

A MODERN PRINCESS:
A DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF TABLOID COVERAGE OF MEGHAN MARKLE

By

SHANNON DALES, B.A. Hons

Supervisor: Professor Faiza Hirji

A Major Research Paper

Submitted to the Department of Communication Studies and Media Arts

in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the Degree

Master of Arts

in Communication and New Media

McMaster University

© Copyright by Shannon Dales, August 2021

Introduction

On March 7, 2021, Oprah Winfrey's interview with Meghan Markle and Prince Harry, Duchess and Duke of Sussex, aired and drew international attention. The anticipated interview came after Meghan and Harry decided to step down as senior members of the British royal family in 2020. Prior to their departure, news coverage of former actress Meghan Markle seemed to range in opinion; however, following the couple's departure from the royal family, news coverage became primarily negative towards Markle. The Duchess of Sussex has been blamed for the divide within the royal family and for creating tension between family members. British citizens are noted as valuing the written traditions of the royal family, but Meghan Markle has been directly accused of disrupting these traditions. However, there are further unspoken traditions around factors such as race that the royal family is expected to follow that Markle has also been seen as breaking, which may further explain the tenor of Markle's news coverage. Overall, these factors have led to the Duchess of Sussex gaining increasingly negative media coverage, which has been criticized for racist and sexist undertones.

My research will analyze and compare tabloid article representations of Meghan Markle in British tabloids during the weeks directly before and after her interview with Oprah Winfrey, from March 1st to 14th, 2021. The research will draw upon Goffman's (1974) framing theory and Van Dijk's (1991) ideas of "context" and "knowledge" to analyze how Meghan Markle is framed using written language. Furthermore, drawing upon Black feminist theory (Collins, 1990; hooks, 2014) and intersectionality (Crenshaw,

1989), I will consider how Britain's history of racism and colonialism has led to possible racialized and gendered representations of Markle in news media. While there is an endless number of themes that could inform the analysis of Markle, this research will focus on the vectors that are the most prominent, including gender, race, Markle's relationship to the royal family, career, celebrity culture, tradition, and nationality.

Literature Review

History of the British Empire

The British Empire has a long and rich history, rooted in colonialism, British tradition, and public image. While Britain had already established a strong domestic empire, the British Monarchy began to expand their rule overseas in the 16th-century, thus beginning the British Empire as it is understood today (Black, 2015). One major aspect that separated the British empire from other leading Catholic empires was the British Monarch's role as the "Supreme Head" of Church (Black, 2015, p. 40). As a result, the church came to represent the British people, resulting in a strong form of nationalism (Black, 2015). It was during this time of the reformation that Britain began its expansion into the British Isles and Western Europe (Black, 2015). However, international travel became more important to the British in order to keep up with the fishing, shipping, and trade abilities of the other major Empires (Black, 2015). This resulted in British colonization in areas such as North America, South Africa, the Caribbean, and India, many of which were originally home to non-white, indigenous

populations (Black, 2015). It is important to note that each expansion into new territory was met with resistance from native groups, which in each case was overcome by the British by use of force and advanced weapons (Black, 2015; El-Enany, 2020). Thus, the British Empire continued to expand, with an increased international following of the crown.

Despite the British Empire taking control of land from native populations, their relationship did not end there. With large demands for trade workers, colonizers looked to the land's natives to provide free labour, increasing the number of enslaved individuals in Britain's overseas colonies (Black, 2015). The slave trade became a large aspect of the British empire and largely contributed to their rise in global power (Black, 2015; El-Enany, 2020). Looking forward to the age of freedom from slavery, many scholars argue that colonies are seen as freeing slaves, whereas enslaved individuals should be seen as "agents of their own resistance and freedom" (El-Enany, 2020, p. 731; Gopal, 2019). The British Empire has attempted to remain favourable in the eyes of their subjects by granting their people freedom, however, not everyone views history in this manner. Over time, many colonies have declared independence from the British Empire or have established their own nation within the Commonwealth. In the 20th century, Great Britain implemented the Immigration Act of 1971, allowing potential immigrants to be racially discriminated against when seeking entry into the UK (Dixon, 1983). The UK under Margaret Thatcher's leadership also became increasingly nationalist, leading to an increase in racism and discrimination against those who did not fit the image of

“belonging” (Dixon, 1983, p. 162; Weidhase, 2021). This idea of belonging continued into the 21st century, when Britain’s Brexit movement revolved around strengthening England’s nationalism. The majority of Black Britons admitted that they have faced racism, and most stated that systematic racism has impacted their daily lives (Ducey & Feagin, 2021). Notably, it is often said that the monarchy is held in high regard among the British people, but this includes primarily Britain’s White citizens, as British people of colour and citizens of commonwealth nations are cited as criticizing the “systematically racist foundations on which the monarchy rests” (Ducey & Feagin, 2021, p. 95). Racial tensions in Britain further became evident in 2020 when Member of Parliament Dawn Butler spoke in support of the Black Lives Matter Movement, and had to close her office due to the amount of violence, abuse, and hate directed towards her by the British public (Ducey & Feagin, 2021). Therefore, racial discrimination and systematic racism have thrived in Great Britain for many years. This racism only became more evident when Meghan Markle joined the royal family, resulting in the Monarchy seeking a balance between catering to the colonialist ideals of Britain, while still acknowledging the ongoing social progress of the nation.

The Monarchy in the Press

With the establishment of the British government in the 17th-century, and the emergence of new media and globalization in the 20th and 21st centuries, the monarchy has had to adapt to remain relevant (Black, 2015). The primary way in which the royal

family has remained popular among British citizens is through their presence in the press (Randell-Moon, 2017). Randell-Moon (2017) explains how members of the royal family are treated like celebrities in the media, which in many ways legitimizes them as public figures. Furthermore, the young royals such as William, Kate, Harry, and Meghan, have been cited as representing “everyday normality,” which in turn has increased their popularity among the British middle class (Clancy, 2021, p. 331). The royals’ public appearances are often carefully staged to keep their reputation up with the public (Clancy, 2021). Even with Harry and Meghan’s departure in 2020, William and Kate have continued to keep up their strong public personas (Clancy, 2021). The royal family has also been seen as representing “national unity” across the United Kingdom, through their celebrated public weddings, the Queen’s Jubilees, and birth announcements (Salimova, 2020). Therefore, the royal family relies on a popular media presence in order to stay relevant in the 21st-century.

In addition, it is important to look at the difference between the monarchy as an institution versus the actual public reception of the current royal family. Randell-Moon (2017) notes that by framing the royal family as celebrities, this separates them from the actions of the monarchy in the past, especially among Commonwealth nations. As previously described, the British Monarchy displaced many citizens of the lands they conquered. However, by framing the modern-day royals as celebrities, this separates them from these actions, and instead allows them to be compared to other adored public figures (Randell-Moon, 2017). Salimova (2020) further concluded through their research that

while British citizens often critique the monarchy as an institution, Queen Elizabeth II still gains high praise among the British people. The previous demonstrates how the royal family is able to separate their public personas from the institution within which they operate, and the importance of their coverage among British news media.

Great Britain's Relationship with America

One important personal aspect of Meghan Markle is her American nationality. Great Britain has had a long and complicated relationship with the United States (US) since long before Markle entered the royal family (Spark, 1996). Since America's separation from the British Empire, the US has become one of the world's most influential cultural powers (Spark, 1996). The US has become the global leader in cultural production, leading to the Americanization of the media (Spark, 1996). However, this has led to further tension, as Britain strives to sustain a strong sense of nationalism (Spark, 1996). Concerns about the Americanization of Britain dates back to the early 19th century, rooted in fear of American's political structure (Marin, 2016). However, one of Britain's primary criticisms of Americans is their focus on material wealth (Marin, 2016). Britain feared that America's materialism would spread to their nation, resulting in a loss of cultural production with the focus instead on immediate material satisfaction (Marin, 2016). Britain's understanding of Americans as materialistic can still be seen through their opinions towards Meghan Markle, as many believe that she wanted to marry into the royal family for the wealth and status. In the 1900s, Great Britain began propaganda

campaigns against the US in an effort to further reduce America's image in the UK.

However, many scholars have concluded that Britain did not fear the US because of their political structure or culture, but rather they feared that the US would take over their cultural production (Johnes, 2019; Marin, 2016; Spark, 1996). Johnes (2019) and Spark (1996) further explain that these tensions came to the surface in the 1960s, when the US was producing a large variety of television programs and film. During this period, American media became extremely popular in Britain, but the press continued to degrade American culture in the media. This demonstrates how the press does not always represent the people, but how press is often used by nationalists in an attempt to shape the public's opinion. This further demonstrates how despite a strong dislike of Americans and American culture, citizens of the UK are still shown to largely follow American culture, creating an ongoing love-hate relationship between the two cultures (Johnes, 2019). Therefore, Meghan Markle's position as an American further complicates her role in the royal family, as it brings forward decades of tensions around the fear of the Americanization of British media.

History of Tabloid Newspapers

When looking at the representations of public figures, it is also important to consider how the origin and history of news media may shape the way individuals are framed. Journalists have long shaped public discourse, despite their claims of objectivity. Most journalists employ a lens, consciously or not, which affects how they present

content relating to factors such as gender and race (Finneman & Thomas, 2014).

Chapman (2011) notes that news media in the 19th century began featuring more gossip-based news to draw a more female-based readership. These gossip-based stories would be considered tabloid-style today, as the articles were mainly about creating a spectacle of “attention-grabbing” news (Chapman, 2011, p. 58). Women began to be depicted more negatively in 1880s tabloids with the rise of the “new women,” as journalists were primarily male at this time and used patriarchal ideologies to show their disapproval of the professional women and the women’s suffrage movement (Chapman, 2011, p. 60; Rothman et al., 2012). The previous issue continues to be seen in the news sectors, as debates continue around “public discourse,” and who belongs in the public sphere and who does not (Rothman et al., 2012, p. 56). The origin of the tabloid and their negative depictions of the new women set a continuing cultural discourse, leading to ongoing negative representations of women in 21st-century tabloids.

