety. (How the editors of the newspaper allowed it to be posted at all is a question for another day.) I am left to wonder if he has ever said what it means to hate someone on a “cellular level” or if he said what Meghan Markle has done to cause him to hate her with a cellular hatred. If he doesn't hate her for something she has done, he must hate her for who she is. Now, the question becomes: what aspect of who she is has

prompted his hatred? Does he hate her because she is a woman or a mixed-race woman or that she married Harry or that she left the UK and took her husband and child with her? Does he hate her beauty, her activism, her fashion sense, her philanthropy? What? However, what the haters fail to realize is that their hatred is a “you” problem. Hatred is a moment for self-reflection. Such hatred ought to be a subject of discussion with one’s mental healthcare professional.

Biblical wisdom teaches us this. In Psalm 139, the psalmist writes: “Do I not hate them, O Lord, who hate You? And do I not loathe those who rise up against You? I hate them with a perfect hatred; I count them my enemies. Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me and know my anxieties; And see if there is any wicked way in me, And lead me in the way everlasting.” (Psalm 139: 21-24)

The psalmist is asking God, who I believe is Divine Love, to show them their own wicked ways, their own anxieties. Our hatred is more about who we are than the person we hate. Our own hatred makes us smaller because we are lost in a maze of our own making. While Jeremy Clarkson’s hatred of Meghan Markle caused him sleepless nights, she is living a good life with a man she loves, who loves her in return, with two healthy and beautiful children. They have established a foundation that is doing and supporting good work in the world. My guess is that Harry and Meghan are not losing sleep over Jeremy Clarkson.

There is a hate Harry and Meghan industry, especially in the UK. As Brian, the host of Sussex Squad Family TV on YouTube has said, there is hate for profit in the British tabloid media. On the other hand, Meghan and Harry have their supporters on YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, and TikTok. A community of supporters is forming at Royal Sussex on YouTube whose host, Baron, comments on various topics beyond the BRF. Sussex Squad Family is a group whose motto is: Love Wins. And yes, the Sussex Squad support their favorite channels financially.

So, we are at a moment in history when the question is: what does monarchy in general and the BRF in particular represent for the people of the UK and for people around the world? For most people in the world outside of the UK, the BRF are irrelevant as are most monarchies outside of their particular countries. I dare say most people do not know who they are or care one wit about them. Some people in the UK see them as exemplars of British values. My question is what values would those be? The day that Queen Elizabeth II died, I watched the BBC coverage for most of the day. William along with Andrew and the Wessexes flew to Scotland in a private plane. Harry was left to find his own way there. “What kind of family is this?” I thought. That moment I lost all respect for the Windsors. This move was petty, spiteful, mean-spirited and just plain low down. Are these the values that represent the British people? Do the values the British and those who the monarchy serves as head of state in the Commonwealth include lying, backstabbing, and disloyalty? Camilla entertains Meghan and Harry haters. Clearly, she has no loyalty to her stepson and to his wife. The haters may even be doing her bidding because if the British people are busy hating Harry and Meghan, they may not pay attention to her, the mistress turned Queen.

I hope that a scholar or scholars of social psychology will study this moment in the UK. I hope they will study the haters and the supporters to help us understand this moment in the moral evolution of humankind. One thing is certain. Harry and Meghan have already changed the way we think of the fairy tale love story. Their love story may be a reflection of the times we live in as well as a reflection of who they are. The ending to the 2021 Cinderella on Prime is different from the original. The lovers find each other and they share their lives together, but not in a traditional way. There is no such thing as a happily ever after in real life. What we can have, if we are brave enough, is a love that will last and grow stronger through the challenges of life. This is what it seems that Harry and Meghan have. They leave us with the hope that Love really does win.