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Monarchy in the Mirror: a Social Psychological Study of Press Representations

by

Nigel Edley

A Doctoral Thesis submitted in part fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Doctor of Philosophy of the Loughborough University of Technology.

9th March 1991

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Abstract

Very little academic work has focused upon the British monarchy/Royal Family and its significance for the people of Britain. However, of the more recent pieces of work on the subject, several have emphasized the ideological impact of the institution (Coward, 1984; Williamson, 1986; Billig, 1990). This is an emphasis which similarly characterizes the present study. Indeed a substantial part of this thesis is taken up with a theoretical discussion about the nature of ideology itself. Following Barthes (1982), I argue that the relationship between a culture/ideology and its practitioners is paradoxical. Each is simultaneously the master and slave of the other.

There are four empirical chapters contained within this volume, the first of which is a quantitative account of popular press representations of monarchy. The other three empirical chapters are, in part, an investigation and illustration of the paradoxical nature of culture/ideology. Drawing predominantly from a three month sample of Royal–related newspaper items (29th Nov. 1987 – 29th Feb. 1988) the first shows how various cultural/ideological themes or discourses determine or give form to the texts. In the second I examine the ways in which similar themes are used constructively in the production of accounts which accomplish a variety of rhetorical, political and ideological 'moves'. These themes are also present within the fourth empirical chapter in which I examine some of the ideological work done via the re-presentation of the Royals as ordinary, extraordinary and 'superordinary' beings. Chapters 6 and 7 also serve to reveal something of the nature of two subject matter categories as defined in Chapter 4. In the final chapter I take issue with certain aspects of the present study's own theoretical and methodological bases.
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This is a piece of work which, as the title clearly indicates, takes a social psychological perspective upon one element of the British monarchy's media representation. Later in this introduction I will provide a brief outline of the following chapters allowing the reader a preview of how I have gone about this task. However, before doing so I think that it would be appropriate to say something concerning two obvious and, as I hope to demonstrate, related questions. These are firstly, why should anyone be interested in studying the British monarchy? and secondly, why would anyone doing so choose to adopt a social psychological perspective?

The importance of the first question has been steadily brought home to me during the course of the last three years. For during that period, like most people, I have been called upon many times to explain my line of work. And, irrespective of whether the enquiry came in the context of an ordinary social conversation or in a more academic gathering, my response was typically greeted with a kind of amused curiosity. For as Billig (1990) explains:

It is easy to think of the British monarchy as a topic which is essentially trivial and undeserving of scholarly attention. Such a thought will come easily to any serious student of world affairs who, when watching televised news in Britain, is forced to see pictures of royalty meeting civic dignitaries, sightseeing in foreign countries or just sitting upon horses. Even self-consciously serious newspapers contain enough of such items to irritate academic readers with a different set of priorities about what should constitute world news (pg. 63).

Perhaps then, in the case of the serious student of world affairs, the amused curiosity was just a polite front put up to cover over an underlying exasperation about what would appear to them to be a waste of valuable resources and energy. However, how might we account for the amused curiosity of those who could not be said to be serious students of world affairs; those who found mass media representations of monarchy a source of great interest and pleasure rather than irritation?
The point is that research into the treatment of cancer, work upon the
effects of 'greenhouse gases' or, slightly closer to home, research into the
psychology of the hooligan or murderer all seem reasonable enough
projects. However, research into the Royal Family? Surely not. To begin
with, as Billig (forthcoming) notes, there exists no sense of the monarchy
or Royal Family being a problem which requires a solution or explanation.
Furthermore, unlike these other research projects, there already exists an
established body of common sense about the monarchy/Royal Family. For
example, 'everybody knows' that they 'add a bit of colour' to many
people's lives; 'everybody understands' that they are 'good for Britain's
tourist trade, and it is 'widely recognized' that the Americans would dearly
love to have a Royal Family of their own (see Billig, forthcoming and
Wilson, 1989). What people also commonly understand is that scientific
study is properly concerned with discovery and the broadening of human
knowledge. So why should one study what we already know?

To this charge one could reply that the very fact that the topic of the
Royal Family exists so much as part of British common sense makes it an
important and worthy area for academic attention. For a culture's common
sense represents a heterogeneous body of understandings, knowledge, values
and practices into which members of that cultural community have been
socialized. In other words, this 'traditional popular conception of the world'
(Gramsci, 1971, pg 199) by and through which individuals apprehend and
make sense of their situations, represents part of the cultural heritage
which binds communities together. Generally speaking, common sense
precedes its 'users', who are born into it, absorb it and draw upon it in
the course of their everyday activities. As Billig (1990) explains:

When an element of common sense is used in discourse it must be
recalled, or to use an archaic term, it must be 'memorated'. If one
uses a proverb, it is being memorated rather than invented, and
re-created rather than created. Using the terminology of ancient
rhetoric, one might say that the use of common sense discourse
frequently involves little inventio, but much reproduction of loci
communes, or commonly shared and commonly used themes (pg.
61).

For example, to argue that the Royal Family's trips abroad help to boost
British exports to the countries involved is not to have created an
argument. Instead it is to have repeated an item of common sense about
why the Royal Family is a valuable or indispensable institution (see Wilson, 1989, pg. 50 ff). However, we must not paint too static a picture of common sense. For while the use or 'revisitation' of these common places represents a process of cultural reproduction, today's common sense is not, as the saying goes, what it used to be. Over time proverbs, understandings and even values can change. Hence, we must see common sense as something dynamic. This is not the place to go into a detailed analysis of the nature of common sense (I provide a more extensive treatment of the subject in Chapter 3) except to say that it is profoundly social — simultaneously constituting and being constituted by social beings. Indeed, just as Barthes (1982) said of language, one could claim that people are 'both master and slave' of common sense.

The relationship between, more broadly, society and the individual represents a major theme of this thesis. And, following Barthes, I understand the relationship to be paradoxical in nature. Consequently, we require a theoretical approach which reflects what Billig (1991) calls the 'social and individual dilemma'. That is, we need an approach that can reveal the processes by which people become socialized. It needs to be able to show how they are determined, both in terms of their thoughts and practices, by the culture/ideology in which they are situated. It needs to be able to conceptualize social and intellectual activity, to borrow a phrase from Moscovici (1984), as 'a rehearsal or recital' (pg. 10). Crucially, however, we require of our theoretical approach that it is also able to encompass the reverse or antithetical image. In other words, it needs to be able to conceptualize people as enjoying some degree of autonomy to think and act for themselves. People must be seen as able, not only to reproduce existing cultural orders, but also to resist, challenge and even change those orders.

Now, as Billig (1991) demonstrates, there are theories and approaches which reflect these differing positions. Althusserian theories of ideology, he argues, stress the priority of the social over the individual.

In the works of Louis Althusser and his followers the writing out of the individual can be observed. The Individual seems to be little more than the obedient servant of ideology. Althusser stresses that ideology creates the individual. It fashions its own subjects and fills their minds with notions which distort the 'real relations' of society (pg. 7).
Conversely, Billig goes on, there are approaches which, in prioritizing the Individual over the Social, make society disappear from theoretical view. Cognitive social psychology is Billig's case in point.

In much orthodox social psychology, thinking is depicted in terms of the receiving and organizing of incoming stimulus information. The processing of information is a task which is individually performed (pg. 6).

However, the point is that these two contrary representations of the relationship between society and the individual both 'overstep the bounds of reality' (see Billig, 1987, pg. 211). For while the culture(s) into which an individual is raised can shape or give definition to their thoughts and actions, it will not do so absolutely. Conversely, while a given culture can be both utilized and transformed through the action of individuals, the culture is able to exert a force of resistance to these changes (the 'weight of established tradition' one might call it). Consequently, the 'reality' which these contradictory representations seem to overstep lies somewhere in between. As Billig (1991) comments:

> If one or the other element is removed, and the speaker is portrayed either as wholly a master or slave, then the result is unbalanced. Theories of thinking need to take into account both aspects. The dissolution of the paradox is less convincing than the contradictions of the paradox itself (pg. 6).

Therefore the best approach to the relationship between society and the individual is one which embraces both aspects of the contradiction. For this reason (to answer my second question) I chose to adopt a social psychological approach to my studies.

Situated, roughly speaking, somewhere in between conventional psychology and sociology, social psychology would at first sight appear to be the perfect approach for studying this paradoxical relationship. However, it must be said that, in general this potential has rarely been realized. As Billig (1991) implied above, a great deal of orthodox social psychology follows its more mainstream relations in adopting a quite asocial, individualistic position with respect to its subject. Taking the individual as its basic unit of study, this kind of social psychology, following in the traditions of Kant, saw the person as:
an entity who is the integrated centre of certain powers: one who is aware, who feels, who thinks, judges and acts. In concept, the individual is adopted as the primary reality, the ontological base from which issues the remainder, including society and social relations (Sampson, 1989).

With its central object of interest so defined, social psychology was reduced to the study of social behaviour, that is, human behaviour in social contexts (Israel and Tajfel, 1972). Topics studied within this framework included social influence (i.e. conformity, obedience and social facilitation), non-verbal communication, and inter-group/personal relations. Clearly, therefore, this restricted definition of social psychology fails to do justice to the complexities of the paradox. For it loses sight of what Tajfel (1984) called 'the social dimension'. Instead, as Tajfel argues:

social psychology can and must include in its theoretical and research preoccupations a direct concern with the relationship between human psychological functioning and the large-scale social processes and events which shape this functioning and are shaped by it (pg. 3).

Interestingly, this turn towards a more fundamentally social psychology (as characterizes the work of Harre, 1979; Moscovici, 1982, 1984; and Tajfel, 1984) is, in fact, as Israel and Tajfel (1972) explain, more of a return.

It is often forgotten that initially a strong impetus was given to the development of social psychology by the hope that it would contribute to our understanding of the conditions which underlie the functioning of a society and the constitution of a culture. The purpose of the theory was to explain social and cultural phenomena; the practical aim was to use the principles which it was hoped would be discovered in order to engage in a critique of the social organization. Thus, the domain of social psychology was seen to include the study of everyday life and relationships between individuals and between groups, as well as of ideologies and of intellectual creativity both in its individual and collective form (pg. 49).

This thesis comes very much out of this mould of social psychology. Firstly, it concerns itself with something that is very much part of our everyday lives – the Royal Family and the way it is portrayed in our national newspapers. Secondly, in looking at the themes and discourses which make up Royal texts and talk, it examines the master/slave relationship between a culture and its speakers/readers. In recalling this older, almost forgotten
definition of social psychology, it is also, in a sense, part of an act of commemoration. Furthermore, it is part of an argument or struggle to reassert a more social social psychology.

**Preview of Chapters**

In Chapter 2 I briefly discuss the dearth of academic work upon the significance of monarchy/Royal Family in contemporary Britain. I outline two contributory reasons for this gap in research starting with the inhibitory influence of Walter Bagehot and his nineteenth century publication *The English Constitution*. I also argue that the refusal (until recently) by academics to take popular cultural forms seriously lead to the topic being ignored (given that the monarchy/Royal Family is experienced primarily via the mass media). Then, in the remainder of the chapter I review the relatively small but heterogeneous body of academic work which, despite these influences, takes contemporary monarchy as its subject. This review section is organized chronologically beginning with the work of Kingsley Martin in the 1930s. From there I discuss (amongst others) the functional analysis of Shils and Young (1953), the political surveys of Blumler et al (1971) and Rose and Kavanagh (1976) and the semiological analyses of Coward (1984), Dayan and Katz (1985) and Williamson (1986). I then bring the review section up to date with an introduction to the work of Nairn (1988) and Wilson (1989) before situating my own work within this, somewhat fragmented context.

In Chapter 3 I begin by explaining my focus upon the popular press. Following this, the rest of the chapter consists mainly of a theoretical discussion concerning the nature of these newspaper items. This discussion starts with a brief review of mass communications research followed by a more extended introduction to Cultural Studies. Following Bennett et al (1981), Cultural Studies is represented as coming out of an uneasy marriage between culturalism and structuralism. The tension between these two intellectual schools reflects the aforementioned paradox, centreing upon different conceptions of the relationship between culture and experience. For while the culturalists saw cultural activity as a response to people's experiences, the structuralists saw experience as constituted through culture (or ideology).
In the middle sections of the chapter I produce a detailed discussion of the concepts of culture and ideology as well as introducing Gramsci’s notion of 'hegemony'. At the end of this discussion I have arrived at an image of the cultural formation as a collection of different and 'class-related' cultures existing in a state of tension and struggle. Further, following Gramsci, this struggle is viewed as an uneven fight between dominant and subordinate orders. And the newspapers, as cultural forms, are seen as the potential sites of such struggles. However, I also borrow from Billig et al (1988) an alternative conception of culture/ideology which combines features from both the culturalist and structuralist formulations. For while Billig et al, like the structuralists, view experience as mediated by culture/ideology, they also emphasize the latter’s positive or enabling function. In other words, although a dominant cultural order may not fully represent the interests of (even) the majority of its 'users', it nevertheless provides them with things to think, talk and argue about. At the end of the chapter I introduce discourse analysis (Potter and Wetherell, 1987) as a method most appropriate for revealing, not only these cultural/ideological struggles, but also other 'forces' patterning the texts.

Before embarking upon this qualitative approach to the data (as provided by discourse analysis) I conduct a much more traditional quantitative examination in Chapter 4. The aims of this work are threefold. Firstly, I want to demonstrate both the sheer volume and salience of Royal related newspaper items in the popular press. Secondly, I want to identify the dominant subject matter categories into which these items classify out. I want to show, for example, how much of their press coverage consists of a kind of expanded 'Court Circular' (see The Times), reporting on the movements and engagements of the principal Royals, and how much is devoted to more 'human interest' stories. Finally, and more generally, I want this chapter to set a quantitative scene of the data; a wider picture into which the fine details of particular qualitative analyses can be subsequently added.