Black Women in News Media

Meghan Markle’s role as a Black female royal is unique and requires intersectional analysis. Intersectional feminism has become a primary discourse around Black female celebrities in the 21st century, as many are using the framework to explain their position and treatment as a Black woman in society (Flood, 2019). Flood (2019) states that despite capitalist issues around celebrity activism, “intersectional celebrity studies are critical to communication studies because the analysis of individual celebrities

reveals the hegemonic norms around identity” (p. 424). Considering that Markle has long presented as a feminist activist, it is important to consider her public identity and how she uses or rejects public discourses.

Meghan Markle’s position as a mixed-race American and the first Black individual in the royal family are also crucial when looking at the way she is presented in the media. Many scholars agree that Western media outlets are “racially prejudiced” against Black communities, as these outlets are rooted in the West’s history of colonialism and white supremacy (Gammage, 2015, p. 29; Wilson, 2021). These prejudices can be seen even against Black women who are in high positions of power and success, such as singer-actress Beyoncé Knowles-Carter, actress Viola Davis, former Xerox CEO Ursula Burns, and former US First Lady Michelle Obama (Flood, 2019; Gammage, 2015; Livingston, Rosette, & Washington, 2012; Wilson, 2021). Both Beyoncé and Viola Davis are entertainers, however, both have been outspoken about how their race has caused setbacks in their careers and public image (Flood, 2019; Wilson, 2021). Additionally, Livingston, Rosette, & Washington (2012) explain how Ursula Burns, the first and only Black female Fortune 500 CEO, was often in a no-win situation regarding her leadership tactics. The scholars explain that when Burns demonstrated outspokenness and agency, she was seen as overly controlling (Livingston, Rosette, & Washington, 2012). However, her position as a Black woman alone caused questions to arise around her leadership capabilities, meaning that she had to possess more agency to prove her worthiness (Livingston, Rosette, & Washington, 2012). Therefore, Ursula Burns had to constantly

balance her gender and race along with her public position, similar to the public discourse that Markle must continuously negotiate.

Former First Lady Michelle Obama was also in a very similar position to Markle, being the first Black woman in a historically white position. Scholars argue that Obama should embody "the essence of womanhood" as a wife, mother, and public servant, however, many media outlets have painted her as "aggressive, a terrorist, and a threat to American sovereignty" (Gammage, 2015, p. 30; Livingston, Rosette, & Washington, 2012). Michelle Obama has acknowledged the media's negative depictions of her on numerous occasions, which demonstrates the ways that Black women must negotiate their public image (Gammage, 2015). Michelle Obama has recognized that negative images of her in the media have large implications for all Black women who live in America and even around the globe (Gammage, 2015). Barack Obama has ancestry rooted in Kenya and Indonesia, which has made the Obamas attract further global attention and influence (Kantor, 2009). If America's first lady is subject to stereotypes around Black womanhood, it is even more likely that the everyday Black women will face even harsher discrimination (Gammage, 2015). Meghan Markle's negative depictions could be seen as having an even larger impact than Obama's, due to Markle's worldwide coverage in the United Kingdom, the United States, and all Commonwealth nations (Weidhase, 2020).

Furthermore, it is significant to consider not only how Black women are portrayed in news media, but how Black women view themselves in comparison (Gammage, 2015; Kooijman, 2019). Gammage (2015) conducted a study in which the majority of Black

women related most strongly to themes such as “Self Pride and Joy, Family and Love... and Admiration and Independence” (p. 138). Through Gammage’s (2015) analysis, it is important to note how Black women are reduced to images in the media that do not reflect how they feel about themselves. Warner (2015) expands on Gammage’s analysis by exploring the impact of the limited number of Black female bodies on television. In order to wrestle with their own identities, Black female audiences negotiate the images and “characterizations” that they see on television (Warner, 2015, p. 139). One of the large issues with these negotiations is that Black women are reduced to tropes, while these stereotypes are ingrained in viewers’ minds and often applied to the Black women they meet in real life (Warner, 2015). An additional challenge that Black women often face concerns respectability politics. Respectability politics refers to Black women’s need to dress and act a certain way in order to gain the respect of others (Cooper, 2017). This concept is important when analyzing Black women such as Markle, as it brings up further tensions between one’s self and their public image. Therefore, one must also consider how Meghan Markle’s portrayals in the media contrast with the way she views herself as a woman, and the effect that her public image has on audiences.

Lastly, Black women in the media are often over-sexualized, and this is no exception when discussing Meghan Markle. Patricia Hill Collins (1990) explains the sexualization that Black women face through her discussion of the “hoochie,” the image of Black women as sexually aggressive and the idea that their bodies are overall more sexual compared to White women. The idea of Black women’s bodies as more sexual

stems back hundreds of years, with one of the most prominent examples being Sara Baartman. Baartman's body was placed on display for Europeans, where the White spectators would stare, touch, and grope various parts of her body (Gammage, 2015). Ultimately, Baartman was used to demonstrate the "abnormality, freakish sexuality, and inferiority of the African race" (Gammage, 2015, p. 20). These ideas live on into the 21st-century, with Black women often being viewed as sexually driven (Gammage, 2015). As an actress, Meghan Markle's sexuality becomes even more prominent, due to various sex scenes featured in the television show *Suits*. However, it is important to note that Meghan Markle's hyper-sexual image is not only because of her career, but due to her Black heritage. Therefore, it is important to understand how Black women are sexualized, not only in the media, but in their daily lives.

Meghan Markle's Media Interest

The Royal Family has long been a primary topic among news outlets. For example, Princess Diana's media attention has been widely discussed among academics for its sensationalization (Finneman & Thomas, 2014). Wober (2000) uses the idea of the "feeding frenzy," the fascination with one particular public figure, to explain the media attention surrounding Princess Diana's life and death (p. 128). Princess Diana was the primary subject of sensationalized news media and tabloid magazines during her time, and a similar feeding frenzy can now be seen surrounding Meghan Markle.

Since entering into a relationship with Prince Harry, Meghan Markle's age, career, activism, race, and mental health have been a primary topic among news coverage. Markle was 36 years old when she married Prince Harry, three years older than Prince Harry at the time, and sixteen years older than Princess Diana when she married (Goodwin, 2018). Markle's age drew questions around whether she would be able to provide children for the royal family and be a good mother as she was already into her late thirties (Goodwin, 2018). It is also important to note that Meghan Markle is seen by many as more than just a woman who married into the royal family, but as a device used to bring diversity into the royal family, as well as a threat to the traditions of the monarchy (Weidhase, 2021). Overall, Markle's career as an actress, her race, and mental health have all shaped her public image, and are important factors to consider when analyzing her media coverage.

Meghan Markle's Career and Activism

Meghan Markle, having previously worked as an actress, faced a new level of scrutiny when entering the royal family. Discourses around celebrities typically relate to a "me" mentality, with the public often believing that celebrities care most about themselves (Holmes & Redmond, 2006). Furthermore, Holmes and Redmond (2006) state that most celebrities are assumed to desire fame and stardom at all costs, whether or not this is true. These assumptions were likely present around Meghan Markle, with many

believing that she wanted to marry into the royal family to elevate her status (Yelin & Clancy, 2021a).

Additionally, the public has long feared that celebrities have become over-involved in politics (Drake & Higgins, 2006). As previously discussed, Markle's position as a mixed-race female celebrity has led her to advocate for many racial and gendered issues, even going as far as to refer to herself as a "feminist" (Goodwin, 2018; Weidhase, 2021, p. 1; Yelin & Clancy, 2020). This may have created fear within Britain that she would be over-involved in politics as a member of the royal family. It is important to note that the royal family does not traditionally participate in politics, with Goodwin (2018) noting that Markle will always have to walk a fine line between "her personal beliefs and her royal persona" (para. 6). These factors may explain some critiques of Markle, as her role as a celebrity has come with fears around her political influence as a member of the royal family.

Markle's career on the television show *Suits* (2011-2019) further complicated her position in the royal family (Weidhase, 2020). On the show, Markle was featured in several intimate romantic scenes, which is a very different image compared to the "virginal youth" that typically marry into the royal family (Goodwin, 2018, para. 4; Weidhase, 2020). Markle's image on *Suits* has also allowed the media to label her as an unfit royal by using tropes connected to the sexualized Black woman. Scholars note that Black women in the media are often "noticed for their visual dissonance," leading to their "physical and sexual characteristics" being foregrounded in news coverage (Trimble et

al., 2015, p. 324). Thus, Markle's role on *Suits* has caused many to challenge her role as a royal and has provided additional opportunities for her to be sexualized by the media.

Furthermore, the British population had long anticipated Prince Harry marrying, seeing this as a sign of him living up to his royal duties (Finneman & Thomas, 2014). This further complicated Markle's presumed role when entering the royal family. The public imagined Harry marrying someone who would steer him towards his family and royal duties, similar, perhaps, to the supportive role that Kate Middleton has played for Prince William. However, Markle is viewed as a professional woman who would instead drive Harry away from his family and duties (Finneman & Thomas, 2014; Goodwin, 2018; Weidhase, 2020). Therefore, Markle's career and subsequent activism drew much criticism around her capability as a royal woman.

Meghan Markle's Race

Meghan Markle's race is shown to continuously be a primary topic and concern among news outlets. Many scholars have agreed that news coverage of Markle is often filled with racial undertones (Andrews, 2020; McLennan, 2021; Weidhase, 2020; Woldemikael & Woldemikael, 2021; Yelin & Clancy, 2021a). McLennan (2021) confidently states that "it is clear that Meghan's biracial identity is understood to be the primary cause of 'harsh criticism'" (p. 1). Furthermore, tabloids are cited as the primary source for criticism around Markle's race (McLennan, 2021). However, complaints of racism among critics and readers are often dismissed by journalists who state that their

critiques have nothing to do with race, instead pointing to Markle's allegedly attention-grabbing schemes and position as a "selfish social climber" (Andrews, 2020; Yelin & Clancy, 2021a, p. 1). The tone of the media coverage is important, as research has shown that the public's initial reaction to Markle was positive as she represented a more progressive and diverse Britain (Weidhase, 2021). However, the public's perception shifted once the media began to portray her in an increasingly negative way (Weidhase, 2021). Lastly, it is important to note that Prince Harry released a statement in 2016 "condemning the racial undertones" of Markle's media coverage (Weidhase, 2020). Prince Harry's statement was unprecedented for a member of the royal family, but demonstrates the deep racial issues that Meghan Markle has faced, as highlighted by her media coverage (Weidhase, 2020).

