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COME 492

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Who wears the Crown in *The Crown*

Introduction

Hegemonic masculinity is found throughout *The Crown* in Queen Elizabeth and Philip. This study will show you that Queen Elizabeth shows more often the characteristics of hegemonic masculinity than her husband, Prince Philip, she can be seen through her actions as an ideal male more than her husband. He obviously can also have these characteristics mainly because he is male, but as far as action and what is seen through the television show he doesn't show as often as Elizabeth. To my knowledge, this study has never been done before with this media and lens, but I could see it being done with other media instead. I took research from other studies done on female and hegemonic masculinity as well as hegemonic masculinity today. I also believe that this study could be replicated in the future as the first season which I studied was released in 2016. There could be more moment that were not discovered or seen differently through someone else. It was interesting to watch her journey unfold through the television show as well as real life as she just passed away this year, in the show you will go from her uncle's abdication, her father becoming king, and to her becoming sovereign of England and the Commonwealth. Queen Elizabeth was different from the other monarchs not just because she was a woman but also because she stood up to the men in her cabinet as well as those who surrounded her. She could keep up with them and never really showed emotion or acted feminine when she didn't need to. She always knew her time and place, she dressed the part of a woman, but when it was time for

business she was ready. Hence, she was monarch for 70 years, and had was the most loved by everyone, even in America she was well-loved, so throughout this study you will see how Queen Elizabeth has shown these five characteristics through the show *The Crown* and see the start a beautiful long-lasting monarch.

Program Information

Polit episode aired in 2016, this is a Netflix original, so it is only offer on Netflix. The show has been popular with everyone who own the platform. It does limit the market of consumers but they have also grown very popular which leads people to watching the show. Netflix just released the fifth season here in 2022, which follow along with the divorce of Diana and Charles as well as her untimely death. The representation of the royal family members was pretty accurate, every twenty episodes or two seasons they change the characters or mature them to represent them at that point in their life. I wonder if the royal family has anything to do with what is released and what is not released on the show, as the royal family lived a public life, so most things are known but what happened behind closed door is what I find interesting. I think this is a great thing the creators did, it adds to the realism of the show. Writing about *The Crown* takes a different approach rather than a typical television show. This is due to the fact that the show is categorized as a Historical Drama, which means that it is based on historical events. Most of these events are accurate descriptions of these events. I did look into the directors and crew and was looking to see if it was a predominately female-held position. As Queen Elizabeth is shown so strongly, I was thinking it would make sense for a female crew, but it was quite opposite mostly male-dominated director and crew. That impressed me with they portrayed her so well, as showing men weaker. I do believe that they kept her in a powerful position because she was a person that everyone loved.

Lens/ Description of Approach

In this study, I will be analyzing how *The Crown* challenges the status quo that says males can only have five characteristics that make them an “Ideal Male” or Hegemonic Masculinity. According to Dictionary.com Hegemonic Masculinity is described as “a socially constructed masculine ideal, defined chiefly in contrast to or as the opposite of femininity, and held up as the most prestigious form of manliness in a hetero-patriarchy.” When created in the 80s-90s, Nick Trujillo applied it to baseball legend, Nolan Ryan, he applied to the five characteristics of Hegemonic Masculinity, so he was considered an ideal male. Trujillo cited R.W. Connell's definition of hegemonic masculinity which is a widely used definition around with media critics and scholars, “the culturally idealized form of masculine characters” which emphasizes “the connecting of masculinity to toughness and competitiveness” as well as “the subordination of women” and “the marginalization of gay men” taken from Connell (1990). Trujillo pointed out that many media critics and scholars such as Brod, Connell, Jeffords, and others have clearly stated the five characteristics that are involved in hegemonic masculinity which include those of “(1) physical force and control, (2) occupational achievement, (3) familial patriarchy, (4) frontiersmanship, and (5) heterosexuality”. These five characteristics are not to describing all men and any man, but that not having all these makes you less of a man. These are all common characteristics that can be seen throughout generations. Trujillo did his studies in the 80s-90s but *The Crown* is based in the 50s and 60s so he was created but still be applied throughout different generations. I’m also challenging Trujillo’s ideas by applying them mainly to a female character.