Chapter 5 is the first of three substantive, qualitative chapters. The purpose of Chapter 5 is the testing of a specific hypothesis born out of the theoretical deliberations of Chapter 3. For in Chapter 3 I argue,
following Billig et al (1988), that the contradictions and tensions which exist within any given society's cultural formation (including both its philosophical and common sense elements) both prompt thought and argument as well as providing the materials for their conduct. Indeed, the hypothesis tested in Chapter 5 states more strongly that any given Royal related newspaper item will embody cultural/ideological tensions. In order to test this hypothesis I randomly selected eight newspaper items from the archive. Chapter 5, for the most part, consists of detailed analyses of the first two randomly selected items.

Chapter 5 explains the patterning of Royal related texts in terms of the dilemmatic nature of culture/ideology. As Billig et al (1988) argue, it is the very existence of such tensions which permits the possibility of thought and argument. In a sense, Chapter 6 provides a counter-balancing weight to Chapter 5. In looking at one of the subject matter categories of Chapter 4 the analysis emphasizes the way in which the contradictory nature of the cultural formation can be utilized in the construction of accounts. More specifically, Chapter 6 looks at the way in which various and contradictory representations of Prince Charles' identity are constructed (using two particular linguistic devices) in order to accomplish a variety of rhetorical, political and ideological 'moves'.

In Chapter 7 I look more specifically at the ideological significance of the British monarchy's re-presentation as a Royal Family. In so doing, I examine the argument that the institution is fast becoming nothing more than a soap opera. As I document in Chapter 2, this argument was first publicly made by Malcolm Muggeridge in 1955. However, since then it has become part of the common sense of contemporary monarchy. As Billig (forthcoming) demonstrates, many ordinary people feel (usually disapprovingly) that the media, in particular the press, are helping to turn the monarchy into just another 'Dallas' or 'Dynasty'. Using both interview data (from Billig, forthcoming) and related extracts from the popular press I compare the ways in which the Royals and other non-royal celebrities are talked and written about in order to test the validity of this argument. Central to this discussion is the development of a tri-partite system of representations of the Royal Family as extraordinary, ordinary and 'superordinary'.
The eighth and final chapter consists largely of a revisitation of the theoretical debates as set out in Chapter 3. However, in Chapter 8 I take a rather more critical stance upon what I see as the two theoretical foundation stones of this thesis — namely Billig et al's (1988) volume *Ideological Dilemmas* and the discourse analytical approach to social psychology as set out in Potter and Wetherell's (1987) book *Discourse and Social Psychology*. Firstly, I argue against the inclusive definition of ideology as advanced by Billig et al. I urge instead that the concept should involve a critical sense of referring to that which helps to sustain relations of domination between social groups and/or classes. Further, I demonstrate how the conceptual distinction between 'explicit' and 'implicit' dilemmatic aspects of discourse (as developed by Billig et al in their book) can be used to help identify ideological operations in the more restricted (i.e. critical) sense of the term.

In the latter part of the chapter I move on to a critique of discourse analysis. Basically my argument is that because discourse analysis focuses exclusively upon discourse, and its functional and constitutional properties, it is incapable of getting to grips with the central question of the monarchy/Royal Family's social significance. It is not that discourse analysts have to rely upon the verbalized introspections of ordinary people for an insight into their psychologies. Rather, the problem is that discourse analysis divorces itself entirely from issues of motive and desire (except, perhaps, as interesting and studiable discursive constructs). Finally, drawing heavily upon the work of both Nairn (1988) and Billig (forthcoming), I close the chapter with a brief discussion of some aspects of the monarchy's contemporary social significance.
CHAPTER 2

MAPPING THE GAP

In Britain today there is simply no escaping the Royal Family. There are signs and traces of them everywhere, from coins and stamps to crests on the packaging of consumer goods. We are so familiar with these signs that we seem almost blind to their presence. However, much more salient is the proliferation of royal related material in the mass media. On television news programmes we will often find an item reporting upon the latest movements of the Windsors sandwiched in between the serious foreign and domestic stories and the sports' round-up. As for magazines, especially those targeted at a female readership, not only are there frequent features and photographs of the Royals, but there are now several editions on the market, namely 'Royalty', 'Majesty' and 'Royal Romances' magazines, which devote themselves entirely to the subject of the Royal Family (the Daily Mirror, 14/1/88 reported that, in the previous year, Princess Diana had appeared on the front covers of magazines more than any other person).

More noticeable still, is the frequency with which Royal stories appear on the pages of our daily newspapers. Hardly a week goes by without there seemingly being a new revelation on the front pages of both 'quality' and popular papers (with the exception of The Independent). Neither have bookshop shelves been devoid of reading material about the Royal Family. Thousands upon thousands of pages are written on this topic each year. For example, Wilson (1989) reports that in 1987 there were approximately 240 books about the monarchy in print while Nairn (1988) claims that each year sees the addition of around 20 new titles to this list. They include studies of particular reigns, biographical works about Royals past and present as well as details concerning the Royals' residences and treasures.

Clearly, the Royal Family is a significant factor in contemporary British culture. However, the precise nature of this significance is less than clear.
For despite this high level of popular interest, academic curiosity about the institution's cultural significance has been remarkably thin. And while there may be books and articles celebrating the Queen Mother or itemizing the Crown Jewels, rather than providing us with valuable insights, they form part of the very phenomenon for which we require explanation.

Undoubtedly, there are many titles available which detail the monarch's constitutional position and role (eg. Jennings, 1961). Other more historical texts may provide an account of how the present constitutional arrangement has evolved, following nearly one thousand years of struggle between the Crown and, in one form or another, Parliament (eg. Chrimes, 1965). However, such texts are instructive only to a limited degree. Describing the monarch's formal relationship with the other constituent elements of the constitutional whole goes little distance down the road to accounting for the salience of the institution in late twentieth century Britain.

How can we explain this apparent blind spot in the visual field of the academic community? There seem to be two very important and related factors involved. We shall consider them now in turn.

Walter Bagehot - The English Constitution

Walter Bagehot lived in Victorian England and worked as a lobby journalist and editor of The Economist. In 1867 he published a volume entitled 'The English Constitution'. At this time Bagehot was busy campaigning against the widening of the franchise, which was due to take place that year with the signing of Disraeli's Parliamentary Bill (which became an Act, despite his efforts). Yet in another crucial respect, Bagehot and Disraeli were working towards a common end. Prior to Victoria, Kings William IV and George IV had proven to be extremely unpopular monarchs. Neither was Victoria held in high regard by the British public in the first three quarters of her reign. Indeed, when she went into prolonged mourning following the death of her husband, Prince Albert, it was commonly thought that the monarchy would die with her. Furthermore, between the years 1871 and 1873 more than fifty, primarily working class, republican clubs were formed nationwide. However, as with the other great
statements supporting monarchial rule, produced at a time when the institution is under the most severe threat (eg. Hobbes' *Leviathan*, written during the Interregnum following the execution of Charles I in 1649, and Burke's *Reflections on the Revolution in France* published in 1790) Bagehot's work, along with the political opportunism of Disraeli, contributed to the resuscitation of the monarchy in both intellectual and popular circles (Martin, 1936).

Central to Bagehot's analysis was a distinction between what he called the 'efficient' and the 'dignified' aspects of the English constitution. The efficient aspects of state referred to the legislative process and the business of collecting and spending monies for and by the state. These were responsibilities which had formally passed from the monarch to Parliament with the accession to the throne of William and Mary of Orange in 1689, following the so-called 'Glorious, Bloodless Revolution' of the previous year. However, Bagehot argued that devoid of these formal powers, the monarchy (as well as the House of Lords) could fulfil an albeit different but still vitally important constitutional role. For through various rituals and ceremonies these institutions gave the constitution as a whole a 'theatrical' or 'mystical' quality which bound the people to it with a religious-like intensity.

'Patriotism', he said, 'involves conceptions of unity and continuity'. Better then that the masses could feel loyalty towards something or someone who is seen to be above the cut and thrust of our adversarial political system. For so removed, the monarch can safely watch the rise and fall of Prime Ministers and their governments, while they themselves remain revered by all, independent of political orientation.

Clearly Bagehot's book was a celebration of the English constitution. He thought of it as a uniquely strong and stable arrangement. In his elitist eyes, it was a constitution which satisfied people of all intellectual levels. On the one hand it had a great emotional appeal; the glamour of the monarch being, he thought, the most crucial factor in maintaining the support of the uneducated masses. Britain was, he argued, really a fully functioning republic dressed up in crown and ermine-edged robes. With the majority of the British public incapable of understanding the complex workings of a republican system of government, it was better that the
people should see sovereignty personified, rather than risk having them realize the terrible truth that the power to rule lay in their own unqualified hands. Overall, however, Bagehot saw the arrangement as justified on a rational level. For while the uneducated were happy (and hence cooperative) in believing themselves ruled over by the monarch, the educated knew that the perils of genuine monarchial rule no longer existed.

This psychological and political rationalisation of the function of monarchy has had an enormous influence since its publication over 120 years ago. Yet this influence has been largely inhibitory. To begin with, Bagehot's analysis of the constitution has proved to be highly credible, provoking remarkably little in the way of argument and dissension (Nairn, 1988, pg. 361). Indeed, it was seventy years before another analysis of the monarchy was published. This was an article written by Kingsley Martin entitled 'The Evolution of Popular Monarchy' (Martin, 1936). The article and the book into which it would later become incorporated (namely Martin's The Crown and the Establishment, published in 1962) are today still two of the most penetrating analyses of monarchy's contemporary relevance.

Secondly, by characterising Britain as a republic dressed up in royal robes, Bagehot effectively removed the monarchy as an object of political interest. Of course, the Tories saw nothing to gain in trying to strip the nation of this grand charade. Quite the reverse, they saw the monarchy as part of the cultural heritage to be passed on from generation to generation without radical change. Yet more surprisingly perhaps, neither did the socialist Left perceive any advantage in abolishing the institution. To them the monarchy appeared incidental to the class war and the prospects of a working class uprising. If the institution had failed to obstruct the middle class overthrow of the aristocracy, then neither should it affect the final stage of the evolutionary process (Nairn, 1988). All they stood to gain was the wrath of a public loyally bound to their symbolic head.

While political scientists might have ruled out the monarchy as an object of interest in all but the most formal sense, it seems equally if not more surprising that the social sciences would be so neglectful. For, as Billig argues:
at first sight the place of the Royal Family in the British consciousness would seem to be a social psychological issue par excellence. Here is a family, with its images of mother, father and offspring which is presented as a model with which the nation can identify. The motives behind any such identification with the Royal Family cannot be reduced to economic or utilitarian motives. Symbols of authority, parental and political, seem to be intertwined, in a way which, it might be thought, cries out for social psychological analysis, yet the topic has been largely ignored (Billig, 1987a).

One of the major reasons for this omission has to do with the very nature of the representation of monarchy in contemporary Britain. As I have already noted, the British public experience their monarchy for the most part through the mass media — television, newspapers and magazines. Indeed, of the small number of academics who have written about the monarchy, most emphasize the dependence of the institution upon the mass media. Martin, for example, includes a chapter in The Crown and the Establishment called 'T.V Monarchy' (see also Cannadine, 1983 and Nairn, 1988). As such, the topic of the monarchy/Royal Family has been largely ignored as part of a more general refusal by (particularly British) academics to take popular culture seriously (Masterman, 1984). One might have thought that, by definition, popular culture would have been a major area of interest for the social sciences. So when, for example, Ziegler (1978) reported that an analysis of the huge number of books about the monarchy/Royal Family sold around the time of Queen Elizabeth II's silver jubilee showed:

that the public did not want constitutional history so much as gossip and pretty photographs (pg. 173)

we might have expected questions to be asked about what the public were seeming to derive from such representations. Instead, the representation of the monarchy as gossip and pretty photographs is perceived to be merely a symptom of what many academics and other serious minded individuals would feel to be a general, and downward, trend in the quality of mass media content. Indeed, Sparks (1988) refers to the 'considerable concern' in Britain that the media, in particular the press, are becoming increasingly trivial and depoliticized. He quotes Baistow (1985) who says that:
the drift towards the gutter and the subordination of news content to sensation, scandal, jazzy packaging and million pound bingo in the scramble for sales have provided the most dramatic evidence of the tabloid revolution's radical impact upon popular journalism.

Irrespective of whether Fleet Street is servicing a genuine public demand for light-weight entertainment (as Sparks suggest) or else 'leading' this demand, we can appreciate how such Royal-related material is taken to be the polar opposite of such serious topics as constitutional history and Parliamentary politics. The point is that the social scientist, just like the political scientist, fails to take seriously representations of the monarchy as significant cultural products worthy of study.

Now while it is true that popular cultural forms have not, until recently, received much in the way of serious academic attention, there have been a few notable exceptions to this rule. As we shall see in the next chapter, the work of people such as Raymond Williams and Richard Hoggart has laid the foundations for the kind of analysis undertaken here. Another of these pioneering figures, according to Masterman (1984), was Roland Barthes. It was he, Masterman argues, who lead the movement to democratize the concept of culture, stripping 'high art' of its elevated status by deliberately choosing to analyse commonplace cultural objects such as wrestling matches and soap powders. In so doing, Barthes was able to reveal a political significance in the most unlikely of 'places'. In some way, therefore, this thesis takes a particular lead from Barthes in taking the monarchy/Royal Family seriously as a cultural object.

However, while choosing to look at the monarchy from any academic perspective may be a relatively rare event, it is now the time to consider the most important of these rarities in a little more detail.

This small body of work can be seen to fall roughly into four major academic perspectives. There are studies from historical, political, psychological and semiotic standpoints although, in fact, many, if not most, are situated at the intersections of these disciplines. For example, Bagehot's influential work would be found at the intersection of the political and the
psychological. Because of this complexity, this review section will be organized according to different criteria. Instead, these various studies will be dealt with in roughly the order in which they appeared. Such a chronological arrangement has the distinct advantage of allowing us to see more clearly the development of ideas about the British monarchy.