Furthermore, scholars have identified Markle as a physical reminder of the media's and the public's tensions around race and racial identity (Washington, 2020; Yelin and Clancy, 2021a). Weidhase (2021) argues that Meghan Markle's position as a biracial woman is directly linked to Brexit Britain. The Brexit movement is rooted in "imperial nostalgia," which had resulted in an increase in hate crimes and racism towards citizens of colour (Weidhase, 2021, p. 1). However, Markle was seen as providing the British monarchy with a progressive and liberal image which disrupted British tradition (Weidhase, 2021; Yelin & Paule, 2021). Therefore, the nation's racial tensions due to Brexit and the rise of nationalist politics also played a large role in the public's dislike of Markle (Weidhase, 2020; Weidhase, 2021). Connor (2021) notes Markle's great symbolic

power in representing mixed-race citizens across the Commonwealth, such as the Māori in New Zealand, a group that is largely Indigenous and Colonial mixed race. However, Markle's position in representing the Commonwealth also worked to her disadvantage among the British people, as their primary concern is British nationalism in the home country (Connor, 2021; Weidhase, 2021). Ultimately, Markle's media depictions demonstrate the intersections between nationalism and identity, and the sexist and racist rhetorics that exist within the public sphere (Washington, 2020; Yelin & Clancy, 2021a, 2021b).

Meghan Markle's Mental Health

In 2021, Harry and Meghan's long-awaited interview with Oprah Winfrey aired for public consumption (Buggs, 2021). The interview touched on many topics that are often discussed around Markle, though one of the newer points of discussion revolved around Markle's mental health (Buggs, 2021). Buggs (2021) notes that many communities globally still possess a stigma around mental health, which may affect the way Markle is viewed moving forward. Much of Markle's support stemmed from her image as a healthy working woman, however, discussions around her mental health may cause further doubt concerning whether or not she is fit to be a part of the royal family (Buggs, 2021). It is important to note that with the recent Oprah interview, Markle was able to create her own narrative, as opposed to the ones perpetuated by the media and royal family (Buggs, 2021). Markle had suggested in the interview that the palace insisted

she “lay low” when it came to her advocacy work, however, she has now been able to create her own brand in which she can discuss her experience with being a “feminist woman, wife, and mother” (Buggs, 2021).

Theoretical Framework

Black Feminist Theory

The two primary theories that will guide the research are Black feminist theory and framing theory. Collins’ (1990) “Controlling Images” and hooks’ (2014) “Oppositional Gaze” offer a framework for analyzing common portrayals of Black women. Collins (1990) states that “portraying African-American women” in a stereotypical manner helps to justify “Black women’s oppression” (p. 69). Collins (1990) outlines common portrayals such as mummies, matriarchs, and welfare recipients that are often used to represent Black women. The welfare queen in particular is a representation of interest for this research, as it explains how Black women are represented as “content to take the hard-earned money of tax-paying” citizens (p. 80). This is significant since there are discussions around the money that Meghan Markle would receive as a member of the royal family, as well as questions raised about whether Meghan was marrying Harry for his wealth and social status. Therefore, the representations outlined by Collins will be used to provide the researcher with a foundation for analyzing common portrayals of Black women.

Furthermore, hooks' (2014) framework aids the research in providing an understanding of how Black women create agency in white dominated spaces. hooks (2014) states that the 'gaze' of the Black woman is able to "interrogate the gaze of the Other," creating a "site of resistance for colonized Black people globally" (p. 116). This framework will be used to explore how Markle uses her gaze to challenge the position of white individuals around her. Although the research will focus on the text alone, the way the language is used to describe Markle's presence will be analyzed in order to draw conclusions around how Markle resists white-dominated spaces. Therefore, the two frameworks by Collins (1990) and hooks (2014) will help in understanding why Markle's media representation is significant and how it impacts society's image of Black women.

Crenshaw's (1989) notion of "intersectionality" is also key in trying to understand Markle's role as a mixed-race woman and as a commoner who has married into the royal family. Crenshaw (1989) uses the example of the Black woman in order to demonstrate how people's lives and identities are multidimensional, as opposed to impacted by a single factor. Furthermore, Crenshaw (1989) argues that the "single-axis framework" limits societies' ability to comprehend the diverse discrimination that Black women face, due to race, gender, and other personal factors (p. 140). The concept of intersectionality provided a framework for the research, resulting in multiple factors, such as race, gender, nationality, and social class, to be considered when determining how Meghan Markle is framed. All personal factors contribute to one's public image and the discrimination they face, so it is important to consider all aspects.

Framing Theory

Goffman's (1974) "Frame Analysis" and Van Dijk's (1991) "Racism and the Press" provide an understanding of how and why news media use language to frame individuals to create specific public discourses. These scholars and their theories will be used during the research process to guide the analysis and to situate the findings within academics. Goffman (1974) explains the idea of "social frameworks," which refers to using background information of a particular event in order to draw conclusions about the agency and will of the person being analyzed (p. 22). In other words, background knowledge is necessary when analyzing the portrayal of a person at a specific time. Goffman's (1974) idea of "social frameworks" will act as a guide for the analysis by providing a structure for which background information and the author's agency can be examined. Furthermore, Van Dijk (1991) assumes that "ethnic prejudices or ideologies" exist in various forms of communication (p. 6). The previous will also be a guiding assumption for this project, as the research is rooted in the understanding that both Great Britain and its tabloids are rooted in colonialist and racist histories. Therefore, Goffman's (1974) "Frame Analysis" and Van Dijk's (1991) "Racism and the Press" are crucial to situate the research project and to provide a framework to consider how individuals are framed in news media.

Research Questions

Based on the reviewed literature, it appears that further research should be done to study how Meghan Markle was portrayed before her interview with Oprah Winfrey, and if these representations shifted once the interview had aired. Drawing on background knowledge and the considered theoretical frameworks, four research questions can be proposed:

1. What role do Meghan Markle's race and gender play in the way tabloid articles frame her?
2. How do tabloid news outlets depict Meghan Markle's relationship to the British Royal Family?
3. What role do Meghan Markle's status as a celebrity and former career as an actress and model play in the way tabloid articles frame her?
4. What role do nationality and British tradition play in the framing of Meghan Markle?

The research questions aim to reveal trends and patterns in media coverage that would affect the public's perception of Meghan Markle, specifically around the time of Markle's interview with Oprah. Each question also explores a key area that was focused on in the literature review, such as Markle's race and gender, her relationship to the royal family, her career as an actress, and her position as an American woman within the British monarchy. Furthermore, the questions allow the researcher to explore how representations can shift due to specific events and how language can be used to frame individuals in specific ways. Therefore, the research questions will offer great insight in shedding light on how racial and gender inequalities are perpetuated and reproduced in popular media.

Methodology

In order to answer the research questions of how Meghan Markle is framed in tabloid news outlets, the appropriate units of analysis were first identified. The research focused on the way Meghan Markle was represented in tabloid news articles during the week before and after her and Prince Harry's interview with Oprah Winfrey. Tabloid articles were chosen as the units of analysis for various reasons. Firstly, tabloid articles continue to be a highly popular medium that obtain a large readership (Linkof, 2018). Secondly, as discussed previously, tabloids continue to play a large role in how readers perceive individuals who are in the public eye (Linkof, 2018). Therefore, the units of analysis are each individual tabloid article that was analyzed.

To analyze news articles from various viewpoints, a critical discourse analysis was conducted. Critical discourse analysis allows the researcher to perform interpretive analysis of the sampled text, in order to analyze the social context and meaning, as well as the text's manifest content (Van Dijk, 2006). Discourse analysis also encompasses the more specialized social actor analysis, which allows researchers to study how public figures are represented in texts (Lamb, 2013). The analysis will be rooted in Van Dijk's (2006) assumptions of "content" and "knowledge," meaning that the texts will be analyzed according to how the language is interpreted by the reader while taking the general social beliefs and attitudes of the text's readership into account (p. 121-122).

Before finalizing the research sample, the appropriate population of articles first had to be identified. The research was intended to look at tabloid coverage around the time of Markle's interview with Oprah, so the population of articles was limited to the week before and after the interview, from March 1st to March 14th, of 2021. There are also many tabloid news outlets that covered this event, so the most popular and relevant outlets had to be chosen. The aim was to focus on tabloids within the United Kingdom, since that is the home of the royal family, where news coverage of the royal family is the most prominent (Linkof, 2018). By looking at UK tabloids, the tensions that may still exist between the UK and the US can be analyzed, through the framing around Markle's nationality and the Sussexes' move to the US. Therefore, articles from *The Sun* and the *Daily Mail* were chosen as the population for the research sample. These two outlets have the largest circulation and readership in the United Kingdom, allowing the researcher to accurately analyze how Meghan Markle is framed towards a large portion of the public (Agility PR Solutions, 2021). Lastly, the two chosen tabloids also feature a large amount of coverage of Markle, allowing the researcher to analyze a large number of articles.

To conduct the research, a sample that accurately represented the range of tabloid coverage of Meghan Markle had to be chosen. The Lexis Nexis Uni system was used to search for articles from the two chosen tabloids. The search used was "Meghan Markle Oprah Interview" for both selected tabloids, along with the time period of March 1st to 14th and the type of content set to "news." The search yielded 280 results for *The Sun* and 338 results for the *Daily Mail*. Due to the large amount of coverage from both tabloids

within a small time frame, a sample had to be chosen rather than conducting an analysis of all 600 articles. Many sampling techniques were considered, but systematic random sampling was chosen in order to select a representative amount of articles spanning the entire researched time period. The desired amount of articles was 25 per tabloid, resulting in 50 analyzed articles total. To obtain the desired sample, every 11th article from the beginning of the sample from *The Sun* was chosen from out of the 280 articles total. On the other hand, every 13th article from the beginning of the sample from the *Daily Mail* was chosen out of 338 articles total. This strategy resulted in 25 articles chosen from each tabloid. This sampling technique also ensured that articles were evenly chosen over the time period. This was important since there were various developments before and after the Oprah interview aired, such as the release of new promotional clips, updates on Prince Philip's health and the effect this had on the broadcast of the interview, and individuals' reactions after the interview had aired. Therefore, systematic random sampling was chosen to provide the most accurate and representative sample from the population.