“Television has also been found in prior research to cultivate norms and beliefs regarding a variety of gender roles, serving an acculturation and socialization role.” (Scharrer and

Blackburn, 2018) So what we see on television is what we expect to find in reality. When females watch *The Crown* do they feel empowered to me more and do greater things? Another follow-up study that would be interesting is how males perceive the show and how she is acting. Applying hegemonic masculinity to a female character breaks the status quo, as Scharrer and Blackburn also brought the idea that there could be a difference in who views it. Genders and perceptions have an impact on how information is interpreted.

This analysis is only of season one and you can see that she is growing into the position she is put in as queen. I have watched the other season and you can see her character grow even deeper than you see in the first season. She is inspired by her father but also by higher-up positions such as Winston Churchill. I believe that Churchill wasn't the biggest fan of a female being his "boss" per se, but still gave her every chance to be the Queen he knew she could be. Now going into the five characteristic of hegemonic masculinity, to let you know what they are.

Physical Force and Control

According to Connell, "force and competence are... translations into the language of the body of the social relations which define men as holders of power, women as subordinate [and] this is one of the main ways in which the superiority of men becomes 'naturalize'" (pg. 28) (Connell, 1983) Than Nick Trujillo cited Komisar's 1980 article as well as Messner's 1988 & 1990 articles, saying that "the male body comes to represent power itself is masculinized as physical strength, force, speed, control, toughness, and domination (Komisar, 1980; Messner, 1988, 1990)." (Trujillo, 1990) The idea behind this characteristic is that you have power and that you don't need to have muscles but if your personality is strong, you still can possess this characteristic.

Occupational Achievement

The second characteristic of hegemonic masculinity is an occupational achievement. The idea that power is defined by success. Trujillo cited Ochberg in the definition of Occupational achievement is defined through occupational achievement in an industrial capitalistic society. (Ochberg, 1987) Other scholars have labeled it “men’s work” or “women’s work” and they spilt it up with what is expected of both.

Familial Patriarchy

Trujillo cited Lerner, 1986 article, “The manifestation and institutionalization of male dominance over women and children in the family and extension of male dominance over women in society in general” The idea is to have a breadwinner and a housewife, there are clear boundaries between one and the other. Trujillo found Modern day “sensitive father” idea where you can have a father who can take care of the family.

Frontiersmanship

Frontiersmanship can be seen as being a “cowboy” and bringing out your inner western. Trujillo labeled it as the daring, romantic frontiersman of yesteryear and the present-day outdoorsman. (Trujillo, 1991). When thinking of the image of frontiersmanship you think of a white male, and working-class values.

Heterosexuality

This is one of the easiest ways to get one of the characteristics from men. This is described as heterosexual, marital, monogamous, reproductive, and non-commercial in Trujillo's article. (Trujillo, 1991) They want to acknowledge that you can be reproductive as well as into women. That is a key aspect of it as well as being male, but not just any male, they must be straight and have the ability to reproduce.

Analyzing The Crown

To my knowledge, no scholar has done this study before so there was no previous study to compare this to. There have been other television shows and films that have been analyzed in this way so this is a topic often studied in the media field. Going into this I was anticipating that Queen Elizabeth would show more hegemonic masculinity characteristics than her husband Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh. I went through the first season of the television show that was released in 2016 and analyzed how and where she showed these characteristics. Now, I will be pulling from the show and relating to the five characteristics that have been described and listed above. I will be showing how Queen Elizabeth presents or didn't present them and then mimicking the study with Prince Philip, and how he contradicts the hegemonic masculinity characteristics.

Physical Force and Control

Right away within the first minutes of the show, you see Elizabeth pacing around a room, and then it shoots Philip getting his past titles taken away so that he can marry Elizabeth the next day. At 15:11 in episode 1, you find out that Philip was never liked, but Elizabeth still forced it on her family that she was going to marry him. At that point, you get a feeling that she will be set in her outways when it comes to what she wants to do. Another key part in the first episode was the line at 15:22 that said "You underestimate her." This was said by Queen Mary, who was Elizabeth's grandmother. Setting the foundation that Elizabeth could take on the bigger thing and still stay true to her values. When her father died in 1952, she then became Queen, and at that moment she had the most power in England and the Commonwealth. When she became Queen regnant and chose her name, Elizabeth, to be her title name was a point that stood out as a power move, but she felt that her name was powerful enough. Queen Mother bowed to Queen Elizabeth on the way to the funeral of King George. The camera angle made me see all about the