Research in the 1930s — Kingsley Martin

As mentioned earlier, the first person to exhibit an academic interest in the monarchy after Bagehot was Kingsley Martin. In 1936 he published a paper in The Political Quarterly entitled: 'The Evolution of the Popular Monarchy', which was followed, a year later, by a book called The Magic of Monarchy. Published around the time of the abdication crisis, involving Edward VIII and Mrs. Simpson, Martin’s 1936 article contains political and psychological themes within a historical account of the monarchy from roughly the mid-nineteenth century to the date of publication. The title of the piece immediately draws the readers’ attention to the idea of public adoration of the monarchy as having a historical specificity. He follows this up by citing from The Times, which, on the morning of the funeral of King George IV, publicly stated that ‘There never was an individual less regretted by his fellow creatures than this deceased King’.

Neither were William IV and Victoria thought of particularly kindly by their subjects. However, in the latter quarter of Victoria’s reign, public feelings considerably warmed to her, and it is this transition which Martin seeks to explain. His analysis varies considerably from that of Bagehot. Indeed, it could be claimed that Martin and Bagehot argue directly opposing cases with regard to monarchy’s social and political role. For example, Bagehot claimed that while the monarch appeared powerful, this was, in fact, far from the truth:
The apparent rulers of the English nation are like the most imposing of personages of a splendid procession: it is by them that the mob are influenced; it is they that the spectators cheer. The real rulers are secreted in second rate carriages; no one cares for them or asks for them, but they are obeyed implicitly and unconsciously by reason of the splendour of those who proceeded and eclipsed them (Bagehot, 1867/1963, pg. 249).

Conversely, Martin argued that the monarch's constitutional powers were far from just symbolic. He provides evidence to suggest that successive monarchs, up to and including Victoria, regularly exercised some of their prerogative powers to favour one political party (Martin, 1936 and 1962). Further, he continues, if it were not for the loyal silence of their Prime Ministers, a great deal of bad feeling would have been aroused against the monarchy both in and out of Parliament.

However, both Bagehot and Martin seem to agree that the monarchy serves to stabilize, and so preserve, the British political system. For Bagehot, the monarchy achieves this by way of it being a less complex form of government. As such, it is within the mental reach of the ordinary person. For Martin, the process has a much more psychological basis. Referring to an article by Dr. Ernest Jones, a leading disciple and biographer of Freud, published in 1936 called 'The psychology of constitutional monarchy', Martin adopts an overtly psychoanalytical approach to the subject (The ideas of Freud were being quickly popularized in the 1930's – Mass Observations, 1987/1937, pg. 416). Jones argued that people feel a sense of ambivalence towards figures of authority. On the one hand, they want to feel protected and be given direction, while on the other hand, they resent the restriction placed upon their freedom. This fact provides any form of governing body with a serious problem. However, Jones goes on, the British constitutional arrangement gets around this fundamental problem by resolving its governing body into two separate elements. On the one side stands Westminster, with its factions and its arguments. This receives the brunt of the peoples' feelings of hostility and resentment. On the other side stands the Crown, symbolizing the wider social and political order, which enjoys the unadulterated sunshine of respect and admiration (however, crucially, the monarchy is seen as being above politics in, as Nairn later wrote, 'the specially narrow, padded room sense of the United Kingdom system' ie. the Parties, Acts, Bills, green and white papers, 'ayes'
and 'noes' etc. Nairn, 1988. pg 83). In this way the monarchy functions as an essentially conservative force, helping to sustain the existing social and political order.

Vital to this psychological process is the dissociation of monarchy and politics. Martin illustrates how this is achieved, in part, through the representation of the monarchy as a Royal Family. In a passage which reiterates a point made earlier by Bagehot (see Bagehot, 1963/1867, pg. 85) he says:

There seem to be thousands of men and women who think of the Royal Family as an ideal extension of their own families... To such people the Royal Family provides a colour and splendour which their own family lives too often lack, but which they none the less feel to be part of their own romance.

In summary, Martin's work, both in his earlier article and in his later publication The Crown and the Establishment, is remarkable. He challenged the contemporary relevance of Bagehot's ideas, which had, until then, been the received word on the role of monarchy in British society. Indeed, at the end of his book he says:

Walter Bagehot, whose views on monarchy (published 1867) are still often quoted, would no longer say, if he were alive, that the value of the monarchy lay in its being 'a disguise' which enables the 'labourer in Somerset' to believe that the Queen personally carries through Acts of Parliament and exercises the functions of government. Today he believes no such thing. Like his working class friend in Shoreditch, he watches on television when there is a royal show or he may come to London by motor-cycle. He enjoys a jamboree and needs more festivals than he gets. But he does not imagine that the Queen is powerful, and he would be talking rank republicanism in the pub tomorrow if he thought she interfered with government. He is under none of the illusions that Bagehot thought essential or that modern propagandists still assiduously foster today. If this is true, it follows that the symbolic value of the monarchy is not what propaganda pretends. It means that monarchy is no longer psychologically necessary (Martin, 1963, pg. 176).

In his work, Martin developed several arguments which have since stood
the test of time. For instance, the idea that the popularity of the monarchy depends upon it being seen as above politics is repeated in the research of other academics (eg. Blumler, 1971; Nairn, 1988). So too have Martin's ideas about the monarchy being re-presented in depolitized form as a Royal Family reappeared in later works. The notion of the Royal Family being 'ourselves writ large' is basic to several of the semiotic analyses (eg. Williamson, 1986; Coward, 1984) as well as Nairn (1988). Neither was Martin the last person to see the significance of monarchy in psychoanalytical terms. Work by both Shils and Young (1953) (see below) and Masters (1972) take a similar perspective.

In between the twenty-six years separating Martin's first and final comments, there were few other relevant pieces of academic work. One such study was an analysis of King George VI's coronation in 1937, conducted by the Mass Observation group. The study was a unique styled survey in which fifty volunteers, resident in different parts of Britain, wrote of their experiences on coronation day, May 12, 1937. These observers reported upon their own thoughts and activities as well as the words and actions of others around them. Collected together, it was hoped that these accounts would represent a cross section of ordinary people's perspectives on the event.

The Mass Observations report sees itself as relevant to the work of a wide range of professionals as well as to 'any person who is concerned to know what people really want to know and think' (pp. iv). The research contains two interesting and important elements. Firstly, it looks for the significance of cultural objects, such as the monarchy, within the accounts of ordinary people, rather than in the hypotheses of esoteric social theorists. In so doing, it anticipates the development of both the ethnomethodological (Garfinkel, 1967) and ethogenical (Harre, 1979; Harre and Secord, 1972) approaches to studying social life. Secondly, it implies that by aiming 'to apply the methods of science to the complexity of a modern culture' (pp iv) it can 'get at' the real thoughts and ideas of ordinary people. By giving an assurance of anonymity, the researchers hoped to control the rhetorical context in which people talk such that the observers could simply 'speak their minds'. With the objectivity of these accounts assured, the true
significance of the monarchy would be plain to see.

This, however, is about the extent of the theoretical framework in which the Mass Observations data are situated. Unlike with ethnomethodological studies which look at the functions of the discourse (see, for example, Wieder, 1974) or ethogenical studies which look for the rules which lay behind and generate social behaviour, the Mass Observations study sees this 'scientifically controlled' discourse as transparent. Although this lack of theorization makes the study problematic, not least in the way in which it prioritizes one true version over and above all other 'distorted' accounts, the volume is important as a data-base to which interested parties can turn, bringing their own theoretical concepts with them. It also can, and indeed has, been used as a primary source of information for other, historical analyses (Harris, 1966; Ziegler, 1978).

Research in the 1950s — Shils and Young

It could be argued that the next piece of work to appear on the subject acted, consciously or unconsciously, as a critique of, and response to the Mass Observations study. Shils and Young's article, which first appeared in Sociological Review (1953), opened by saying that:

In a survey of street parties in East London at the time of the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II, nothing was more remarkable than the complete inability of people to say why they thought important the occasion they were honouring with such elaborate ritual (Shils, 1975, pp 135).

They also comment on the dearth of political and philosophical work on the contemporary significance of monarchy claiming Martin to be the only modern writer to make headway. They argue that this is due to an 'intellectualist bias' amongst academics.
The decline in the intensity of religious beliefs, especially in the educated classes, has produced an aversion towards all the sentiment and practices associated with religion (pgs. 136–7).

And since, they continue, the true significance of monarchy resides in people's beliefs and sentiments about what s/he regards as sacred, the academic world, in fine psychoanalytical style, represses the whole topic.

The researchers bring two distinct theoretical strands to the study of the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II. Firstly, they adopt the psychoanalytical position of Jones, as outlined earlier. As such they see the British constitution as catering perfectly for the inevitable feelings of ambivalence felt towards figures of authority. This relates directly to the second theoretical strand—namely, a Durkheimian functionalism. That is, the monarchy, via such rituals, serve to reaffirm certain sacred values which, in turn, function to bind the British people into a homogeneous community or family. For example, in one section of their article, Shils and Young pay close attention to the details of the coronation ceremony itself. Through its various stages they illustrate how sovereign and subjects pledge their service to each other according to God's law.

This study has been heavily criticized from several quarters, most notably two years later in the same academic journal (Birnbaum, 1955). Birnbaum's main charge is that Shils and Young paint a far too harmonious portrait of British society. He claims that while they talk of the embourgeoisement of the British working class helping to create a society based on consensus, compared with Shils and Young's native America, Britain remains a profoundly divided society. This distorted image comes, Birnbaum argues, as a consequence of their functionalist bias; a point echoed many years later by Bocock (1974) who says that in taking a Durkheimian rather than a Weberian or Marxist position, Shils and Young inevitably perceive the monarchy to be legitimizing and sustaining a united nation, not one riven with warring, hierarchically organized, social classes.

However, to some extent, Shils and Young seem to have anticipated, and
catered for just this objection. They state:

Just as no society can exist without moral consensus, without fairly far-reaching agreement on fundamental standards and beliefs, so is every society bound to be the scene of conflict. Not only is there a clash of interests, but moral and intellectual beliefs too are in collision (pg. 138).

So, not only do Shils and Young admit a conflictual view of British social structure, but they also seem to recognize the oppositional nature of what Billig et al (1988) have since called a culture's 'lived and formal ideologies' (Chp. 3). What Shils and Young do suggest is that the monarchy plays a vital role in reaffirming those commonly held values, and in so doing, produce a society relatively free of social division. It can be argued, however, that Shils and Young inadvertently exaggerate the homogeneity of British society because their study happened to fall within an extraordinary period in British political history. For example, in an article entitled 'The Resurgence of Ideology' Plant (1983) claims that:

While it is of course true that differences between political parties have been profound, nevertheless most commentators have tended to argue that from the late 1940s to the early 1970s there was a consensus about the fundamental parameters of the post-war political settlement: an acceptance of the welfare state, the mixed economy managed by Keynesian techniques, a duty on the government to secure 'full' employment, combined with low rates of inflation, and economic growth (pg. 7).

Birnbaum also makes the point that Shils and Young take the coronation ceremony too literally, failing to see it as an anachronism. But this criticism is only warranted if Shils and Young set out to describe the viewing public's appreciation of the event. Now bearing in mind the authors' opening comments about the people's inability to articulate what they felt to be the cultural significance of monarchy, this criticism looks to be unfair. Indeed, it seems that Birnbaum was taking Shils and Young's analysis too literally. For when, in describing the significance of the orb and sceptre, they say that 'the people are thus made aware of the protection which a good authority can give them', Shils and Young do not mean that the people become conscious of this fact. Lines such as 'the individual loses his egoistic boundaries and feels himself fused with his community' should have alerted Birnbaum to the psychoanalytical, and thus
symbolic, sense of their analysis.

However, not only can Shils and Young be attacked for exaggerating the religious significance of monarchy and the homogeneity of British society, but they can also be challenged on the notion of the monarchy being like a magical spring pouring forth healing waters. For when people talk about the Royal Family they are most often engaged in the construction and articulation of arguments (see chapter 3). Indeed, in a sense, Shils and Young’s own analysis of the ceremony undermines their argument about the consensual nature of these sacred values. For in receiving the orb and sceptre, the monarch, they claim, is told to execute justice but never to forget mercy. But, as Billig (1987b) illustrates, the dilemmatic tension between the values of justice and mercy is something that most people (not just judges and magistrates) live and think about on a daily basis. However, Shils and Young’s focus upon the coronation ceremony seems to have lead to an exaggerated emphasis upon the mystical and the religious. For such a reverential relationship hardly explains the prurient nature of many newspaper stories about the Royals. For example, the News of the World (13/12/87) featured two Royal–related items. The first was a piece of speculation about an extra-marital affair involving the Princess Royal (‘Anne and Andrew’s 3 nights in Paris’) while the second remarked upon the size of a Royal backside (‘Who’s Got a Big Bum Then?’). All this seems a far cry from Shils and Young’s idea of a ‘national communion’.

In the same year as Birnbaum’s reply to Shils and Young, a small article appeared in The New Statesman and Society entitled ‘Royal Soap Opera’. Written by Malcolm Muggeridge it complained of, what was then, the recent development of the press’ ‘adulatory curiosity’ towards the Royal Family (beginning the period that Martin would later christen the ‘T.V. Monarchy’). It spoke in disapproving terms about this development warning that:

the application of film–star techniques to representatives of a monarchial institution is liable to have, in the long run, disastrous consequences. The film star passes into oblivion (Muggeridge, 1955).
He also spoke disapprovingly of the way that monarchy, instead of celebrating and reaffirming God's sacred values (as Shils and Young would have it), had become a substitute for religion. The debate as set out in this article (for which Muggeridge was to receive both popular and official abuse – Martin, 1962) has since proved to be the precursor of a great deal of popular debate and even a little academic effort.

Research in the 1970s – Political surveys

The next landmarks in our chronological voyage bring us into the 1970's and two articles published in political journals. The first appeared in Political Studies, and was called 'Attitudes to the Monarchy: their structure and development during a ceremonial occasion' (Blumler et al, 1971). The occasion in question was the Investiture of the Prince of Wales which had occurred two years earlier. The second study, entitled 'The Monarchy in Contemporary Political Culture' appeared five years later in Comparative Politics (Rose and Kavanagh, 1976). Both studies report upon surveys administered to members of the general public which sought their attitudes towards the monarchy. Both studies came out with the general conclusion that the British public value the monarchy positively, and that this support varies little across differences in sex, age, socioeconomic status and political affiliation. Indeed, they suggest that there is a consensus amongst the people as to their views of the political significance of monarchy.