The next step was to determine how the discourse analysis would be conducted, and whether to include images in the analysis. Since the research is focused on coverage of Meghan Markle's interview with Oprah Winfrey, the majority of the images that accompanied the analyzed articles were captured images from the interview and its promotional footage. Therefore, the majority of the images were the same or similar, so it was decided that the text alone would be the focus of this research. When analyzing the text from each tabloid article, specific themes would be the focus. These themes include

gender and race, relationship to the royal family, career, celebrity impact, and nationalism, which will be further discussed in the upcoming paragraphs. It should also be noted that each theme may present some overlap, such as Markle’s American nationality impacting her relationships within the royal family. This research attempted to code each aspect of Markle’s media coverage into the most dominate or applicable category, however, readers may notice specific trends in coverage and topics of conversation across multiple themes.

Themes for Analysis

Gender and Race	Relationship to the Royal Family	Career and Celebrity	Nationalism
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Position as a Black woman 2. Controlling Images (Collins) 3. Racism and Racial Undertones 4. Discussions of Skin Colour 5. Pregnancy 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Relationship to the Royal Family 2. Silenced and/or Controlled by the Royal Family 3. “Megxit” 4. Accusations of War Against the Palace 5. Tradition Within the Monarchy 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Career as an Actress 2. Income 3. Status 4. Activism 5. Celebrity Reactions 6. Celebrity Culture 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. UK vs. US Culture 2. Residency in Los Angeles 3. Residency in Canada 4. British Nationalism 5. British Tradition 6. Markle’s Nationality

Gender and Race

The themes of gender and race are two of the leading themes when looking at coverage of Markle. As previously mentioned, the analysis of these themes will be guided by Patricia Hill Collins, bell hooks, and Kimberlé Crenshaw's theoretical frameworks. When analyzing the text for themes of gender, written language that points to Markle's image and position as a woman and mother will be considered. Patricia Hill Collins' "controlling images" will be considered to explore how gendered and racial stereotypes are present in Markle's tabloid coverage. The "welfare queen" and angry Black woman are two particular images that will be specifically looked for in relation to Markle's public image. Furthermore, when analyzing the aspect of race in particular, the way the text includes racial undertones will be considered. Due to the discussions around race and motherhood in the Oprah interview, how the tabloid articles cover the conversation around Meghan and Archie's skin colour, as well as Meghan's second pregnancy, will also be considered.

Relationship to the Royal Family

The royal family and the Sussexes' relationship to them are also central to Meghan Markle's public image. Markle's relationship with the current members of the royal family has remained a large topic of public conversation, specifically since her and Harry's departure as senior royals. Many British citizens believe that Markle has manipulated Harry into leaving his family, so the way their move to North America is represented will be focused on. Ultimately, the way Markle is seen as dividing the family

will be considered. Additionally, the interview brought up conversations around the relationship between Kate and Meghan, how Meghan was denied mental health help by the palace, and whether/how Meghan was ‘silenced’ by the royal family. The way these conversations are represented in the text will be analyzed. As mentioned in the literature review, royal brides typically had an image of “virginal youth,” so it is significant to explore how coverage of Markle may purposefully separate her from other women in the royal family (Goodwin, 2018, para. 4). Lastly, Prince Philip also deteriorated in health around the airing of the interview, which brought up conversations around whether or not it was acceptable for the interview to air as planned, which it ultimately did.

Career and Celebrity

Two additional themes that will be looked at in the research are Markle’s career and the corresponding celebrity culture. In terms of Markle’s career, the research will focus on how her acting career is discussed in the text, and how her career and public image has allowed her to perform as an activist. Markle has also been accused of using the royal family to increase her social status, so this theme will be looked for during the analysis. Discussions around Markle’s wealth and media deals since returning to California will also be analyzed. Furthermore, attention will be paid to discussions around celebrity culture, as well as how other celebrities, or Markle’s peers, were represented as reacting to or showing support towards Markle after the interview had aired.

Nationalism

Lastly, the textual analysis will focus on the aspect of British nationalism, and how Markle's position as an American is represented in the text. As stated in the literature review, the UK has a history of resenting the US, so it is important to note how these tensions continue to exist around Markle. Meghan and Harry have also been living in Los Angeles, California, leading to considerations around how their residence may impact Markle's framing in the media. As discussed in the literature review, the British people still show large amounts of support for the royal family and their commitment to British tradition, so how Markle is portrayed as challenging the royal family and thus British nationalism is significant.

Summary of Findings

After conducting a discourse analysis of 50 tabloid articles, the findings revealed that the themes of gender and race, relationship to the royal family, career, and nationalism, play a large role in the public framing of Meghan Markle. To demonstrate each theme's impact on the overall framing of Markle, I will address the findings in relation to each of the four research questions. In relation to Markle's gender and race, the most common sub-themes identified by the analysis included: Markle as a bully, aggressive, manipulative, and dishonest, while discussions around Archie's skin colour were also common. The most dominant sub-themes pertaining to Markle's relationship to the royal family included: Markle starting a war against the monarchy, Markle causing

strained family relationships, claims of Markle bullying palace staff, Markle silenced by the monarchy, Markle breaking tradition, and Markle's claim that the palace denied her mental health help. When analyzing for the theme of career and celebrity, the most common sub-themes included: conversations around Markle's former acting career, the Sussexes' new media deals, the Sussexes' wealth, and celebrities either supporting or condemning Markle. Lastly, when focusing on the theme of nationalism, it was found that the most dominant points of discussion included: the Sussexes' move to California, Markle's American nationality and subsequent cultural differences between the US and the UK, and discussions around the fact that Oprah Winfrey and the interview were "American" and not British. These sub-themes will be examined in more detail in the following sections.

What role do Meghan Markle's race and gender play in the way tabloid articles frame her?

Throughout the 50 analyzed articles, 43 articles either directly make reference to Markle's gender and race, or more subtly frame her using gendered or racial stereotypes. *The Sun* had 23 articles and the *Daily Mail* 20 articles that specifically featured the themes of race and gender. When looking at Markle's coverage from the week before the interview from March 1-7, many articles from both *The Sun* and the *Daily Mail* framed Markle as aggressive, cruel, and a bully. *The Sun* featured 5 articles and the *Daily Mail* had 3 articles that called Markle a "bully" or "aggressive." These portrayals surfaced due

to accusations made by palace staff members that Markle had bullied them. The analyzed tabloid articles seem to side with the palace staff, with articles from *The Sun* accusing Markle of “plotting” her return to the US and by calling her “disingenuous” (Winter, 2021; Zeltmann, 2021a). Meanwhile, *Daily Mail* articles used language such as “bully” and “angry” to describe Markle (Kay, 2021; Robinson, Duell, Robinson, Carr, & Tingle, 2021). It is important to note that in some cases, these terms were used in the article to either explain the issue or when quoting a secondary source. However, the terms are still used to describe Markle and play into various stereotypes around Black women. Based on Patricia Hill Collins’ theoretical framework, Markle can be seen as representing the angry Black women (1990). 10 of the 14 analyzed articles that were written before the Oprah interview aired were largely focused on the claims made by staff that Markle was aggressive and a bully. The sheer coverage of the issue across the two analyzed tabloids demonstrates the way Markle is being represented to the public. Therefore, although Markle’s race and gender were not the focus of her coverage before the airing of her interview with Oprah, racial and gendered stereotypes still played a large role in her representations.

The second half of the analyzed articles consisted of coverage after the Oprah interview, from March 7-14. Direct references to Markle’s gender and race were more prominent in these articles, as discrimination on the basis of gender and race was a main discussion point in the interview. Directly after the interview aired, there were multiple long articles published which summarized the interview in its entirety including

quotations. From there, a large focus was put on the accusation made by Harry and Meghan that members of the royal family were concerned about how dark their unborn son Archie's skin colour would be. Archie's skin colour was discussed in 6 articles in *The Sun* and 12 articles in the *Daily Mail*. It is important to note that the tabloid articles were very clear about this being an 'accusation,' demonstrating that not all of the authors and the readers believe the claim to be true. Furthermore, many of the articles either stated or implied that it was primarily Meghan and not Harry who was offended by remarks about Archie's skin colour. This is likely tabloid authors assuming that Markle is more likely to be offered since she is Black and Harry is not, as there is no evidence provided to support the claim. Furthermore, 4 articles in *The Sun* and 9 in the *Daily Mail* made mentions of Markle's second pregnancy and the Sussexes having a baby girl. Coverage of the second pregnancy seemed to be mentioned alongside discussion of Archie's skin colour, possibly implying that these conversations could happen again around the birth of their daughter. This is one way in which Markle's race and role as a mother play a large role in the way she is framed.

In addition, a significant majority of the coverage after the interview pointed to Markle as a liar, with 10 articles from *The Sun* pointing to Markle being dishonest and 3 from the *Daily Mail*. During the interview, Meghan and Harry admitted to privately marrying three days prior to their televised ceremony. As a result, many of the articles proceed to point to the fact that Harry and Meghan lied to everyone who watched their ceremony. One article by Zeltmann (2021b) in *The Sun* pointed to Markle being married

three times, as she had been previously married in 2011 and then had two weddings with Prince Harry. Furthermore, many of the articles suggested that Markle has manipulated Harry in various ways over the span of their relationship. A total of 7 articles from *The Sun* and 1 from the *Daily Mail* painted Markle as manipulative. Multiple articles discuss how “controlling” Markle is, and how Harry’s actions can be read as a result of Markle’s influence. This controlling image is very much tied again to tropes around the aggressive Black women, as many articles do not have evidence of Markle’s dominance, but simply assume that she plays the dominant role in her relationship with Harry. Additionally, other articles simply claimed that Markle is not authentic. Overall, the analyzed articles framed Markle as a liar and manipulative, often using quotes from those who have met her, as well as her public actions, as evidence of such.