power that Elizabeth was receiving. You a wide angle alongside have a high angle of Queen Mother and a low angle of Queen Elizabeth. The power roles were reversed at this moment. In moments where she wants to stand up for the rights of her family, including where they live and her husband's right to fly, and not being afraid to pull out the fact that she is queen and is higher than any of the gentlemen she deals with. She had Philip become the chairman of her coronation, which no one was excited about but they followed her decision.

Prince Philip doesn't provide the appearance of a strong masculine character. Looking at the study *Nothing Suits me like a Suit* you see that Marshall from the show *How I Met Your Mother* is a soft character with a personality similar to Prince Philip but then his physical features show the focus and power that he has, which in Philip's case he doesn't present that in his physical features. In *The Crown*, Philip protects Elizabeth at the Elephant sanctuary, as he puts his own life in front of his wife's, by showing that he was in control of that situation in episode 2 showing his control of the situation. Philip gives up his control by kneeling to his wife in episode 5 around 51 minutes, he was very against this but he did it because at the end of the day he knew this is what had to be done.

Occupational Achievement

This is the most obvious characteristic of hegemonic masculinity that you can know before even watching the show. If you know the royals, you know that Elizabeth was Queen Elizabeth II and Philip was Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh. Just by the title, you can see that she has a higher position in the family dynamic. Watching *The Crown*, you could see moments where the different ranks of power came in the way of their marriage. It was harder for Philip to accept his position but if it was the other way around and Philip was King it would be a different story because Elizabeth would have been Queen Consort. That is typical so no one would

question the relationship and who was in charge. I also believe that the monarch would've been in a different place today if she was never been, queen. One of the most obvious points was when she became the Queen of England and the Commonwealth overnight when her father passed away. Her life would never be the same and Philip knew that going into the marriage but I didn't think he thought it was going to be as soon as it happened. Another big moment was when Queen Mother (Queen Mary) wrote Queen Elizabeth a letter in Season 1 episode 2; this was when Elizabeth was stepping off the plane for the first time as Queen of the United Kingdom. The letter was telling Elizabeth that her life will change and nothing will be the same after this point. The crown must win and everything will be behind the crown. I took this as her grandma was giving her a warning of what she is expecting from what she just took on. Another crowning moment was when she was crowned as Queen. This truly marked her in occupational achievement because there is no higher place in England society that a female can hold.

Prince Philip is the opposite of Queen Elizabeth in this characteristic. This is one of them that he lacks compared to his wife because as Prince he can't go out and get a job, Prince duties are his job. He is the one who takes care of the children, he takes on the mothering role and Elizabeth is off to official business. In the first episode, you see him playing with the children and then he is decorating the house, picking out curtain swatches. In episode 4 we learned that Prince Philip got named Marshal of the Royal Air Force, but he didn't know how to fly. He commented, "I'm the most senior airman in the country and I can't bloody well fly." At the very beginning of the episode, this is just one example where he is given power but he also does not correlate with that power. He has control but he still doesn't understand the position itself. He also received the name Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, so receiving the title does show occupational achievement as that is his job.

Familial Patriarchy

Both of them have this characteristic because of each other, the main purpose of Familial Patriarchy is that you have a family. If they did not have each other they neither would fit in this characteristic. In season 1 they get married in the first episode, and they don't really cover much they just have their first two children, Charles and Anne. They do have two more children but not until later. They don't do much with the children in season one, they were more focused on Elizabeth becoming Queen and the family. Philip fills this position by being the homebody for the children and taking care of them, they have nannies and maids that are closer to the children but between Philip and Elizabeth, Philip is with the children more. In episode 3, you see Elizabeth working and Philip is seen playing with the children.

Frontiersmanship

The one characteristic that I didn't know if she would fall under was this one but leave it to the Queen of England to show off her inner "cowboy". Halfway through episode 2 when she and Philip were at the Elephant Sanctuary, she shows off Frontiersmanship but fixing the engine of the car. She then tells them that she was machinic during the war. This show that she is willing to get her hands dirty, which is unusual for a woman in her position. She also has a love for adventure which you find out when her father gives her a camera in episode 1 as a wedding gift.