The study by Blumler et al was also concerned to examine the influence of the mass media upon these attitudes. They did this using a pre-test/post-test experimental design in which people were asked a series of questions either side of the 1969 Investiture ceremony. Using complex statistical techniques, they concluded firstly, that the mass media did have an effect upon people's attitudes (i.e. that the media could produce attitude change) and secondly, that their results supported Shils and Young's, rather than
Birnbaum's reading of the monarchy's political significance.

The later study by Rose and Kavanagh also used complex statistics in order to test a variety of hypotheses corresponding to commonly heard claims about monarchy's political significance. For example, they looked for but found no statistically significant relationship between support for the monarchy and support for other authorities operative in society (eg. police, judiciary etc.). In so doing, they challenged the argument put forward, for example by Martin, that respect for the monarchy ensures a level of support for other societal institutions. Similarly, they failed to find a correlation between people's support for the monarchy and their sense of national unity; thereby refuting the argument advanced, most forcefully, by Shils and Young. Rose and Kavanagh conclude that although the Queen's dignified role as head of state is clearly recognized, she has little political import. They also say that while a non-political monarch may add something to the life of a nation by stimulating popular emotions, even this is superficial (pgs. 566 and 573). Indeed, they argue, following a very brief overview of the fates of other European Courts since 1850, that the abandonment of all political influence is the key to the survival of the British monarchy.

There are two, quite distinct problems with these two studies. The first arises out of the sort of concluding comments as reported above. For just as Walter Bagehot's was thought to have solved the mystery more than a century ago, so too does calling the cultural significance of the monarchy 'superficial' encourage the cessation of academic interest. Yet, even if we could take their findings at face value, we are still left in need of an explanation. Indeed, in the light of Rose and Kavanagh's results, the question becomes even more compelling. For what can explain, if it is not a political function, the proliferation of Royal signs, symbols and stories?

Furthermore, and to bring us to the second criticism, both studies utilize a problematic formulation of the concept of attitudes; treating them as straight-forward representations of stable and enduring mental states. This traditional view of attitudes is undermined by a relatively new theoretical
perspective; one which places discourse and rhetoric centre stage (see, for example, Potter and Wetherell, 1987). According to this new perspective, instead of carrying attitudes around in the head like marbles in a tin, they are seen as arguments constructed within a specific rhetorical context. So to ask, for example, do you think that Britain needs a Queen? is not to demand that respondents scan their memory banks for the relevant opinion. The respondent may have never been asked this question before, yet they can still 'come out with' a reply. That is, people can construct opinions on the spot.

We might also usefully note that attitudes can only be 'held' about controversial issues. To be asked: What is your attitude towards X? assumes that X is something or someone about which/whom there exists a difference of opinion. It invites the respondent to take a stance which champions one position while simultaneously negating or criticizing counter-positions. The significance of this reconceptualization is twofold. Firstly, even the most sophisticated of surveys cannot cater for the potential multiplicity of subtly different responses. Even Likert scales and multiple choice questions, as opposed to simple yes/no or agree/disagree formats, inevitably place constraints upon the range of possible replies. Secondly, the surveys fail to reflect the dynamism of attitude expressions by erroneously assuming that respondents would produce similar replies irrespective of the rhetorical context. In summary therefore, the heuristic value, as well as the reliability and quality of their findings, make the studies of Blumler et al, and Rose and Kavanagh of severely limited value.

The final piece of academic work to appear in the 1970s was a book by Philip Ziegler called Crown and People (Ziegler, 1978). It is a broadly historical account of the monarchy which concentrates particularly upon the twentieth century situation. His approach to the topic uses a combination of survey evidence and data from the Mass Observation studies, as he attempts to provide a 'public's eye view' of the monarchy. Four of his ten chapters deal with ceremonial occasions, such as the 1937 and 1953 coronations and the 1977 silver jubilee celebration. In so doing, Ziegler follows the lead of Shils and Young and Blumler et al in taking these special events as most revealing of the monarchy's cultural and political significance. However, Ziegler also takes time to consider what happens to the monarchy in between these extravaganzas. The picture he paints is of a
British public for whom the monarchy is of little consequence except for on those occasions when it engages the nation in some ceremonial event. In this way he succeeds in reconciling the seemingly contradictory findings of Shils and Young and Rose and Kavanagh. That is, while support for the Royal Family is normally widespread but shallow, the advent of a ceremonial occasion seems to precipitate a blossoming of the perceived significance of the institution.

There is an additional interesting feature of Ziegler’s historical account. He argues that the mass media, particularly the press, lead the public in the build up to a ceremonial occasion. It appears that even the coronation of George VI in 1937 was ‘hyped’ by the media. They spoke of the most trivial facts such as the total weight of BBC equipment covering the ceremony, while local papers detailed the special events that were being organized. But it appeared that public interest did not grow until quite close to the event itself. The inter-relationship between the media and the monarchy/Royal Family is a theme also common to the work of Martin and Muggeridge before him and a number of commentators since (eg. Williamson, 1986 and Nairn, 1988). Furthermore, now that the hyping of the Royal Family has become a daily, rather than an occasional, phenomenon, this relationship takes on an increasing significance even discounting suspicions of Establishment conspiracy.

Research in the 1980s

Relatively speaking, the 1980’s have been a busy period of research on the monarchy. The earliest piece was a fascinating chapter by Cannadine in a book called *The Invention of Tradition* (Hobsbaum and Ranger, 1983). The book’s paradoxical title reflects two of the most central themes running through the volume. Firstly, it refers to a view of history as socially constructed representations of the past. That is, history is not a straight-forward telling of ‘how it really was’, but an inherently partial or selective (if not biased in the conspiratorial sense) account of events past. Indeed, the book is more generally concerned with the growth of nationalism in the nineteenth century and the way in which, ever since, history has been
written in terms of nations and nationality.

Secondly, the use of the term 'invention' invokes the image of an inventor and a purpose for the invention. In that sense, their work is functionalist. So while Cannadine follows the likes of Shils and Young, and Blumler et al in looking at Royal ceremonies, he does so from a very different perspective.

He begins by pointing out that today's finely orchestrated Royal ceremonies, be they weddings, coronations or funerals, are constructed as if they have been conducted in exactly the same manner for thousands of years. He cites the commentaries of media people in which they make this a factual claim. However, Cannadine then goes to other, older sources which suggest that in days gone by, corresponding Royal ceremonies were ineptly performed if performed at all. Without, it must be said, stopping to consider the epistemological status of these older accounts, Cannadine goes on to investigate the appearance and performance of these ceremonies over the course of the last two hundred years. By examining the historical contexts in which these events took place, he draws conclusions about the functions of these inventions and re-presentations, mainly in terms of domestic and international struggle.

For example, he claims that the golden age of invented Royal rituals was in the latter quarter of Victoria's reign through to the beginning of the Great War. Although, he explains, Britain was at this time still a considerable world power, it was coming under increasing competition from abroad. Britain's emergence from 'Splendid Isolation', the imposition of import tariffs on foreign goods and Britain's military struggle in the Boer War were all symptomatic of this challenge. Hence, the staging of grand Royal ceremonies as well as the construction of great monuments and buildings in London at that time, can be seen as an attempt to match similar programmes occurring simultaneously in other, mainly European capitals, so reaffirming Britain's world standing.

Subsequently, in the period up to the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II in 1953, Royal ceremonies functioned in an additional capacity. As Britain continued to decline as a world power, the monarchy, fast becoming the last of a dying breed, had also to bind together a people who seemed to be breaking down into antagonistic factions. The broadening of the
franchise had placed political power in the hands of a disgruntled working class. The Labour movement grew overtaking the Liberals as the main opposition to the Tories. The country was shaken by the General Strike of 1926 and the Great Depression which began only three years later. Yet not only did the Royal ceremonies continue throughout, but they expanded in number. On Xmas day in 1932 King George V spoke to the nation on BBC radio. This, Cannadine argues, became an immediate tradition, with the monarch adopting the symbolic position as head of a great national family, speaking personally to his/her children.

This appetite for creating new traditions can be explained not only by reference to their unifying properties, but also because they constructed, while merely appearing to reflect, British national identity. This identity was of a people who had long found what they were searching for — a winning formula — and who could sit smugly and watch the rest of Europe staggering from the violence of social and political upheaval.

Of all the work considered so far, Cannadine was the first since Shils and Young to consider the significance of the monarchy in terms of what it provided the British people. Most accounts see the institution as insulating and sustaining a social and political order by distracting the potentially dissenting public with its bright lights. However, these two studies take as their central concern the nature of the distraction. Having said this, in restricting their analyses to ceremonial occasions even these researchers fail to take into account the meanings and functions of the daily representations of monarchy so salient in contemporary British society. We cannot merely assume them to have similar functions.

In each of the next three years there appeared chapters in separate volumes which took a semiotic approach to media representations of monarchy. The first was also a structural analysis of these representations by feminist Rosalind Coward (Coward, 1984). Following on from Muggeridge nearly thirty years before her, Coward likened the media representations of monarchy to soap opera. They share, she argued, the same narrative structure dealing with a mixture of ‘cosmic’ or Christian themes (such as good and evil; love and duty) and a series of ordinary familial preoccupations (eg. relationships, holidays and birthdays etc.).
Coward makes a couple of crucial observations which also go to form two of the central premises of this thesis. She argues that all knowledge of the Royals is more or less fictional, meaning, not that it is all 'untrue' in some absolute sense but, that our experience of the Royal Family is always mediated. It is a similar point to that made by Cannadine when he treats history as socially constructed versions of the past. Indeed, social constructionists would argue that it is not that second or third hand accounts incorporate an accumulation of representational errors (as happens to everyone's amusement with the game of 'Chinese whispers' – see also Bartlett, 1932), but that even a first hand account involves the construction of an inevitably partial version of events (see, for instance, Gergen and Davis, 1985). Moreover, the partiality of these histories is not so much due to limitations upon what can be recalled (i.e. too much to remember). Rather, recollections of the past are actively tailored to fit the social, political and rhetorical contexts in which they are produced (see chapter by Schwartz in Middleton and Edwards, 1990). In so doing, Coward withdraws from a debate about the ontological status of the institution, for she recognizes that we are for ever dealing with re-presentations or mediated accounts.

The second crucial observation is that the success or popularity of the Royal soap opera derives from the fact that it echoes themes and plays out dramas relevant to the lives of the ordinary viewers. It follows that when people think and talk about the Royal Family they are very probably thinking and talking also about themselves and their own experiences. For, in the words of Williamson (1986), to whom we shall soon turn, the Royal Family is 'ourselves writ large'. Coward's main argument is that the image of women portrayed in the Royal soap opera is taken from 'a peculiarly traditionalist standpoint'. The female characters in the soap are concerned with issues of motherhood and heterosexual relationships as they relate to marriage, rather than with issues about women's independence and autonomy. As such, she concludes:

"The Royals" eternalizes traditional values, glorifies women's route to power through individual sexual attraction, and defines women as exclusively bound up with these values (pg. 171).

The following year a chapter by Dayan and Katz entitled 'Electronic Ceremonies: Television performs a Royal wedding' appeared in a volume of
semiotic analyses called *On Signs* (Blonsky, 1985). In a complex and subtle analysis, Dayan and Katz examine the transformation that the event undergoes upon televisation. Their main concern is with how the role and status of the viewing public changes vis-à-vis the ceremony (which simultaneously becomes transformed into a spectacle). However, they also examine the significance of national emblems, such as Union Jacks and police helmets, and their relationship with their mass-produced counterparts (called 'secondary symbols'). On a more general level, we see once again that attention is being paid to media representations of monarchy.

The third semiotic approach to the subject appeared a year later in a book by Judith Williamson. The chapter called 'Royalty and Representation' identifies a central contradiction within the media representations of monarchy. She recognizes that the Royal Family is simultaneously like 'us' and not like 'us', and that it is this contradiction which provides a seemingly inexhaustible potential for Royal news and stories. However, Williamson's analysis also serves to make a political point. She argues that the monarchy operates as a profoundly conservative force in contemporary society. She sees in the Royal Family a relic of a pre-capitalist feudal order. They sit at the apex of society, a family who represent other, ordinary families, protecting them just as a parent defends her or his children. In other ways too they obstruct change towards a more equal society. Firstly, in accepting their position at the head of society, the British public simultaneously admit their own subordinacy. Secondly, in representing a caring force in society (albeit through a condescending paternalism) they take the onus away from the Welfare State in a way which fundamentally complements Thatcher's radical politics (Williamson, 1986).

This was also the year in which another, fairly straightforward historical account of the monarchy first appeared. Pearson's *The Ultimate Family* (Pearson, 1986), which focuses upon the developments of the last two centuries, was probably not meant for an academic audience. Nevertheless, it does echo the ideas of other academic commentators in firstly, recognizing the crucial role of the mass media in the development of modern monarchy and secondly, noting the centrality of the ordinary/extraordinary dialectic.
However, almost certainly the most incisive of all the analyses of the 
British monarchy's contemporary significance came in 1988 with the 
publication of Tom Nairn's *The Enchanted Glass*. Struggling against the 
legacy of Bagehot, part of Nairn's project sought, like those of Coward and 
Williamson, to re-establish the political significance of the institution. To 
do this he had to break through what he refers to as monarchy's 'defensive 
machinery'. Importantly, this machinery exists at the level of ideology, 
consisting of a set of related ideas which together serve to insulate the 
institution from critical evaluation. The first element in the machine is this 
dissociation of the monarchy from politics. Reduced to being seen as mere 
spectacle or light entertainment, the Royal Family is excluded as a topic 
for serious academic study. So neglected, any genuine social or political 
significance remains hidden.