How do tabloid news outlets depict Meghan Markle’s relationship to the British Royal Family?

The next research question explores how Meghan Markle is framed in relation to her relationship with the royal family. Of the 50 analyzed articles from *The Sun* and the *Daily Mail*, the theme is present in 18 out of 25 articles in *The Sun* and all 25 articles in the *Daily Mail*. The most prominent areas of discussion within this theme included the Sussexes’ “war” on the palace, the Sussexes’ leaving the royal family, Markle being controlled by the monarchy, and the impact of bullying claims made against Markle.

Firstly, the articles were analyzed for coverage suggesting that Meghan and Harry have either offended the palace or have started a “war” against it. In *The Sun*, 9 out of the 18 articles that referenced the Sussexes’ relationship to the royal family directly implied that Meghan and Harry have offended the monarchy due to their actions. Even more prominently, 17 out of the 25 articles in the *Daily Mail* pointed to Meghan and Harry offending the monarchy. Some of the most common ways that the articles framed them as offending the monarchy included Meghan and Harry upsetting or blindsiding the Queen, treating their family poorly while Prince Philip was in the hospital, and critiquing their family’s livelihood. Another recurrence in coverage was the idea that Meghan and Harry had started a “war” against the royal family. In *The Sun*, 7 articles used the word “bombshell,” 3 the word “explosive,” and 3 the term “war” when referring to Meghan and Harry’s interview and their depictions of the royal family. The *Daily Mail* included similar coverage, with 13 articles using “bombshell” or “explosive” interchangeably, and 6 articles making reference to starting war against the palace and creating a level of fear. This coverage is important as it creates an ‘us versus them’ mentality in which many of the readers will choose to support either the royal family or Meghan and Harry. However, since these are British tabloids, the writing very much suggests that the majority of the readers will sympathize with the royal family for the “war” that they are facing.

Furthermore, the term “Megxit” has become popular in the press to describe Meghan and Harry’s departure from the royal family. The term is significant as it both uses Markle’s name in relation to the negative word “exit,” but also draws comparisons to

Brexit. As mentioned in the literature review, a large aspect of the Brexit movement was the idea of strengthening British nationalism. This connects to Markle leaving the royal family as she is not British, but American. The theme of nationalism will be explored in more detail later, but it is significant to look at how “Megxit” is discussed now over one year after their departure from the royal family. *The Sun* mentions “Megxit” directly in 6 articles, and the *Daily Mail* mentions “Megxit” in 5 articles. It must be noted that these 11 articles choose to use the term “Megxit” as opposed to simply stating that Meghan and Harry had left their royal duties. Therefore, “Megxit” frames Markle negatively by both including her name in the term and by drawing connections to Brexit.

Additionally, there were several other recurring themes when looking at Markle’s relationship to the royal family. This included Markle creating a strain within the royal family, Markle’s relationship with Kate Middleton, the staff’s bullying claims against Markle, Markle being silenced and controlled by the palace, Markle being denied mental health help, and the overall breaking of tradition. Out of the 18 articles in *The Sun* that discussed Markle’s relationship to the royal family, 6 discussed Meghan and Harry’s strained relationships with the royal family, while 1 article discussed Markle’s revelation that it was Kate who made her cry before her wedding to Harry. On the other hand, the *Daily Mail* featured 22 articles which depicted a strained relationship with the royal family, and 6 articles discussed Markle’s claim that Kate made her cry. This means that 65% of the analyzed articles suggested that Markle had created a strain between Harry and his family. 3 articles from *The Sun* and 5 from the *Daily Mail* also suggested that the

palace needed to be protected from Markle due to the staff's bullying accusations against her. Lastly, 3 articles from *The Sun* and 7 from the *Daily Mail* pointed to the fact that Markle has broken tradition within the monarchy, something that is viewed very negatively among the British public. All of the previous depictions display Markle in a negative way, as she is either causing a rift between family, bullying staff members, or breaking centuries-old traditions.

On the other hand, there are few articles that discuss Markle's struggles within the royal family. In *The Sun*, 3 articles discussed Markle's claim that she was denied help for her mental health by the palace, and 5 discussed Markle's statements that she was silenced or controlled by the palace. The *Daily Mail* touched on these topics more frequently, with 9 articles noting that Markle was denied mental health help and 7 discussing how she was silenced and controlled by the palace. Though these topics appeared less frequently than those discussing how Markle has disrupted the royal family, by discussing Markle's point of view she is being framed in a more positive way. It is important to note that most of these topics came up due to Markle's interview with Oprah, so most of these themes appeared in coverage from March 8th to 14th, and not during the first week of sample articles from March 1st to 7th. However, some of these articles included both points of view, meaning that they still discussed how Markle has negatively impacted the royal family, but also noted her struggles as well. Overall, positive coverage of Markle in relation to the royal family is less common, but it should be noted that positive framing of Markle does exist within the sample.

What role do Meghan Markle's status as a celebrity and former career as an actress play in the way tabloid articles frame her?

Meghan Markle's former career as an actress has led to further celebrity opinions surrounding her treatment by the royal family and British press. However, her career has also led the press to make assumptions about her desire to continue working in the entertainment industry. Both *The Sun* and *Daily Mail* touched on the theme of career and celebrity in 16 out of the 25 analyzed articles, resulting in 32 out of 50 articles total. Some of the coverage within this theme did not recur in too many analyzed articles, however, when the topic was discussed, it was discussed in detail. Two examples of this include coverage of Markle's former acting career, as well as the Sussexes' new media deals since leaving the royal family. *The Sun* had 3 articles which discussed Markle's former career as an actress, and 4 articles that discussed the media deals that Meghan and Harry have made within the past year, such as deals with Netflix and Spotify. Similarly, of the analyzed articles from the *Daily Mail*, 1 article discussed Markle's career and 2 discussed the Sussexes' media deals. Despite only a handful of articles addressing these topics, the articles often went into detail and used these topics to frame Meghan and Harry in a negative way. When discussing Markle's career, 3 articles pointed to the fact that she was an actress and could now be using her skills to act the victim. In addition, the articles that discussed Meghan and Harry's media deals often criticized them for claiming that they moved to North America for privacy, and then signed major media deals. These

articles also implied that the couple left the royal family simply so that they could make more money for themselves in Los Angeles. Therefore, despite small numbers of articles featuring these themes, the coverage is still significant due to the way Meghan and Harry are framed.

Another major area of coverage when looking at Markle's status as a celebrity is the way other celebrities have publicly reacted to Meghan Markle. *The Sun* discussed the many celebrities that have defended Markle in 4 articles, and the *Daily Mail* in 11 articles. Some of these articles discussed how major celebrities such as Beyoncé and Chrissy Teigen, former First Lady Hilary Clinton, and many of Markle's former co-stars have publicly defended her character and supported her during the bullying claims and Oprah interview. It is significant that the analyzed articles mentioned celebrity support for Markle, as if readers like and trust these celebrities, they are more likely to see Markle in a more positive way. However, these articles often did not spend much time discussing how the celebrities have defended Markle, and often quickly moved on to another topic. On the other hand, there were some articles that discussed public figures who had criticized Markle. *The Sun* had 3 articles and the *Daily Mail* 1 article in which public figures such as Piers Morgan and political commentator Candace Owens condemned Markle for attacking her own family and for attempting to gain public attention. Though Piers Morgan is a prominent figure in the United Kingdom, Morgan and Owens are not as universally known as Markle's supporters such as Beyoncé and Teigen. However, these articles still largely featured Morgan and Owen's criticisms and detailed the ways in

which they questioned Markle's character. Therefore, it should be noted that while more articles featured positive celebrity reactions to Markle, the articles featuring critics of Markle often went into more detail.

What role do nationality and British tradition play in the framing of Meghan Markle?

The Sussexes' move to California along with their breaking of tradition have both played a large role in how Meghan Markle is framed in the media. In *The Sun* and *Daily Mail*, the theme of nationality was present in 9 articles and 15 articles respectively. The most common points of discussion within this overall theme were the Sussexes' move to Canada and then to California, Meghan Markle's American identity, and the fact that the Oprah interview was filmed in the US.

The majority of articles that were published before the March 7 broadcast of the Sussexes' interview with Oprah noted Meghan and Harry's move to North America. In *The Sun*, a total of 6 out of the 9 articles with the theme of nationality mentioned that Meghan and Harry had moved to California. The *Daily Mail* yielded similar results, with 11 out of the 15 articles noting the couple's move to California. On the other hand, only 3 articles total mentioned that Meghan and Harry had first moved to Canada, a commonwealth country. The articles seemed to connect their move to California with the couple wanting to make more money through media deals. This could be one reason their time in Canada was not mentioned as frequently, as it does not fit the narrative that the press is trying to convey.

Furthermore, a fair number of articles noted both Markle and Winfrey's American nationality, especially after the interview had aired. 3 articles in *The Sun* noted that Markle is American, while 2 articles stated that Markle possesses cultural differences with to the royal family. The *Daily Mail* discussed these topics less than *The Sun*, with only 1 article noting Markle's American nationality and no articles making mentions of cultural differences. These articles often aimed to separate Markle from the royal family, by showing that she is not only racially different, but also nationally and culturally different as well. Many of the articles also suggested that it was only Markle's idea to move to the US and not at all Harry's, since it was Markle who is from the US in the first place. Additionally, 1 article in *The Sun* and 3 in the *Daily Mail* noted that Oprah is an American interviewer and that the interview was filmed in California. By bringing up Oprah's nationality, the articles are suggesting that she cannot speak to issues surrounding the royal family, since she is not British herself. Overall, the theme of nationality is mentioned less than the other themes of race, gender, family, career, and celebrity, yet this theme still demonstrates significant ways that Meghan Markle is negatively framed in UK tabloids.

Discussion of Results

Analyzing how public figures are framed in the media is an important consideration when drawing conclusions on how race and gender are perceived by the public. Through this analysis, it is evident that the press frames individuals in specific

ways that likely impacts the reader's opinion of the individual. Moreover, framing not only impacts the public figure in the press, but also individuals within the general public who share the same race and gender. Racist representations affect everyone within that race, not just the one celebrity in the press. The following discussion will compare the findings of the analysis to previous research conducted in the literature review and theoretical framework, to draw more universal conclusions.