Heterosexuality

Media scholars may argue that Queen Elizabeth doesn't have a heterosexual characteristics, but I am here to show how she can still apply those characteristics. Heterosexuality doesn't have any examples to state here where it is shown, except that it is physical appearance. According to Trujillo, to be a man you need to have a penis, and they can

be reproductive. Queen Elizabeth does not have a penis, but she can have children so she should be able to fall under this characteristic.

This is the characteristic that Prince Philip fits the best because he is a male with reproductive capability. Embodies personal characteristics are manifest by adult males through exclusively social relationships with men and primarily sexual relationships with women. (Trujillo, 1991) As a man he automatically fits this category which doesn't make sense because this makes any male have this characteristic.

Evaluation

When you think of royalty, you think King and Queen, a powerful male, and a delicate woman who is the wife, sits and looks pretty for the photos, but doesn't speak her mind. Then if I were to add British Royalty, you think of Queen Elizabeth, even though now she is gone and her son, Charles is the King. Everyone still associates Elizabeth with the Queen and head of the country for 70-plus years, which was the longest monarchy in British history. She had the love of everyone not only her people but everyone in the world. I believe that she loved what she did and the people she reigned over that is why she said alive for so long.

When looking at *The Crown* and the characters that are shown in the show you beg to wonder, do they possess this power because of their character or do they possess this power because it was given to them by birth or in Queen Elizabeth's case when her uncle abdicated? Throughout the episodes, I watched there were numerous times when we as the audience were presented with the ideas of Physical Force and Control with the Queen and even before her being Queen. In Elizabeth's case as a female, she used this characteristic in the more controlled part, as she was not a broad character or presented in any way that would insinuate that she showed manly characteristics. I think that Philip was a great husband as he allowed her to be the Queen

and he knew what that meant for their relationship and how things would work. Philip had to struggle by not being able to have the power in a relationship be the man. He was allow under her and having to follow by the rules, also being under the public eye made him exposed to everyone. He watched his wife get all the praise and he sat back, but that was his job as Prince to the Queen.

Numerous scholars have examined shifts in hegemonic masculinity toward a softer version that centered less on violence, stoicism, and muscular performance. (Cuklanz, L. & Erol, A., 2021) When I approached this study I had questions in mind about how she is perceived, does she show these characteristics because she is the main character, or did she have this characteristic in her and it came through the position she was born into? I believe that after doing this study I can see that even though she was the main character she still possessed the characteristic due to being born with them. Having her father becomes king she also had a great role model, and I believe that when Elizabeth was young and saw that her father became king that she was going to hold to higher standards. Looking at what her father did in his possession of power. I also believe that Queen Elizabeth mother was not a mother that was sweet towards her children, throughout the first season you saw he spread hatred on her brother in love. She even brought up the idea that the abdication set her husband King George to an early grave. Queen Elizabeth's main role model was her father, a male figure. Before becoming Queen Elizabeth didn't have much power, and she just wanted to enjoy her freedom. As she and Philip were just a young couple that was enjoying their honeymoon phase together. Settling down and they had their first two children, and everything was normal, going on vacations and doing royal duties. I can see that how not having a strong female role model may have altered her mothering skills, but Philip was there to help her out and raise the children.

Conclusion

A takeaway from this report is that as a society need to approach these characteristics that were made up decades ago and change them to apply to the world today. Especially in the Feminist/ post-feminist world, women can be seen as independent individuals and do the same/similar things as men, so we should be put into one category and not be allowed in others. As far as this study, overall season one is about how Queen Elizabeth finds herself in the role that she was put in. She finds herself as well as builds off the characteristic that Nick Trujillo wrote about labeled, Hegemonic Masculinity. Throughout the first season, she was given male figures such as Winston Churchill and her father, King George to help her guide through life, they gave her the backbone that she needed to take on the position she was given. Well, she was still and woman, wife, and mother she did have more power and authority than her husband, Prince Philip, this article goes to show that she showed that the status quo is in fact challenged. Queen Elizabeth does in fact have more hegemonic masculinity characteristic than her husband.

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