For sure, Nairn is not claiming that the present Queen secretly exercises 
any of her constitutional rights, such as refusing to put her signature to 
Bills passed by the Upper and Lower Houses. Much more subtly, Nairn 
sees the political significance of the monarchy in terms of its central role 
in constructing a 'backward looking' national identity. Nairn traces the roots 
of this identity back into Anglo-British history and the struggle for 
sovereignty. Very briefly, the power wrested away from the Crown in the 
Glorious, Bloodless Revolution of 1688 was taken over by a Parliamentary 
class who never had any intention of handing it over to, or allowing it to 
be taken by, the ordinary British citizen. Then, one hundred years later, 
while more thorough revolutions were taking place in America and France, 
the descendents of those Parliamentarians were forced into constructing an 
image of the British which persuaded the public not to follow the violent 
example of their counterparts across the sea. Through the efforts of, 
amongst others, Edmund Burke, the French Jacobites were portrayed as a 
villianous bunch, in marked contrast to the typically sober, reasonable and 
conservative British subject.

Ever since then, Nairn argues, although power has been appropriated by 
the mercantile classes resident mainly in the south east of England, the
Crown has continued to operate as an obstacle to popular sovereignty. Symbolizing, as it does, the uninterrupted evolution of Anglo-British history, it checks popular uprisings by defining such actions as ill-mannered and un-British. Instead of challenging the system, the British way is to take any hardships on the chin without flinching.

Nairn's political and historical account of monarchy has received deservedly good reviews. Arblaster, writing in the *New Left Review* the following year called it 'brilliant'. Commenting on the dearth of serious, non-sycophantic analyses of this 'most conspicuous institution' he says:

> the last cool look at monarchy was taken by Kingsley Martin more than a quarter of a century ago. To say that Nairn's book fills this yawning gap would be an exaggeration, simply because, as I think Nairn would be the first to agree, the gap is so vast; and what is required is not a single study, but a whole range of investigations and debates, not to mention polemics, which will explore the roots and expose the workings of the social and political structures and culture to which the monarchy is so integral (Arblaster, 1989, pg 98).

Published far too close to Arblaster's review to be a direct response, Edgar Wilson's book, *The Myth of Monarchy*, published in 1989, nevertheless fits the bill as a polemical piece of writing. In effect, what Wilson has produced is a handbook for would-be republicans. He systematically takes to task many of the arguments, or myths, which today form part of the common sense of monarchy, and which serve to justify its continuation. Part of the power of these myths is that their validity stems from their status as common knowledge. So, for example, the idea of the Royal Family as a major tourist attraction for foreign visitors becomes true by virtue of everyone knowing it. Furthermore, in order to challenge the validity of such 'facts' (read 'beliefs') often requires an inordinate amount of time and energy spent on research. However, undaunted, Wilson takes up this challenge and sets out to prove that in every instance the reasons for having a monarchy collapse and disappear. Suitably equipped, therefore, the would-be republican could cite statistical evidence to prove, for example, that British exports to foreign countries tend to fall, rather than rise, following a Royal visit; or that the Queen, on average, has three months
per year more holiday than the typical British worker. Indeed, more than merely arguing that the monarchy is useless, Wilson suggests that it does damage by helping to sustain a profoundly unequal, class divided society.

**The Gap — Research into the 1990s**

Quite clearly, the major problem for anyone wishing to do research on the monarchy is not the finding of a novel project. Indeed, if there was a more substantial body of relevant research it might facilitate the identification of particular problem areas. For then it would be a case of 'filling in the gaps', so to speak, to complete the picture. However, as Arblaster argues, 'the gap', with respect to research on the monarchy, is so absurdly large that we are faced with a virtual carte blanche. Consequently, the problem becomes one of avoiding the trap of attempting a comprehensive analysis, for this is, at present, an impossibly large task. Instead, we must define some, perhaps arbitrary, boundaries of much smaller, manageable questions, and tackle these in a series of studies.

Wilson announces his unashamedly rationalist approach to the topic at the outset of his book. However, in marking out a space for himself, Wilson begins to define another important area for investigation. He says:

> I am concerned here with old-fashioned questions of truth and justification. These are the issues that exercised Tom Paine and others in that same radical tradition. In particular, I am not concerned with ideology, that is with the cultural formation of ideas and their function, except indirectly as it relates to my main concern. A study of monarchy from the perspective of the theory of ideology will be at least as interesting and important as the one I have attempted (pg 3).

This thesis represents one of two projects looking at the British monarchy which comes out of the Discourse and Rhetoric Group based at Loughborough University. Both of these projects are concerned with
examining representations of the monarchy/Royal Family. However, while Billig (1988a, 1988b, 1989, 1990, forthcoming) looks at representations as constructed by ordinary families in the context of their own homes, the present study follows the lead of the semioticians in focusing upon media representations.

Yet, despite this difference, the work of Billig and the present study share a dual interest in entering into theoretical debates as well as shedding light upon the significance of monarchy in contemporary Britain. For instance, one such concern corresponds precisely to that 'other' area as defined above by Wilson. That is, both projects are interested in ideology – not only enquiring as to the ideological significance of the monarchy, but also about the very nature of ideology itself. It is to these theoretical debates that we now turn our attention.
CHAPTER 3

IDEOLOGY, CULTURE AND DISCOURSE
ANALYSIS

Various surveys and opinion polls have shown that the British public have a detailed knowledge of their Royal Family (eg. Billig, 1987a; MORI, 1987). In one such poll it was found that people could recall the names of the present Queen's children better than they could the names of the leaders of the major political parties in Britain. But more than just the names of the Queen's children and grandchildren, also the various Royal residences, their hobbies and pastimes, likes and dislikes are all part of the common knowledge about the Royal Family.

Needless to say, this knowledge is not usually derived from first-hand experience of the Royals. For while many people might have seen one or more of the Royals in the flesh, so to speak, only a tiny minority have actually spoken to any of them. Even then, of course, the likelihood is that the conversation was limited to the exchange of platitudes. Instead, of course, this knowledge is gained through watching and reading about the Royal Family as they appear in the mass media.

Analyses of these media representations are inevitably, therefore, a crucial part of the wider project of understanding the cultural significance of the institution in contemporary British society. However, as noted in the previous chapter, the Royal Family is represented in virtually all of the media: television and radio, newspapers and magazines. And because each of these media is likely to give its representations of Royalty a distinctive character, the analyst is presented with a variety of different problems. Now, whilst a comparative analysis of the ways in which the Royal Family is represented by two or more of these media might be interesting and insightful work, it is not the aim of the present study. Instead, this thesis will concern itself with what, it could be argued, is the most important medium for the construction and dissemination of Royal representations; namely the press.
The reasons for this particular focus are twofold. Firstly, compared to most of the other media, newspapers are consumed by a very high percentage of the British public. Indeed, it has been claimed that if one takes both national and provincial newspapers into consideration, then 83% of the adult population in Britain claim to look at and/or read a newspaper on a daily basis (Royal Commission on the Press, 1977 pg. 87). Secondly, the nature of the newspaper allows it both to carry a wider range of material about the Royal Family (including special features, cartoons and quizzes, as well as 'news') and to provide a comparatively elaborate treatment of the subject.

Of course, the other media vary with respect to how well they match up to the press on these two criteria. For example, the Royal Commission report referred to above states that, on average, people spend more time watching television than reading newspapers (pg. 87). However, comparing the two media, it is apparent that the press give greater prominence to a more heterogeneous range of Royal-related items (see Chapter 4). Similarly, while magazines may be able to carry a comparable depth and breadth of representation, as a medium it reaches a relatively small and unrepresentative (ie. predominantly female) audience compared to the press.

However, once the decision has been made to look at the press, there still remains a problem concerning the sheer volume of material, which, by these criteria, represents 'admissible' evidence. In other words, in order to keep the project manageable, the boundaries for the data base have to be drawn in still further. The thesis, in attempting to do this while maintaining the representativeness of the data (in terms of it still representing material to which a large proportion of people are regularly exposed) focuses in upon a select band of popular press titles. These newspapers are: the Daily Mail, the Daily Express, The Sun and the Daily Mirror. Between them, these four newspapers account for about three-quarters of the 'dailies' taken (ie purchased) during the sample period (ABC Sales figures as quoted in The Sun 18/4/88). In addition to these four dailies, our sample includes the following three Sunday papers: The News of the World, The People and the Sunday Express. The representativeness of this sample is further amplified by the fact that any single newspaper is very likely to be read by more than one person;
whether by work-mates, friends or other family members. Once again, comparative analyses of popular versus 'quality' nationals or versus provincial papers exist as potential research projects, but not the one undertaken here.

It should be noted at this early stage, that this thesis is not concerned with the ontological status of the monarchy/Royal Family. It does not attempt to piece together the various representations as provided by the press in order to form some clear, coherent picture of the institution. It does not seek to reveal the truth about the Royal Family. At the end of this thesis we shall be no closer to knowing, for instance, what Prince Charles is really like, or whether or not the Queen and the Duchess of York get on. It is not that the newspapers fail to make claims about such issues. Indeed, these are often exactly the issues taken up by the press. But while we might be examining the various and frequently competing claims made about the private and public lives of the Royal Family, it will not be in the role of arbiter; sorting out the truth from the fabrications. For any attempt to do so would be an almost certain failure. For example, if I were to read in one newspaper that Princess Diana and the Duchess of York were best friends but then in another newspaper that they were fierce rivals, how am I to decide which, if either, is true? Therefore, I shall leave the business of making truth claims to the people of Fleet Street and busy myself instead with an analysis of such contradictory claims.

However, there is another, more abstract reason for abandoning the search for the truth about the Royal Family. This has to do with language and the nature of representation. This will be an argument taken up again and developed later in the chapter. For the moment suffice it to say that it has to do with problematizing a straightforward representational model of language (see section entitled 'Semiology and the Arbitrariness of the Sign').

At first this epistemological position might appear disappointing. It is as if instead of stalking the animal we have to make do with its tracks. However, we must recognize that the phenomenon of the monarchy/Royal Family as a cultural object exists largely in terms of representations or stories; whether told orally or through the written word. For sure the Royal Family exists as a group of real, flesh and blood people, who wear
priceless jewels and make public addresses; but the significance of these people, objects and activities has to be constructed through and by texts and talk. Therefore, it seems true to say that in studying media representations of the Royal Family we are examining the (re)production of the very phenomenon itself.

In order to study these stories properly we need an appropriate analytical method. That is, we need a set of conceptual tools which we can use in analysing these representations. And, as any craftsperson knows, when choosing one's tools one needs to keep a very clear idea of the nature of the material upon which one is intending to work. Welding equipment is no good if one is constructing a wooden cabinet. Therefore, the first question to which we need to address ourselves concerns the nature of these newspaper representations. How exactly are we to conceive of them?

Mass Communications Research – a brief review

The first research into the mass media was concerned to reveal what, if any, effect they had upon their audiences. Two, diametrically opposing models of mass media influence had been developed by the 1970s. The first, called the 'effects' or 'hypodermic' model, saw the mass media as omnipotent. With the propaganda machines of the Second World War in mind, and a feeling that society was becoming increasingly unstable and volatile, the media were conceived of as simply injecting their messages into the passive and defenceless audience (Howitt, 1982).

However, the experiments designed to test the effects model proved, at best, inconclusive (Howitt, 1982; Brody, 1977). Indeed, some experiments seemed to prove that people were remarkably unmoved by what they heard and saw in the mass media (eg. Berelson, Lazarsfeld and McPhee, 1954). Instead, people appeared to be selective in terms of the things they remembered and even perceived, according to their already established dispositions (eg. Cooper and Jahoda, 1942. Also see Festinger's (1957) theory of cognitive dissonance). For example, a study by Butler and Stokes (1969) suggested that electoral campaigns conducted through the media only brought about a swing of 2 – 3% in voting behaviour. Instead of the media doing things to the audience, Klapper (1960) began to argue that
the audience took from or used the media as they wished. However, this 'uses and gratifications' model of mass media influence, while presenting a more dignified image of humankind, went against what was many people's intuition. For example, advertisements seem to be able to create a demand for a given product rather than merely catering to some already existing need.

We might imagine these models as being located at the two ends of a bipolar dimension representing the power relationship between the media and their audiences. At one pole we would have the effects model with its image of an all-powerful media and defenceless audience. On the other side we would find the uses and gratifications model in which the balance of power would be reversed. Interestingly, a more generalised form of this same tension appears as a leitmotif within the following discussion. For example, while in the above the two contrastive elements appeared as distinct phases of research, in the development of Cultural Studies (as described below) we will see them combined as the generative forces behind a more unified approach to the topic.

**Cultural Studies**

According to Hall (1980, 1977) Cultural Studies began life as an academic discipline sometime during the late 1950s and early 1960s with the publication of several seminal texts. Hall (1981) argues that the works of Raymond Williams (1963, 1965), Richard Hoggart (1957) and E.P. Thompson (1968) constituted important 'breaks' in the tradition of literary criticism established in the 1930s and 1940s through the work of Leavis and the literary quarterly Scrutiny (see also Masterman, 1984 – who identifies Roland Barthes as another founding father). Central to their enterprise was a broadening of the concept of culture away from its elitist connotations and concerns.

Prior to the intervention of these figures culture was idealized in two senses of the term. Firstly, literary criticism had restricted itself to the analysis of 'high' culture, such as literature and poetry. It was seen as concerning 'the best that has been thought and said' (Hall, 1981, pg. 21).
However, between them Williams, Hoggart, Thompson and Barthes succeeded in democratizing the concept of culture. It came to mean:

the inventories, the folk taxonomies, through which social life is ‘classified out’ in different societies (Hall, 1980).

In other words, culture became defined as something common to all members of a social grouping. Furthermore, Hall argues that in The Long Revolution Williams (1965) challenges the other sense in which the concept of culture was idealized. Namely, instead of as ideas, culture was reconceptualized as a set of practices through which the members of a social group actively responded to the conditions of their social existence. This emphasis on human agency and the active creation of culture is central to the culturalist strand within Cultural Studies (Bennett et al, 1981). In a sense, therefore, it occupies the same pole as the uses and gratifications model of mass media in so far as it sees power within the hands of the ordinary ‘consumer’. For it is within their powers to help reconstruct and historically transform the inventories by and through which the world is made sensible.