The findings across the 50 analyzed articles from *The Sun* and *Daily Mail* demonstrate larger issues around racial and gendered representations in the United Kingdom. The literature review explored racism in Britain, common portrayals of Black women, tensions between Britain and the United States, the framing of celebrities, and media coverage of the royal family, all of which proved to be significant themes while analyzing Meghan Markle's coverage in tabloids.

In the analyzed articles, Markle's race was often not the focus. However, the articles frequently framed Markle in ways that corresponded with the stereotypes of Black women that were outlined in the literature review. This demonstrates how the press is able to discriminate against minorities and cause division among races without drawing criticism for outright racism. The articles are not criticizing Markle because of her skin colour, but rather criticizing her for being aggressive and a bully. The controlling image of the "Welfare Queen" was also identified, with articles suggesting that Markle was using the royal family and their money to increase her own personal status and wealth (Collins, 1990). Additionally, since it was UK tabloids being analyzed, these results prove

that there are still racial tensions throughout Great Britain. Therefore, the analysis demonstrates that changes to tabloid writing are necessary if the industry wants to prevent the negative framing of Black individuals.

Furthermore, the findings of the analysis demonstrated Britain's commitment to their royal family and Britain's ongoing tension with American culture. Many of the articles blatantly appeared to side with the working royals over Meghan and Harry when discussing tensions between the two. Many of the articles also pointed to Markle's American nationality and accused her of possessing a plan to return to the US. Some articles even suggest that many of the issues within the royal family are happening because Markle is American. The analyzed articles aligned with the findings of the literature review, as Britain's strong nationalism and tensions with American culture can still be seen. Lastly, celebrity culture plays a role in Meghan Markle's framing. In the literature review, Holmes & Redmond (2006) discuss how celebrities are often seen as selfish. This is reflected in the analysis, as many of the articles express the belief that Markle has forced Prince Harry to move to the US and to sign media deals for her own happiness. Therefore, the analysis largely aligned with previous research on similar topics, demonstrating the many tactics that authors use to frame individuals in the press.

Limitations

Despite a successful analysis, there are several considerations that should be explored in future research. Although the analysis focused on a two-week time period

before and after Meghan and Harry's interview with Oprah Winfrey, there was still a large number of articles between the two tabloids. There were approximately 300 articles from each tabloid focusing on Meghan Markle within the selected time frame. Selecting 25 random articles from each tabloid provided a strong sample size for the research questions and timeline of the research. However, a large, more comprehensive study would also be useful to find if there is more variation in how Markle is framed. The two tabloids with the largest readership in the UK were also selected, but it would be useful to explore smaller British tabloids, as well as tabloids from other countries.

Furthermore, it is important to note that British royal family as a whole, and not just Meghan Markle, receive a large amount of media coverage. A primary example is Kate Middleton, another woman who married into the royal family and also receives a great deal of media attention. While looking at the media coverage of other members of the royal family is out of scope due to the time frame and resources for this analysis, it would provide important information for those wishing to examine the full extent of Markle's media coverage. For example, Kate Middleton is often praised as the perfect royal spouse. In this way, Markle is often snubbed by the media, even without a mention, as she is hardly noted as a good royal or as a good spouse. Therefore, it should be acknowledged that this paper does not analyze the totality of Markle's media coverage, but rather looks exclusively at media articles that specifically make mention of Markle and her actions.

Lastly, *The Sun* and *Daily Mail* also presented some differences to one another which should be considered when looking at the findings. The analyzed articles from *The Sun* averaged 300-1,000 words per article. On the other hand, the *Daily Mail* articles averaged 1,000-3,000 words, with one article even reaching 13,000 words. The variation in word count per article did not cause any clear issues when analyzing the results. However, it should be noted that themes are more likely to come up in the *Daily Mail* if the articles are two or three times the length of the articles in *The Sun*. Overall, both tabloids yielded similar findings, further validating the results of the analysis.

Conclusion

This discourse analysis looked at media coverage of Meghan Markle across 50 UK tabloid articles, from March 1 to March 14, 2021. The analysis aimed to uncover whether or not Markle's interview with Oprah Winfrey shifted the way she was framed in the media. Although there were subtle changes in coverage, such as new topics of conversation arising surrounding Markle's mental health, Markle's representation remained fairly unchanged. The themes of gender and race, relationship to the royal family, career and celebrity, and nationality played the largest role in how Markle was framed. The research not only demonstrates Britain's ongoing racial tensions and its citizens' disdain for American culture, but also their strong nationalism and loyalty to their royal family. Therefore, this analysis reaffirms the findings from much of the

literature on Black women's framing in the media, and demonstrates that there is still a long way to go towards equality.

References

- Agility PR Solutions (2021, January). *Top 10 U.K. newspapers by circulation*. <https://www.agilitypr.com/resources/top-media-outlets/top-10-uk-newspapers-by-circulation/>
- Andrews, K. (2020). The post-racial princess: Delusions of racial progress and intersectional failures. *Women's Studies International Forum*, 84(1), 1-6. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wsif.2020.102432>
- Black, J. (2015). *The British Empire: A History and a Debate*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315614151>
- Buggs, S. G. (2021). Post-script – When post-racialism fails: Meghan Markle and the limits of symbolism. *Women's Studies International Forum*, 86(1), 1-3. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wsif.2021.102473>
- Chapman, J. (2011). Female representation, readership, and early tabloid properties. *Australian Journal of Communication*, 38(2), 53-70. <http://eprints.lincoln.ac.uk/3499/>
- Clancy, L. (2021). The corporate power of the British monarchy: Capital(ism), wealth and power in contemporary Britain. *The Sociological Review*, 69(2), 330-347. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0038026120916105>
- Collins, P. H. (1990). *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment* (2nd ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203900055>

- Connor, H. (2021). Māori, monarchy and Meghan Markle: An Indigenous perspective. *Women's Studies International Forum*, 86(1), 1-7. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wsif.2021.102458>
- Cooper, B. (2017). *Beyond Respectability: The Intellectual Thought of Race Women*. University of Illinois Press. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5406/j.ctt1q31sfr>
- Crenshaw, K. (1989). Demarginalizing the intersection of race and sex: Black feminist critique of antidiscrimination doctrine, feminist theory and antiracist politics. *University of Chicago Legal Forum*, 1989, 139-168. <https://heinonline.org/HOL/P?h=hein.journals/uchclf1989&i=143>
- Dixon, D. (1983). Thatcher's people: The British Nationality Act 1981. *Journal of Law & Society*, 10(2), 161-180. <https://heinonline.org/HOL/P?h=hein.journals/jlsocty10&i=165>
- Drake, P., & Higgins, M. (2006). Chapter 5: 'I'm a celebrity, get me into politics': The political celebrity and the celebrity politician. In S. Holmes & S. Redmond (Eds.), *Framing Celebrity* (1st ed.) (pp. 87-100). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203715406>
- Ducey, K., & Feagin, J. R. (2021). *Revealing Britain's Systematic Racism: The Case of Meghan Markle and the Royal Family*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003167433>
- El-Enany, N. (2020). Insurgent empire and building archives of dissidence. *Identities*, 27(6), 731-734. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1070289X.2020.1816333>

- Finneman, T., & Thomas, R. J. (2014). The British national press and the 2012 royal family photo scandals: Privacy and the public interest. *Journalism Practice*, 8(4), 407-420. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/17512786.2013.833678>
- Flood, M. (2019). Intersectionality and celebrity culture. *Women's Studies in Communication*, 42(4), 422-426. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07491409.2019.1682917>
- Gammage, M. M. (2015). *Representations of Black Women in the Media* (1st ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315671550>
- Goffman, E. (1974). *Frame Analysis*. Northeastern University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1177/004839317800800108>
- Goodwin, D. (2018). An American in Windsor: Why Meghan Markle is a revolutionary kind of royal. *Time International*, 191(21), 24-25.
- Gopal, P. (2019). *Insurgent Empire: Anticolonial Resistance and British Dissent*. Verso.
- hooks, b. (2014). *Black Looks: Race and Representation* (2nd ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315743226>
- Holmes, S., & Redmond, S. (2006). *Framing Celebrity* (1st ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203715406>
- Johnes, M. (2019). Race, national identity, and responses to Muhammad Ali in 1960s Britain. *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, 36(9-10), 812-831. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09523367.2019.1679775>

- Kantor, J. (2009, January 20). A portrait of change: Nation's many faces in extended first family. *The New York Times*. <https://www.nytimes.com/2009/01/21/us/politics/21family.html>
- Kooijman, J. (2019). Fierce, fabulous, and in/famous: Beyoncé as Black diva. *Popular Music and Society*, 42(1), 6-21. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03007766.2019.1555888>
- Lamb, E. C. (2013). Power and resistance: New methods for analysis across genres in critical discourse analysis. *Discourse & Society*, 24(3), 334-360. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/24441643>
- Linkof, R. (2018). *Public Images: Celebrity, Photojournalism, and the Making of the Tabloid Press* (1st ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003103868>
- Livingston, R. W., Rosette, A. S., & Washington, E. F. (2012). Can an agentic Black woman get ahead? The impact of race and interpersonal dominance on perceptions of female leaders. *Psychological Science*, 23(4), 354-358. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0956797611428079>
- Marin, S. A. (2016). Did the United States scare the Europeans? The propaganda about the "American danger" in Europe around 1900. *The Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era*, 15(1), 23-44. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1537781415000584>
- McLennan, R. (2021). A new wrinkle: Age, race and writing Meghan Markle. *Women's Studies International Forum*, 85(1), 1-6. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wsif.2021.102454>