However, just like the uses and gratifications model, this image seems to overstate the freedom enjoyed by ordinary people. As Marx (1951) famously put it:

Men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves but under circumstances directly encountered, given and transmitted from the past (pg. 79).

In other words, 'culture' has a constraining as well as an enabling function. History has a kind of momentum. It moves along with a weight of established meanings and understandings. These meanings represent the cultural heritage into which a person is born and raised. They are what Williams (1961) called 'documentary culture' – those forms, including poems, songs and buildings etc. left behind by previous generations. Hence, in the act of telling these same stories and playing these same games we are all involved in a process of cultural ratification. That is, we are all instrumental in the re-presentation and re-constitution of culture itself.
Now while it could be argued that it is a relatively simple matter for a new generation to 'cast off' these inherited forms; to sing different songs and play new games, it is not so easy to imagine them dispensing with what many theorists consider to be the central component of any given culture, namely its language.

The study of meaning and of the ways in which meaning is mobilized in the social world is closely linked to the analysis of language. Of course, meaning may be conveyed by images, gestures, and other non-linguistic expressions and codes of various kinds; but it can hardly be denied that language, whether spoken, written, or recorded in some other way, is a fundamental medium for the creation, transmission and contestation of meaning in the social world (Thompson, 1987, pg. 520).

In terms of the development of Cultural Studies the counter-weight to the culturalists' emphasis on human agency and freedom came from structuralism. Bennett et al (1981) argue that although structuralist theorists such as Levi-Strauss, Barthes, Lacan and Foucault worked in very diverse areas (anthropology, semiology, psychoanalysis and the history of science respectively) they all share and indebtedness to the earlier work on language by Ferdinand de Saussure.

### Semiology and the Arbitrariness of the Sign

Saussure was the founding father of semiology — the science of 'signs'. A sign, Saussure explained, refers to the relationship between a concept or 'signified', such as, for example, a flower (ie. something with roots, stem, petals etc.) and a word or 'signifier', in this case 'flower' (the 'sound image' as spoken). Crucial to Saussure's work was the notion of signs being arbitrary in nature. The arbitrariness of the sign existed in two senses. In the first, more obvious sense, Saussure was demonstrating that the relationship between a signifier and a signified is not natural or inevitable. For example, the word 'flower' no more naturally belongs to the concept flower than does any other. This can be seen as most obviously true if we consider English in relation to other languages. For example, French, German and Italian all have alternative sets of signs. While an English-speaking person might refer to the colour red as 'red', the French speaker calls it 'rouge'. Neither would it matter if these foreign terms were
switched around, for then the French would happily talk of the 'red voiture' while the English would speak of the 'rouge car'.

We might imagine that each language community has its own set of labels with which it describes the social and material world. However, to do this would be to underestimate the subtlety and profundity of Saussure's work. As Potter and Wetherell (1987) urge:

> it is important to note Saussure's suggestion goes further than merely providing a convenient... way of organizing a mass of material. He argues that the underlying system is essential for full knowledge of the nature of given items (pg. 24 — emphasis mine).

In other words, a term does not simply carry its meaning around with it on its back. Its meaning is also derived from its position within a system of other terms. To begin with, Saussure identified what he called the syntagmatic rule; a rule which relates to the order of a term within a sequence or chain of other terms. An ungrammatical sentence is one in which the links of the chain are illegitimately arranged. Moreover, the meaning of a sentence can completely alter if the links of the chain are rearranged. For example, take the following two, grammatically legitimate sentences:

A: Always say what you mean.
B: Always mean what you say.

Notice that both A and B have exactly the same verbal elements while 'saying' completely different things.

Saussure also identified what he called the paradigmatic rule; one which relates to the interchangeability of elements in and out of the chain. To take a non-linguistic example we can imagine the human body as divided up into various 'clothing slots'. For each slot there exists a selection of grammatical pieces of clothing. So, for the 'head slot' we have a hat, crown, hood etc. and for the 'foot slot', boots, shoes and socks etc. The upshot of the paradigmatic rule is that a given item takes its meaning not only from its relative position within the chain but also from the category of alternative (ie. legitimate) items from which it was selected. This idea relates directly to the later work of Derrida (1973) who, in criticizing the failure of other academics to consider the paradigmatic rule, talked of the
prioritization of 'presence' over 'absence'. Both Saussure and Derrida argue that, to take an often used example, the term 'terrorist' takes its meaning, in part, from its absent counter-part 'freedom fighter'. As Derrida would say, the two terms are defined in relation to one another (a relation of opposition) and each 'always already' inhabits the other.

There is, yet another, more controversial sense in which Saussure thought the nature of the sign arbitrary. He claimed that the signified itself was arbitrary. That is, to use the words of Hall (1980), different languages, even different 'codes' within a language community, 'classify out' the world in different ways. In its strongest form, this argument mirrors the linguistic determinism of Whorf (Carroll, 1956) where the language into which an individual is born and raised fully determines her/his perception of the world. As Hall (1980) argues:

"Reality exists outside language, but it is constantly mediated through language: and what we can know and say has to be produced in and through discourse. Discursive 'knowledge' is the product not of the transparent representation of the 'real' in language but of the articulation of language on real relations and conditions (pg. 131)."

Clearly, therefore, neither can media representations of the Royal Family be considered transparent. There is no simple correspondence between the accounts and the raw 'facts of the matter'. In the process of making sense of the world, whether for ourselves (in thinking) or with others (through talk and text), the raw event undergoes an inevitable transformation. Again as Hall (1980) explains:

"A 'raw' historical event cannot, in that form, be transmitted by, say, a television newscast. Events can only be signified within the aural—visual forms of the television discourse. In the moment when a historical event passes under the sign of discourse, it is subject to all the complex formal 'rules' by which language signifies. To put it paradoxically, the event must become a 'story' before it can become a communicative event. In that moment the formal sub—rules of discourse are 'in dominance', without, of course, subordinating out of existence the historical event so signified, the social relations in which the rules are set to work or the social and political consequences of the event having been signified in this way. The 'message form' is the necessary 'form of appearance' of the event in its passage from source to receiver (pg. 129)."

Indeed, taking a broader definition of language which includes all forms of symbolic exchange, then one could say that culture mediates reality. In
other words, culture is itself taken to be a signifying practice. Indeed, in
the early work of both Levi–Strauss (1964, 1968) and Barthes (1972/1957),
models of structural linguistics were deployed as a paradigm for the
scientific study of culture.

Similarly, Hoggart's *The Uses of Literacy* (1984/1957)

deployed literary criticism to 'read' the emblems, idioms, social
arrangements, the lived cultures and 'languages' of working class life,
as particular kinds of 'text', as a privileged sort of cultural evidence
(Hall, 1980).

Understanding culture/ language in this way gave the structuralists a
completely different view upon the relationship between human beings and
their social world compared to the culturalists. Instead of culture being
seen as a response by people to their experiences of the social world (ie.
the culturalists' perspective), the structuralists saw things the other way
around. For them there could be no such thing as a neutral or 'raw'
experience. Experiences were the products of culture; something that has
already been 'classified out' and made sensible (Hall, 1981). By accepting
the structuralists' argument for the primacy of culture over experience we
seem to have moved ourselves back along our bipolar dimension towards a
view of people as more fully determined.

According to the structuralists, people cannot escape their culture because
there is no 'outside' to which they can run. As ordinary social actors they
succeed merely in the inevitable renewal, amplification and extension of
social norms and values. However, it should be stressed that workers from
different theoretical perspectives understand the process of cultural
ratification in very different ways. For example, sociologists working
primarily from a Durkheimian perspective, see culture as an integrated set
of beliefs and values which bind together the members of a given cultural
community. In reaffirming these values all cultural practices and forms
(including mass media output) were regarded positively. This functionalist
perspective can be quite clearly seen the work of Shils and Young
(1953/1975) as described in the last chapter. There the coronation
ceremony of Queen Elizabeth II, and hence its representation in the
media, was seen as reaffirming the sacred values around which British
society operated.
Alternatively, thinkers from within a Marxist framework (which includes the majority of the structuralists) fiercely oppose this image of stability and consensus (e.g. Birnbaum, 1955). Instead, they see society as characterized by conflict and struggle. Borrowing from Hegel, Marx argued that history proceeds dialectically; as a series of specific stages or epochs characterized by distinctive modes of production (such as feudalism and capitalism). A dialectical progression involves a given thesis in a state of tension and conflict with its antithesis or antidote. This struggle ends with the fusion of these two opposites, with the resulting synthesis going on to form a new, higher level thesis. This dialectical process occurs over and over again until a perfect state is attained. While for Hegel this end point is spiritual or metaphysical ('The Absolute Idea'), Marx preferred a material dialectic where the perfect state (communism) is an economical rather than a metaphysical phenomenon. Further, Marx argued that in all the phases of this historical progression, except for the final, perfect phase, the mode of production in operation was based upon the exploitation of one class of people by another (e.g. the exploitation of the peasants by the aristocracy, or of the proletariat by the bourgeoisie).

Therefore, instead of conceiving of there being a single, unified Culture, the Marxists argued that there was a plurality of different and opposed class–related cultures, existing in a state of tension and struggle. However, this struggle between different ways of life was not, according to Marx, a fair fight, so to speak, for as he and Engels argued in a much celebrated passage from The German Ideology:

The class which has the means of material production at its disposal has control at the same time over the means of mental production... thus their ideas are the ruling ideas of the epoch (Marx and Engels, 1938, pg. 39)

Marx's cultural struggle, then, is like a fight between David and Goliath except for that, in Marx's version, David seems to be faring pretty badly, at least up until the closing rounds.

Because those who own or have control over the means of production (i.e. the economy or 'base') have control over meaning itself they can determine which inventories or taxonomies are presented as common sense or knowledge (part of the 'superstructure'). Therefore, in any epoch, other than in the final communist stage, the subordinated classes are born and
raised into a cultural order which, from the beginning, fails to embody their interests. They see the world with foreign eyes; the eyes of their masters. They are, as Engels called it, living in a state of 'false consciousness'. The things they know, do and even say are all constructed in such a way that it conceals the fact of their being exploited. Whenever they think, act or speak they succeed only in reproducing the conditions of their own subordination.

Marx's writings have, of course, been subject to an enormous amount of attention and debate. Critics and apologists abound. When the critic claims to have identified a weakness or deficiency in Marx's work the apologist claims there to have been a mis-reading of the texts. However, certainly one of the most contentious elements of 'classical' Marxism is his economic determinism. Bennett et al (1981) write that an important characteristic of Williams' early work was the distance he put between himself and Marxism over just this issue. Along with the other culturalists Williams sought to emphasize the constitutive primacy of superstructural or cultural processes; ascribing them equal status to the economic and political aspects.

However, time witnessed a coming together of Williams and the structuralists upon several important issues. Indeed, in his later work Williams located himself squarely within the Marxist camp. Williams' part of the convergence followed the criticisms of his book *The Long Revolution* levelled by E.P. Thompson in *The Making of the English Working Class*. Williams came to accept that the social formation consisted, not of a unified culture, but of a variety of different 'ways of living' which existed in a state of tension with one another. On the part of the structuralists, such as Louis Althusser, they came to recognize the relative autonomy of cultural, social, political and economic processes thereby rejecting, at least in its most basic form, Marx's economic determinism.

In terms of our bipolar dimension, the meeting up of the culturalists and the structuralists represents a convergence upon a mid-point. Society is no longer seen as a monolith, prescribing a single way of life for its people. Instead, the social formation is viewed as a collection of different, competing cultural orders. However, these orders do not compete on equal terms. Rather, they are arranged hierarchically with the most powerful
social groups or classes producing the dominant cultural orders. Subordinate cultural orders may try to resist, negotiate or even directly contest the meanings which the dominant orders try to impose upon the world. In other words, we must ever hold in mind that while Goliath may speak with a booming voice, there is always, at least the potential, for David to call another, albeit quieter, tune.

**Culture, Ideology and Hegemony**

In the introduction to their book Bennett et al (1981) make the following point:

One of the difficulties involved in disentangling the often complicated relationships between culturalism and structuralism is that, whereas 'culture' is a central concept within the former, it is almost entirely absent in the latter where... the term 'ideology' – operating a related but not entirely symmetrical range of meanings – has been preferred (pg. 11).

Then, later in the same volume Clarke et al (1981) offer an account of this asymmetry:

Dominant and subordinate classes will each have distinct cultures. The dominant culture represents itself as the culture. It tries to define and contain all other cultures within its inclusive range... When one culture gains ascendancy over the other, and when the subordinate culture experiences itself in terms provided by the dominant culture, then the dominant culture has also become the basis of a dominant ideology (pgs. 54–55 paraphrased).

This idea has also been taken up and developed by Antonio Gramsci in his notion of 'hegemony'.

Gramsci argues that 'hegemony' exists when a ruling class... is able not only to coerce a subordinate class to conform to its interests, but exerts a 'total social authority' over those classes and the social formation as a whole. Hegemony is in operation... when they not only possess the power to coerce but actively organize so as to command and win the consent of the subordinated classes to their continuing sway (Hall, 1977).

Gramsci's concept of hegemony was an important advance upon the Marxist definition of ideology as 'false consciousness'. For many, the classic Marxist definition of ideology is problematic because the notion of false
consciousness implies this other, opposing realm of truth. Apart from the obvious arrogance of this position (assuming as it does the existence of a largely deluded citizenry) there is an objection based upon an epistemological point similar to that discussed earlier in this chapter. Briefly, the argument is that because we never perceive reality directly, but always have to make sense of it through codes for classifying knowledge and representing reality, we can never distinguish a true representation from one which is distorted of false. Instead, one is forced into adopting a relativistic position with respect to these different ways of representing reality. [NB. It must be said at this point that Marx's conception of ideology changed considerably from his earlier formulations (eg. as described above from The German Ideology) to his later work. In his later writings Marx developed a more sophisticated understanding of how ideology functions to sustain relations of domination (eg. Marx, 1859, also see Larrain, 1979)].