- Randell-Moon, H. (2017). Thieves like us: The British monarchy, celebrity, and settler colonialism. *Celebrity Studies*, 8(3), 393-408. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19392397.2017.1299019>
- Rothman, E. F., Nagaswaran, A., Johnson, R. M., Adams, K. M., Scrivens, J., & Baughman, A. (2012). U.S. tabloid magazine coverage of a celebrity dating abuse incident: Rihanna and Chris Brown. *Journal of Health Communication*, 17(1), 733-744. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10810730.2011.635778>
- Salimova, R. M. (2020). An insight into the British monarchy. *Bulletin of the South Ural State University. Ser. Linguistics*, 17(4), 12-15. <https://doi.org/10.14529/ling200402>
- Spark, A. (1996). Wrestling with America: Media, national images, and the global village. *Journal of Popular Culture*, 29(4), 83-98. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.0022-3840.1996.83984987.x>
- Trimble, L., Raphael, D., Sampert, S., Wagner, A., & Gerrits, B. (2015). Politicizing bodies: Hegemonic masculinity, heteronormativity, and racism in news representations of Canadian political party leadership candidates. *Women's Studies in Communication*, 38(3), 314–330. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07491409.2015.1062836>
- Van Dijk, T A. (1991). *Racism and the Press*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315682662>

- Van Dijk, T. A. (2006). Ideology and discourse analysis. *Journal of Political Ideologies*, 11(2), 115-140. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13569310600687908>
- Warner, K. J. (2015). They gon' think you loud regardless: Ratchetness, reality television, and Black womanhood. *Camera Obscura* 88, 30(1), 129-153. <https://doi.org/10.1215/02705346-2885475>.
- Washington, M. (2020). "Draw your own box": Deciphering Meghan Markle's mixed-race identity. *Women's Studies in Communication*, 43(4), 348-353. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07491409.2020.1833630>
- Weidhase, N. (2020). Chapter 16: 'Prince Harry has gone over to the dark side': Race, royalty and US–UK romance in Brexit Britain. In B. J. Brickman, D. Jermyn, & T. L. Trost (Eds.), *Love Across the Atlantic: US-UK Romance in Popular Culture* (pp. 275-290). Edinburgh University Press. https://discovery.mcmaster.ca/iii/encore/record/C__Rb4651348?lang=eng
- Weidhase, N. (2021). The feminist politics of Meghan Markle: Brexit, femininity and the nation in crisis. *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, 1-18. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1367549420980010>
- Wilson, N. (2021). "I like my baby heir with baby hair and afros": Black majesty and the fault-lines of colonialism. *Women's Studies International Forum*, 84(1), 1-11. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wsif.2020.102431>

- Wober, J. M. (2000). A feeding frenzy, or feeling friendly? Events after the death of Diana, Princess of Wales. *Journal of Popular Culture*, 34(1), 127-134. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.0022-3840.2000.3401-127.x>
- Woldemikael, E., & Woldemikael, O. (2021). From Suits to royals: The politics of Meghan Markle's racial ambiguity. *Women's Studies International Forum*, 85(1), 1-6. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wsif.2021.102439>
- Yelin, H., & Clancy, L. (2020). 'Meghan's manifesto': Meghan Markle and the co-option of feminism. *Celebrity Studies*, 11(3), 372-377. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19392397.2018.1541541>
- Yelin, H., & Clancy, L. (2021a). Introduction to special issue - Race, royalty and Meghan Markle: Elites, inequalities, and a woman in the public eye. *Women's Studies International Forum*, 84(1), 1-4. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wsif.2020.102436>
- Yelin, H., & Clancy, L. (2021b). Monarchy is a feminist issue: Andrew, Meghan and #MeToo era monarchy. *Women's Studies International Forum*, 84(1), 1-8. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wsif.2020.102435>
- Yelin, H., & Paule, M. (2021). "The best thing about having Meghan join the royal family is that she actually has Black in her": Girls making meaning around Meghan Markle, the monarchy and meritocracy. *Women's Studies International Forum*, 86(1), 1-8. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wsif.2021.102456>

References: Research Sample

The Sun UK:

Cliff, M. (2021, March 6). Heir this: The real reason Prince Harry raged 'what Meghan

wants Meghan gets' in wedding tiara row, according to palace staff. *The Sun*

UK. [https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?](https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6250-TPK1-JBNF-W192-00000-00&context=1516831)

[collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6250-TPK1-JBNF-](https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6250-TPK1-JBNF-W192-00000-00&context=1516831)

[W192-00000-00&context=1516831](https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6250-TPK1-JBNF-W192-00000-00&context=1516831)

Devlin, A. (2021, March 10). Fielding off Phil: Phillip Schofield scolds Meghan Markle's

friend over being 'unbelievably guarded and saying nothing' in heated

interview. *The Sun UK*. [https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/](https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6261-BY11-DY4H-K4B2-00000-00&context=1516831)

[document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6261-BY11-DY4H-](https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6261-BY11-DY4H-K4B2-00000-00&context=1516831)

[K4B2-00000-00&context=1516831](https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6261-BY11-DY4H-K4B2-00000-00&context=1516831)

Duggan, J. (2021, March 8). 'More to come': Meghan Markle and Prince Harry will make

more shocking revelations in unseen Oprah footage later today. *The Sun*

UK. [https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?](https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:625J-KK61-JBNF-W1G5-00000-00&context=1516831)

[collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:625J-KK61-JBNF-](https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:625J-KK61-JBNF-W1G5-00000-00&context=1516831)

[W1G5-00000-00&context=1516831](https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:625J-KK61-JBNF-W1G5-00000-00&context=1516831)

Fiorillo, C. (2021, March 11). 'Had to go': Which GMB stars complained about Piers

Morgan?. *The Sun UK*. [https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/](https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6267-B331-DY4H-K1RN-00000-00&context=1516831)

[document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6267-B331-DY4H-](https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6267-B331-DY4H-K1RN-00000-00&context=1516831)

[K1RN-00000-00&context=1516831](https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6267-B331-DY4H-K1RN-00000-00&context=1516831)

- Fuller, A. (2021, March 13). 'Dishonest': Oprah interview with Meghan Markle and Prince Harry 'misled viewers', claims newspaper group in complaint to CBS. *The Sun UK*. <https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:626N-8F41-JBNF-W243-00000-00&context=1516831>
- Grealish, S. (2021, March 3). Heir this: Meghan Markle 'wore earrings gifted by Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman to formal dinner after Khashoggi killing'. *The Sun UK*. <https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6249-DXT1-JBNF-W502-00000-00&context=1516831>
- Hawken, A. (2021a, March 3). Mega-plan: Meghan Markle 'wanted to be the victim from day one to convince Harry of "unbearable" Royal life & force US move'. *The Sun UK*. <https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:624H-JNH1-DY4H-K2R3-00000-00&context=1516831>
- Hawken, A. (2021b, March 10). Double down: Piers Morgan says he still doesn't believe Meghan Markle and 'freedom of speech is a hill I'm happy to die on'. *The Sun UK*. <https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:625T-PXG1-JBNF-W1M1-00000-00&context=1516831>

- Hawken, L. (2021, March 12). Heir this: The Queen 'extended an olive branch' to Meghan Markle & Prince Harry but must 'learn to modernise', claims royal expert. *The Sun UK*. <https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:626F-97Y1-JBNF-W0SM-00000-00&context=1516831>
- Keane, D. (2021, March 8). One is not amused: Queen briefed over breakfast today by aides after shock Meghan Markle and Prince Harry bombshell claims. *The Sun UK*. <https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:625J-KK61-JBNF-W1HV-00000-00&context=1516831>
- Kraterou, A. (2021, March 7). 'Narcissist': Candace Owens 'knew Meghan Markle & Harry would bolt to LA' as she slams Chrissy Teigen's 'miscarriage' tweet. *The Sun UK*. <https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6255-0BH1-JBNF-W4CB-00000-00&context=1516831>
- Leyfield, F. (2021, March 9). Sock shock: Prince Harry's socks mocked during Oprah interview with Meghan Markle as ITV viewers 'can't get over how bad they were'. *The Sun UK*. <https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:625T-D0G1-DY4H-K24K-00000-00&context=1516831>

Lockett, J. (2021, March 1). 'Service' row: Meghan Markle and Prince Harry launch new

Archewell logo with the word 'service' after cruel jibe at Queen. *The Sun*

UK. [https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?](https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:623W-GK21-JBNF-W26M-00000-00&context=1516831)

[collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:623W-GK21-JBNF-](https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:623W-GK21-JBNF-W26M-00000-00&context=1516831)

[W26M-00000-00&context=1516831](https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:623W-GK21-JBNF-W26M-00000-00&context=1516831)

Rizzo, P. (2021, March 8). 'Silenced': What did Meghan Markle say about The Little

Mermaid. *The Sun UK*. [https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/](https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:625C-M1H1-JBNF-W3W2-00000-00&context=1516831)

[document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:625C-M1H1-JBNF-](https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:625C-M1H1-JBNF-W3W2-00000-00&context=1516831)

[W3W2-00000-00&context=1516831](https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:625C-M1H1-JBNF-W3W2-00000-00&context=1516831)

Schaffstall, K. (2021, March 10). Free Britney: Britney Spears' fans want Oprah Winfrey

to interview singer amid conservatorship battle after Meghan Markle's

interview. *The Sun UK*. [https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/](https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:625T-J8G1-DY4H-K2NJ-00000-00&context=1516831)

[document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:625T-J8G1-DY4H-](https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:625T-J8G1-DY4H-K2NJ-00000-00&context=1516831)

[K2NJ-00000-00&context=1516831](https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:625T-J8G1-DY4H-K2NJ-00000-00&context=1516831)

Soteriou, S. (2021a, March 10). Out with a bang: Piers Morgan says 'my work is done'

after Good Morning Britain beats BBC Breakfast's ratings for first time in

history. *The Sun UK*. [https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/](https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6261-BY11-DY4H-K48B-00000-00&context=1516831)

[document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6261-BY11-DY4H-](https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6261-BY11-DY4H-K48B-00000-00&context=1516831)

[K48B-00000-00&context=1516831](https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6261-BY11-DY4H-K48B-00000-00&context=1516831)

Soteriou, S. (2021b, March 13). Moving on: Alex Beresford supported by Trisha Goddard

who wishes him 'peace' as on-air spat with Piers Morgan was day after her

own. *The Sun UK*. <https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:626G-8S81-JBNF-W0FV-00000-00&context=1516831>

Vonow, B. (2021, March 8). Markle her words: Meghan Markle claims Palace aides were 'willing to lie to protect other royals' over her. *The Sun UK*. <https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:625C-M1H1-JBNF-W3YN-00000-00&context=1516831>

Wilkinson, M. (2021, March 2). Meg bully claim: Meghan Markle 'faced bullying complaint from one of her closest advisers at Kensington Palace'. *The Sun UK*. <https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6249-DXT1-JBNF-W4WW-00000-00&context=1516831>

White, D. (2021a, March 8). Oprah's win-free: Were Harry and Meghan paid for the Oprah interview?. *The Sun UK*. <https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:625K-85G1-DY4H-K2GP-00000-00&context=1516831>

White, D. (2021b, March 9). Off the mark: What has Thomas Markle said about his daughter Meghan?. *The Sun UK*. <https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?>

collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:625K-X7V1-JBNF-

W0P8-00000-00&context=1516831

White, D. (2021c, March 9). Cashing in: What is Thomas Markle's net worth and what

has he said about being paid for stories?. *The Sun UK*. [https://advance-lexis-](https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?)