However, when Gramsci claimed that hegemony works through ideology he did not mean that it operated via the imposition of false ideas or perceptions. Rather he meant that:

the 'definitions of reality' favourable to the dominant class fractions, and institutionalized in the spheres of civil life and the state, come to constitute the primary 'lived reality' as such for the subordinated classes. In this way, ideology provides the 'cement' in a social formation, preserving the ideological unity of the entire social bloc (Hall, 1977).

Notice here how the notion of ideology as a social cement brings Gramsci's sense of the term much closer to the sociological definition of Culture, as described earlier. However, Gramsci takes from Marx a crucial characteristic of ideology which fundamentally divides his concept and the sociological sense of the term 'culture'. For when Marx used the terms 'ideology' and 'ideological', he generally did so in reference to those practices, ideas etc. which serve to sustain relations of domination by representing the interests of the dominant classes as the interests of all (he also used the terms in connection with idealist philosophy). In summary, culture is a broader concept than ideology. For, in a sense, the ideological is a special sub-species of the cultural (see Thompson, 1987, 1984 for a defence of the critical definition of ideology over the more neutral or inclusive interpretations).
However, while the concept of ideology retains Marx's sense of referring to
that which serves to sustain relations of domination, we need not be
restricted to the economic sense of classical Marxism. That is to say, that
in contemporary Britain anything which serves to sustain relations of
domination between 'white' and 'blue' collar workers, men and women,
heterosexuals and homosexuals etc. can be said to be ideological. So,
although studying different cultural systems also concerns questions of
representation, the concept of ideology has the important additional feature
of looking specifically at questions of how processes of representation link
themselves to systems or structures of power.

Gramsci's image of the social formation then is of a hierarchically
organized set of cultural orders existing in a state of tension and struggle.
In terms of our bipolar dimension, we can see that people are neither
fully determined nor totally free. Even as a member of a dominant cultural
order one is, according to Gramsci, involved in a struggle to maintain
dominance. Indeed, he emphasized that a hegemonic state was never
stable; having to be constantly reinforced and reconstituted. Clearly, what is
at issue is the degree of dominance of some cultural orders over others.
Gramsci's point is that when a state of hegemony exists, the dominant
cultural order overwhelms all subordinate and conflicting orders. As such,
the dominant order comes to resemble Culture as in the Durkheimian
sense (see above). However, at other times, Goliath's grip upon David is
loosened as the dominant order comes under seige. Furthermore, while as
a Marxist theorist, Gramsci would have maintained that a society's history
would be marked by the victories of certain cultural/ideological orders over
others, he would also have insisted that for as long as society was marked
by class divisions the roles of David and Goliath must ever be occupied.

So far I have deliberately kept the discussion at a theoretical level.
However, it seems time to ask the question about what cultural struggle
actually looks like. For while the graphic analogy of David and Goliath
nicely captures the sense of there being a fight between unequal
opponents, contemporary British society rarely seems to be the site of such
physical exchanges.

Earlier in the chapter we heard Hall (1980) describe culture as:
the whole process by means of which meanings and definitions are socially constructed and historically transformed.

We also heard J.B. Thompson (1987) insist that:

The study of meaning and of the ways in which meaning is mobilized in the social world is closely linked to the analysis of language... [being] a fundamental medium for the creation, transmission and contestation of meaning in the social world (pg. 520).

Therefore, if cultures/ideologies are best understood as languages, then surely, cultural and/or ideological struggles are best thought of as arguments. In other words, different social groups or classes are engaged in arguments with each other where each group tries to get its own inventories or set of meanings endorsed as, at least legitimate, if not primary. In order to illustrate this, we can turn to an excellent analysis of a concrete historical example by Hall (1988). Hall examines the rise and success of Thatcherism, illustrating how the accession of the New Right involved much more than the implementation of an alternative set of policies. He shows how the rise of Thatcherism entailed the challenging, and subsequent disorganization of the political taken-for-grantedness of the British postwar political settlement.

the aim was to reconstruct social life as a whole around a return to the old values – the philosophies of tradition, Englishness, respectability, patriarchalism, family and nation (pg. 39).

It was the supercession of one hegemonic order by, what sought to become, another. It tried to revolutionize the way the British public saw their world. It had to change the terms and the emphases of the debates.

Thatcherism has succeeded in reversing... many of the historic postwar trends. It has begun to dismantle and erode the terms of the unwritten social contract on which the social forces settled after the war... There has been a striking reversal of values: the aura that used to attach to the value of the public welfare now adheres to anything that is private – or can be privatized. A major ideological reversal is in progress in society at large... conceived not in terms of outright victory but more in terms of the mastery of an unequal equilibrium (Hall, 1988, pg. 40).

The key term in both of the above quotations is 'value'. In this context, values can be thought of as those things which people feel are important
in life. Rokeach (1973) defined a value as something which is self-evidently good or bad in itself. So, for example, everyone would be in agreement that while friendship, kindness and beauty are good (positive values) cruelty, ugliness and greed are bad (negative values). In other words, these values form part of a society's common sense. However, this seems to present us with something of a paradox. For how can an ideological struggle be centred upon or conducted around things upon which everybody agrees? Surely, such contests or struggles have to involve the two rival parties fighting because they fundamentally disagree about something. However, as we shall see, the key to solving this paradox lies within the very nature of common sense itself.

**Culture, Common Sense and Contradiction**

Referring back to ancient texts on rhetoric Billig (1987) shows how common sense is built up out of argumentative 'common places' (loci communes). They can take the form of values, such as those listed above, or maxims; either of which can be used to bolster arguments. Common places, according to Aristotle, 'add a moral quality to our speech'. So, for example, we could warn that 'he who hesitates is lost' in an attempt to move someone to swift action. Similarly, we could counsel 'an eye for an eye' in excusing someone a retaliatory attack. However, as Francis Bacon (1858) recognized and documented, these 'common places' exist in antithetical pairs, such that each maxim is counter-balanced by an equal and opposite other. Hence, the motion for swift action can be checked by the warning to 'look before you leap', just as the retaliatory strike may be halted by the thought of 'turning the other cheek'.

The dilemmatic quality of these maxims is obvious. For example, even though they directly contradict each other, nobody would claim that 'looking before you leap' or 'striking while the iron is hot' are not both sound pieces of advice (and therein lies their rhetorical force). But the debate will usually be about the appropriateness of these maxims for a specific situation. It is this fact that led Bacon to say that common places form 'the seeds, not the flowers of arguments' (in Billig, 1987, pg. 205).
Values can also provide the seeds for ideological arguments. For example, Rokeach's (1973) work on political ideology focused in upon the relationship between freedom and equality. Both of these values are recognizable as being positive. Put simply, both freedom and equality are good. However, in certain contexts they can be seen to work in opposition to one another. Imagine that society is a closed system which, according to the Law of entropy, moves naturally towards a state of disorder (an assumption many political scientists seem to share) — in just the same way as a drop of ink, placed in a glass of water, diffuses, never again to reform as a single droplet. According to this law, society, if left to its own devices, would move towards a state of complete social, political and economic inequality (maximum disorder). Equality, therefore, being a state of order, has to be imposed. As such, equality is only ever achieved by the curtailment or regulation of freedom.

Rokeach argued that the difference between various political ideologies lay with the priorities which each assigned to certain values. For example, someone from the Right of the political spectrum would prioritize freedom over equality while somebody from the Left would invert this prioritization. It is in this sense that Hall talks about the 'mastery of an unequal equilibrium' (see above). For Thatcherism does not deny the importance of the public sector in any absolute sense. Rather it upsets the balance between public and private (established within the Keynesian system of a 'mixed economy') by assigning greater value to the latter.

This analysis also helps us to appreciate why Gramsci's hegemonic order can never win a final victory. For while in the above example, Thatcherism champions the common place or value of freedom (particularly economic) over equality, it cannot do so in any final or absolute way. Even the strongest advocates of the New Right philosophy must acknowledge times when freedom must be curtailed, so as to maintain some degree of equality (if only of opportunity).

We have seen that the idea of common sense as inherently contradictory has a long history. One of the most interesting contributors to this tradition is, in fact, Gramsci himself. Gramsci talked of there being two distinctive domains of ideology. He distinguished between what he called 'particular' (ie. formal or intellectual) ideologies, which were the
productions of professional thinkers and philosophers, and 'organic' (i.e. general or 'lived' – Billig et al, 1988) ideologies; a central part of which being a society's common sense.

Gramsci maintained that particular ideologies, such as liberalism or communism, consisted of systematic and unified representations of the world. They attained this quality, Gramsci believed, through the concentrated efforts of expert minds. However, the other domain of ideology, the organic ideology, was thought of as being a fragmented and contradictory corpus of knowledges and practices. Nevertheless, it was primarily through and by this domain that ordinary people lived their lives. As such, it was this form of ideology which acted as the 'social cement' binding together members of the same cultural community.

However, there was, according to Gramsci, an historical cross-fertilization between these two realms of philosophy/science and common sense. On the one hand, scientific ideas could 'percolate down' to settle in the bedrock of a culture's common sense (although the ideas are probably transformed in transit). Indeed, Gramsci talks of common sense as being littered with the 'sediments' or 'deposits' of centuries of scientific and philosophic endeavour (see also Moscovici's theory of social representations – 1982, 1984). On the other hand, intellectuals or academics could take ideas up out of a culture's common sense and subject them to the rigours of the scientific process. Then, perhaps at some later date, these ideas might make the return journey, in a new clarified form, back to the realm of common sense.

There are two aspects of Gramsci's conception of ideology with which Billig (1987) and Billig et al (1988) take issue. Firstly, Billig objects to Gramsci's notion that common sense serves primarily as a cement to bind together members of a given cultural community. For although the members of a community, by definition, share the same common sense, its dilemmatic nature ensures that they will not exist in a state of perpetual agreement. Secondly, it is argued that Gramsci's particular or intellectual ideologies contain their own contradictory or dilemmatic elements. Take liberalism, for example. Liberalism, as the name suggests, places the value of freedom uppermost in its scheme of things. However, as I have already demonstrated, a society which refrains from creating rules and regulations
to govern its people tends towards a state of disorder. Crucially, freedom itself appears on the list of resulting inequalities. For the weak would not be able to look after themselves and the rich and powerful would be free to place others into slavery and so forth. Paradoxically, therefore, certain checks upon freedom are necessary if only to ensure the continuance of freedom itself.

Similarly, Thatcherism is far from being a consistent and coherent ideology. Indeed, Hall argues that:

Thatcherism, as a discursive formation, has remained a plurality of discourses — about the family, the economy, national identity, morality, crime, law, women, human nature.

He claims that Thatcherism has 'stitched together' this complex of contradictory discourses making them, to some extent, cohere. And the success of Thatcherism has much to do with how it manages the tensions between, for example, its nineteenth century liberalist and its more old-fashioned, patrician, Tory elements.

But perhaps the most fundamental difference between Gramsci and Billig is the significance they ascribe to these contradictions. For Gramsci they exist as flaws or weaknesses which ought to be resolved or removed. Common sense, for him, is a vastly inferior kind of ideology compared to the works of the great philosophers such as Voltaire and Rousseau.

Philosophy is criticism and the superseding of religion and "common sense" (Gramsci, 1971, pg. 326)

where 'common sense' represents:

the "folklore" of philosophy, [which], like folklore, takes countless different forms. Its most fundamental characteristic is that it is a conception which, even in the brain of one individual, is fragmentary, incoherent and inconsequential, in conformity with the social and cultural position of those masses whose philosophy it is (pg. 419).

In direct contrast, Billig et al (1988) argue that such contradictions are of central importance to social psychology.
The very existence of these opposing images, words, evaluations, maxims and so on is crucial, in that they permit the possibility, not just of social dilemmas, but of social thinking itself (pg. 17).

To view 'proper' ideologies as coherent and consistent representations of the world is, they argue, to liken them to some kind of schemata — cognitive structures into which incoming 'raw' information is organized and made sensible. Just like a computer, all inputted data must be assimilated into these existing structures if they are to be stored (remembered or even perceived). If necessary the incoming information will be distorted in order to allow smooth assimilation. However, while like cultures and ideologies, schemata are can be thought of as structures through which an individual make sense of the world, Billig (1987) argues that this 'bureaucratic' model of human thinking leaves no room for conscious and deliberate mental activity. For these cognitive structures (read 'cultures' or 'ideologies') operate at a pre-conscious level, providing their bearers with a sensible, coherent, and unproblematical view of the world.

One of the central problems with this cognitive perspective is the way it portrays thinking as the processes going on within the confines of individual brains. However, culture does not exist as a pattern of neural activity in the brains of individuals. Rather, as Moscovici (1982) argued, it exists more like a collection of 'social representations' about the world; shared and maintained by social intercourse. We do not typically spend our time sitting down like Rodin's Thinker, chin rested on fist, pondering life's great problems. For the most-part, we are involved in social processes; getting thoughts and ideas from talking with other people, as well as through watching television, and reading books and magazines. Furthermore, these social processes are kept alive or fuelled, at least in part, by the dilemmatic nature of cultures/ideologies. In other words, they compel individuals to think and to argue.

So what does this mean for the analysis of press representations of the Royal Family? To begin with, we can imagine the monarchy/Royal Family as a discursive formation, existing at the intersections of several major cultural themes. And following Billig et al (1988) we would expect to find that talk (and texts) about the institution will be fuelled and formed by contradictions both within and between these constitutive themes or discourses. Indeed, one of the primary aims of this thesis is to identify
these themes and to reveal how their uneasy combinations generates Royal talk and argument.

We must be careful, however, not to overstate the prescriptive nature of cultural formations. Halbwachs (1980) argued that we are all like echoes; meaning that everything we are likely to think or say has been thought and said many times before. To draw a culinary analogy; Halbwachs is saying that given the same ingredients (ie. language and culture/ideology) people from any and every epoch are going to bake the same kind of cakes. However, Halbwachs is guilty of de-historicizing the cultural formation. For, as Hall's analysis of Thatcherism revealed, that which is taken for granted and that which is a matter for debate shift over time. Furthermore, and to continue the culinary metaphor, given a wide enough variety of ingredients, we can, by changing the way they are combined, produce an enormous array of different dishes for the table.