[com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?](https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?)

collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:625T-D0G1-DY4H-

K27M-00000-00&context=1516831

Winter, A. (2021, March 5). Mega-drop: New clip from Meghan Markle's explosive

Oprah chat to air at lunchtime today. *The Sun UK*. [https://advance-lexis-](https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?)

[com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?](https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?)

collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:624Y-H1K1-DY4H-

K0NN-00000-00&context=1516831

Zeltmann, B. (2021a, March 6). 'How dare you?': Piers Morgan brands Meghan Markle's

pal Patrick J Adams a 'jumped-up twerp' after Suits star called Royals

'obscene'. *The Sun UK*. <https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/>

[document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6250-9Y31-DY4H-](https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/)

[K0CT-00000-00&context=1516831](https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/)

Zeltmann, B. (2021b, March 8). Royal reveal: When did Meghan Markle and Prince

Harry get married?. *The Sun UK*. [https://advance-lexis-](https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?)

[com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?](https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?)

collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:625C-Y5K1-JBNF-
W169-00000-00&context=1516831

Daily Mail:

Becker, C. (2021, March 11). Marlo Thomas, 83, and Phil Donohue, 85, share the secret to their 40 year marriage ... and weigh in on Harry and Meghan's Oprah interview. *Daily Mail*. <https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6263-PB81-JBNF-W36X-00000-00&context=1516831>

Brown, C. (2021, March 13). Everyone's had their say about the Harry and Meghan interview except Kim Jong-Un and Dilyn the dog! Craig Brown's unique take on the dizzying royal circus at the end of a mind-boggling week. *Daily Mail*. <https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:626J-48G1-JBNF-W0CB-00000-00&context=1516831>

Carr, J. (2021, March 8). 'Harry wants America to hate his own family': Piers Morgan blasts 'shameful' Prince for allowing Meghan to 'portray the royals as a bunch of racists in the most incendiary charge he's ever seen'. *Daily Mail*. <https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:625D-9241-JBNF-W36R-00000-00&context=1516831>

Court, A. (2021, March 10). 'We are all strengthened and inspired by you': Beyoncé thanks 'rule breaker' Meghan Markle for her 'courage and leadership' - two days after Duchess's bombshell Oprah interview. *Daily Mail*. [https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:625T-79W1-JBNF-W4M7-00000-00&context=1516831](https://advance.lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:625T-79W1-JBNF-W4M7-00000-00&context=1516831)

Dailymail.com Reporter. (2021a, March 8). Harry and Meghan's interview becomes the second most watched non-sports broadcast this TV season after CBS paid up to \$9M to Oprah to air her bombshell interview. *Daily Mail*. <https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:625F-9NV1-JBNF-W337-00000-00&context=1516831>

Dailymail.com Reporter. (2021b, March 11). Tiffany Haddish looks worse for wear while leaving pre-Grammy party in LA... and gives spirited take on Megan Markle and royal family drama. *Daily Mail*. <https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6263-PB81-JBNF-W33S-00000-00&context=1516831>

Davison, R. (2021, March 8). 'Mental health doesn't discriminate on how wealthy you are': Holly Willoughby defends Meghan Markle after she admitted to feeling suicidal thoughts during Oprah interview. *Daily Mail*. <https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6263-PB81-JBNF-W33S-00000-00&context=1516831>

com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?
collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:625D-T711-DY4H-
K0HV-00000-00&context=1516831

Duell, M. & Robinson, M. (2021, March 4). Meghan's friends accuse Royal aides of painting Duchess as an 'angry woman of colour' with 'bullying' allegations in an 'ugly' bid to 'destroy her character' ahead of tell-all Oprah interview. *Daily Mail*. <https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:624J-X481-JBNF-W068-00000-00&context=1516831>

Fruen, L. (2021, March 10). CBS This Morning beats GMA and Today for the first time ever to top morning show ratings thanks to bonus clips of Oprah's chat with Harry and Meghan - as the interview is watched by nearly 50 million worldwide. *Daily Mail*. <https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:625X-7G71-JBNF-W33M-00000-00&context=1516831>

Gayle, L. (2021, March 9). Jill Biden's show of support for the Sussexes? First Lady mirrored Meghan Markle in \$2,190 Oscar de la Renta lemon-print dress on International Women's Day in wake of bombshell Oprah interview. *Daily Mail*. <https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:625M-S791-JBNF-W1WC-00000-00&context=1516831>

Gordon, A. (2021, March 8). 'I was trapped until I met Meg, I just didn't know it': Harry says he feels sorry for William and Charles who can never escape and reveals his father stopped taking his calls during Megxit. *Daily Mail*. <https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:625C-8VW1-DY4H-K13K-00000-00&context=1516831>

Griffith, K. (2021, March 6). Chrissy Teigen rushes to defend her friend Meghan Markle ahead of Oprah interview and says critics 'won't stop until she miscarries'. *Daily Mail*. <https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6252-9YK1-JBNF-W0KP-00000-00&context=1516831>

Harris, N. (2021, March 8). 'For me as a Black woman, it made me feel sick to my core': Alexandra Burke responds to Meghan Markle's 'heartbreaking' racism claims about the Royal family. *Daily Mail*. <https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:625D-T711-DY4H-K0B2-00000-00&context=1516831>

Hevesi, B. (2021, March 9). Tough-talking Aussie mother-of-three dubbed 'Samantha the Panther' is set to be 'central' to Buckingham Palace's bullying probe after working as Meghan and Harry's private secretary. *Daily Mail*. <https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?>

collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:625T-79W1-JBNF-
W4B2-00000-00&context=1516831

Johnston, H. (2021, March 1). Prince Harry and Meghan Markle urge followers to 'unleash a groundswell of compassion' ahead of International Women's Day next week and suggest 'good deeds' for fans to do this month. *Daily Mail*. [https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?](https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6240-1871-DY4H-K3V2-00000-00&context=1516831)

collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6240-1871-DY4H-
K3V2-00000-00&context=1516831

Kay, R. (2021, March 3). Royals' Meghan 'bully' crisis: As Buckingham Palace launches an unprecedented investigation into sensational bullying claims against Meghan, make no mistake this is a crisis that echoes the Abdication. *Daily Mail*. [https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?](https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:624D-F6R1-JBNF-W0MS-00000-00&context=1516831)

collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:624D-F6R1-JBNF-
W0MS-00000-00&context=1516831

Lankston, C. (2021, March 5). Oprah's best friend Gayle King says Harry and Meghan have been 'vilified': CBS hosts brand royal family 'oppressive' after airing clip of Duchess claiming palace stopped her speaking to TV mogul. *Daily Mail*. [https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?](https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:624T-CWY1-DY4H-K1M4-00000-00&context=1516831)

collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:624T-CWY1-DY4H-
K1M4-00000-00&context=1516831

Martin, H. (2021, March 7). Queen wears brooch she wore on her honeymoon in touching tribute to ill Philip as she joins forces with the royal family to celebrate Commonwealth Day with message to the nation. *Daily Mail*. <https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6256-TFX1-DY4H-K0HT-00000-00&context=1516831>

Mrad, M. (2021, March 9). Oprah was just the beginning: Now Channel Nine airs The Crown In Crisis special exploring the fallout of Prince Harry and Meghan's devastating tell-all. *Daily Mail*. <https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:625P-8FK1-DY4H-K49C-00000-00&context=1516831>

Robinson, M., Duell, M., Robinson, J., Carr, J., & Tingle, R. (2021, March 8). Oprah interview bombshells: Meghan claims she was suicidal when she was five months pregnant, Kate made her cry and Royals refused to make Archie a prince because they were worried how 'dark' he would be. *Daily Mail*. <https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:625C-8VW1-DY4H-K0WD-00000-00&context=1516831>

Sales, D. (2021, March 8). Prince Philip, 99, wakes to bombshell revelations about his family on his 21st day in hospital - as Meghan tells Oprah she phoned the Queen

to 'check in' on the Duke's heart battle. *Daily Mail*. <https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:625D-9241-JBNF-W3B0-00000-00&context=1516831>

Sandbrook, D. (2021, March 12). Trust 'The Firm' to keep the flag flying: Dominic Sandbrook says surely there's only so long Prince Harry and Meghan Markle can trade on their pique. *Daily Mail*. <https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:626B-5V41-JBNF-W0X9-00000-00&context=1516831>

Tingle, R., & English, R. (2021, March 11). 'We're very much not a racist family': Angry Prince William publicly hits back at Harry and Meghan's claims as he becomes first member of family to break silence - and reveals he hasn't spoken to his brother since Oprah interview 'but will do'. *Daily Mail*. <https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6262-6621-DY4H-K29T-00000-00&context=1516831>

Tourelle, C. (2021, March 14). 'Papa is missing you!' Prince George, Princess Charlotte and Prince Louis make home-made cards addressed to their 'Granny Diana' to mark Mother's Day - and say they 'think of her always'. *Daily Mail*. <https://advance-lexis-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/api/document?>

collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:626P-8GC1-DY4H-
K52B-00000-00&context=1516831