Secondly, although the cultural formation provides the 'raw materials', we are, as social actors, constantly engaged in doing constructive work. When we speak or write we are not merely giving voice to the lines provided us by history. To talk is to act upon the world (Austin, 1962). That is, people use talk to conduct the 'micro-political' business of their everyday lives. People describe, assess, compliment etc. and perform greetings, arrange deals and seek advice etc.

Indeed, we can conceive of talk and texts as existing on three distinct levels. At the first, most manifest, level we have the words themselves and the ideas and objects that they signify (in this case, the Royal Family). At a deeper level we have the functions (usually rhetorical) of the talk and texts; what Austin (1962) and Searle (1969) referred to as 'speech acts'. So, for example, at the scene of a car accident the comment, 'You have got bald tyres' represents an act of proportioning blame as well as being a straightforward descriptive statement. Similarly, people can perform a whole range of rhetorical moves in the process of producing 'Royal talk'. Deeper still we have the level of cultural and ideological reconstruction. For in talking we can either reaffirm or contest the dominant cultural orders.
However, it could be argued that, because the media are owned and/or controlled by members of the dominant social classes, media discourses will be almost exclusively bound up with reaffirming the dominant cultural orders. In particular, it was Louis Althusser (1971), a structuralist Marxist, who theorized about the role of the media in the process of cultural ratification. A social formation constantly reproduces itself, he claimed, through two sets of apparatuses called the 'repressive' and the 'ideological state apparatuses'. The former set, which includes the military and the police, operate by direct coercion or force. However, the ideological state apparatuses, which, as well as the media, include the church, schools and the family, operate, as the name suggests, through ideology. These ISAs work to reproduce the existing structures of power by legitimating the existence and behaviour of the ruling authorities, whilst doing so, not in their own names, but through apparently 'class neutral' structures of the state.

They perform this function by bathing society in official discourse: laws, reports, parliamentary debates, sermons, text books, lectures (Fowler, 1985)

The mass media play a central role as:

[They] are specialists in the production of ideological discourse, working in language, visual images, behavioural sign systems such as dance and sport. This discourse functions... by constructing and reiterating certain selected signs... insist[ing] upon a set of concepts that make up a certain reality – one that is favourable to the groups for whom the ideology is constructed (Fowler, 1985).

All this goes to suggest that the media are important weapons in the battle to attain and/or maintain a ruling class' hegemonic control. However, Althusser thought it possible that the ISAs might allow minority voices to speak through their channels. Therefore, these discourses would reflect the contradictions embodied within the wider cultural formation. Furthermore, we must not lose sight of the fact that as acts of communication these discourses have to be received or 'read' as well as produced. And while a communicator might 'mean to say' something in particular, at the moment of her speaking/writing she relinquishes control over her own words. There is no way in which she can guarantee that her words will be received and understood in the way she intended. In the words of Hall (1980) there may be an asymmetry between the 'encoding'
and 'decoding' of a message. En route the message can be said to have the potential for several different readings ie. it is 'polysemic' (Fiske, 1986).

Yet such a view, while saving us from the error of believing the media omnipotent, runs the equal but opposite danger of imagining mass media output as something from which consumers can simply take what they please (similar to the 'uses and gratifications' model of mass media influence as discussed at the beginning of the chapter). As Jensen (1990) argues:

The accumulating evidence on decodings of media content can be taken to imply that audiences appropriate and transform meaning for their own ends.

However, he goes on to warn that:

The further suggestion, however, that audiences may be resistant to the mass-mediated constructions of reality and thus presumably also to any ideological impact of mass communication needs to be critically examined.

Perhaps the most obvious and important respect in which Jensen's warning is valid concerns the fact that while it may be possible for a message to be decoded in a non-reciprocal relationship to its encoding, it is not as likely. For in constructing a version of events, an encoded message will be structured to prefer a particular reading (Hall, 1980). Fowler (1985) provides a 'linguistic checklist' of a dozen 'categories of structure' through which a particular preferred or dominant reading of a message may be secured. To take just one brief and invented example, we might imagine two reports of the same incident (A and B) where A comes from a right-wing and B a left-wing newspaper:

A - 'Illegal Immigrants Sent Home'
B - 'Govt. Sends Back Refugees'

Notice that both the choice of terms and the syntax of the phrases have particular semantic, political and ideological effects. For example, the passivization of the verb in sentence A allows for the deletion of the agent (the Govt.). The point being that the recovery of this information by the reader is made virtually impossible. Therefore, any social group or class
which can gain a disproportionate influence upon the production of 'news' (especially via owners, programme controllers, editors etc.) has a strong hold upon the production of meaning (see Trew, 1979a and b; Glasgow University Media Group, 1976, 1980, for detailed analyses of such biases in the reporting of television news; and Morley, 1980 for a study of polysemy and the production of preferred/non-preferred readings).

In this chapter I have tried to show how the discourses which make up this material can simultaneously operate on a number of different levels. To begin with, the newspaper items refer to something, either concrete or conceptual. Secondly, the items operate at a deeper functional level. That is, they can perform a variety of rhetorical functions such as making accusations or excuses, producing criticisms or praise. Finally, as cultural forms these items play a role in reproducing and reconstituting the social formation itself. In so doing, such representations tend, of course, to reaffirm the dominant cultural orders. However, as the cultural formation is defined as being, to some extent, fragmentary — consisting of a complex of dominant and subordinated understandings existing in a state of tension — these newspaper items can also, therefore, represent sites of cultural/ideological struggle. As such, they can be seen as part of a wider struggle over meaning and, hence, for social, political, and economic power.

Now while, of course, these levels can be kept conceptually separate, any given slice of discourse may simultaneously operate on all three levels. This presents the analyst with a problem. The task is to dis-integrate or tease apart the forces exerted at each of these three levels and to then see how they combine to pattern the discourse. Therefore, it makes sense to adopt an analytic method which allows us to examine the precise ways in which these representations are constructed to perform rhetorical moves and to ratify/contest meanings. Accordingly, this thesis will adopt what has been called a discourse analytical approach to the topic (as presented in Potter and Wetherell, 1987).

Discourse Analysis

Discourse analysts argue that the study of language should be a central part of the enterprise of social psychology. For people spend a great deal
of their everyday lives using and producing language. It is at the heart of our social lives, being the very stuff of communications. Talking and listening, reading and writing are all central aspects of our lives—whether we are at home or at work, with others or, indeed, alone. As Potter and Wetherell (1987) put it at the beginning of their book:

language is not just a code for communication. It is inseparably involved with processes of thinking and reasoning (pg. 9; see also Billig, 1987).

Discourse analysis, as the name suggests, is concerned with the study of language. According to Potter and Wetherell, the approach founds itself upon three established areas of research on language; namely semiology, speech act theory and ethnomethodology. I will make brief comments on each in turn.

Semiology — I have already explained something of what a semiological understanding of language entails. In brief, it views language as relational and emphasizes the arbitrariness of the 'sign'. However, semiologists also recognized that language represents a kind of map of the cultural concerns and interests of any given language community. Put simply, a culture deeply concerned about, for example, the afterworld or the weather will have these interests reflected by a correspondingly large vocabulary of terms. In other, more technical words, these concerns will be 'over-lexicalized' (the classic example being eskimo communities having thirteen different terms for snow). Therefore, on a general level, language can be seen as having an ecological function; equipping its users with the conceptual resources to deal effectively with their particular social and material worlds.

Speech Act Theory — On a more micro level, speech act theorists such as Austin and Searle also saw language as functional (of this I have also already said something). Instead of seeing language as a set of labels which name aspects of the world, they saw language as both stating and doing things. Austin (1962) also developed a distinction between 'locutionary', 'illocutionary' and 'perlocutionary' acts. Very briefly, a locutionary act is the production of words and sentences, the act of saying something. An illocutionary act is that which is performed by the words; for example, a blame, compliment or mitigation. A perlocutionary act is that which comes
about as a result of the words, whether it be a verbal or physical response. However, one of the main criticisms of the work done by speech act theorists is that they commonly analyse 'made up' sentences rather than natural discourse (which bear little resemblance to one another). This, however, is not a criticism which could be launched at the practitioners of the next area of research.

**Ethnomethodology** – This approach looks at the ways in which ordinary people make sense of their worlds (see Garfinkel, 1967; Wieder, 1974; Heritage, 1984). By looking at participants' discourse ethnomethodologists try to gain an understanding of how ordinary people conduct the business of everyday life. As such it is a reflexive exercise with the analyst and the participants both involved in similar interpretative exercises.

Ethnomethodologists stress two important points about language use which are of great value to discourse analysts. Firstly, they emphasize the context dependence of language. That is, any stretch of discourse takes its meaning, in part at least, from the context in which it is produced. So, for example, the statement 'I'm cold' could be, depending on the circumstances surrounding its production, (i) a request for the fire to be switched on (ii) a subtle hint about wanting a cuddle or (iii) a straightforward description of a bodily sensation. The second important emphasis is on the way that language can not only reflect upon reality, but can itself be constitutive of reality. Take, for example, the rules of a game or the interpretations of those rules by the games' officials. These rules/interpretations do not so much describe what a goal or offside is, rather than create those events.

The idea of language or discourse as constructing reality is one of three senses, identified by Potter and Wetherell (1987), in which the metaphor (of language as construction) can be thought of as appropriate.

First, it reminds us that accounts of events are built out of a variety of pre-existing linguistic resources, almost as a house is constructed from bricks, beams and so on. Second, construction implies active selection: some resources are included, some omitted. Finally, the notion of construction emphasizes the potent, consequential nature of accounts. Much of social interaction is based around dealings with events and people which are experienced only in terms of specific linguistic versions. In a profound sense, accounts 'construct' reality (pgs. 33–34).
The second of these reasons links up with the notion of language as functional, with talk being designed to do particular jobs. Together, the notions of language as construction and as functional form two of the central tenets of discourse analysis. A third central tenet follows from the first two. Because people want to do different things with language at different times (whether it be to accomplish blamings, make requests or more generally to appear in a positive light) they will construct different versions of events or objects tailored to the task. As Potter and Wetherell (1987) explain:

In general, we find that if talk is orientated to many different functions, global and specific, any examination of language over time reveals considerable variation. A person’s account will vary according to its function. That is, it will vary according to the purpose of the talk (pg. 33).

The importance of variation for discourse analytical research derives from the fact that it can be used as a means of gaining an insight as to the functions that a given stretch of discourse serves. Briefly, the analyst examines the ways in which an event or object is variously constructed and asks what, in each case, is achieved by the different constructions.

In the majority of the chapters that follow I will be using the methods of discourse analysis in order to examine the construction of Royal related newspaper items. I will be paying close and careful attention to each of the three levels at which discourse operates: to see how the monarchy/Royal Family is talked about, to reveal what rhetorical functions are being accomplished by these texts and finally to see whether I can discover evidence of cultural/ideological struggle.

However, before embarking upon this discourse analytical approach to the subject, there will be a chapter which considers the same material from a much more quantitative angle.
Imagine a database of newspaper cuttings about the monarchy / Royal Family as a great expanse of countryside. Qualitative and quantitative methods of analysing this data would then become akin to two different forms of surveying the land. On the one hand, we might think of taking a qualitative approach as viewing the territory from on foot. The analyst or surveyor can take her/his time to wander down country lanes and follow winding streams, stopping occasionally to look under stones and bushes. From this method of surveying we would expect to produce detailed notes about particular areas of the terrain. However, as the old, common-place adage goes; we might not be able to see the wood for the trees. That is, we might fail to appreciate the general lay of the land because we can never, in practice, cover enough of the ground as we carefully stroll around.

To adopt a more quantitative approach would be to get into a helicopter and to make long, sweeping turns across the sky. From such a height we would be able to make out the wider patterns of the trees, rivers and hills. However, of course, this wider perspective is adopted at the expense of a more detailed picture. The twists and turns of the stream, the wildlife and vegetation that live on the forest floor are not visible. We, in other words, can now see the wood but no longer the trees.

Clearly, both of these analytical approaches have their costs and benefits. To some extent, the choice about which methodological branch to follow depends upon the nature of the questions one takes to the data. It will be argued that, for the purposes of the present study, a qualitative approach to the topic would provide the most appropriate choice. It will be suggested that a quantitative approach to the data would seriously limit the likelihood of revealing the workings of culture / ideology. However, it will be argued that there is a place for a limited quantitative study; something chapter 4 seeks to provide.
On a more general level, the nature of the present enquiry, as described in the previous chapter, is to examine the inter-play of various cultural/ideological and rhetorical forces within a specific body of texts. This discourse analytic approach involves the close and careful reading of the texts; picking out the subtle nuances and contradictions. It demands time spent on examining individual cases from our data base. For only then will we capture the complex inter-play of themes, something lost when arguments are transformed or reduced into frequency marks under category headings.

There are other reasons why a qualitative approach to the data would be more appropriate. To begin with, we should note that the above analytical practice, whilst representing what Potter (in Woolgar, 1988) calls a 'craft skill', is not an expertise which makes claims to reveal the meaning of any given text. The analyst has no privileged access to the true or real meaning of any stretch of discourse. As Potter (1988) argues, the categorizations and interpretations made by the discourse analyst are not, in any principled way, dissimilar to those made by ordinary people in the context of their everyday lives. The readings of a discourse analyst are epistemologically equivalent to other, perhaps non D.A. readings. All that can be said is that, for a given text, a particular reading or interpretation may be more or less well argued. The point is that this kind of relativistic approach is the anathema of the more positivistic sections within the social sciences. They aim to do much more than provide competing versions of the social world. Armed with their quantitative methods and statistical packages, they seek to establish scientific knowledge about the world through the formation and testing of specific hypotheses.

In order to achieve this, quantitative methodologies are designed to generate data which can be tested for 'significant differences' between two or more subject groups or categories. Indeed, a number of studies have been done which test for differences in attitudes towards the Royal Family across various sections of British society (see for example, Rose and Kavanagh, 1976; Ziegler, 1977; MORI, 1987). However, these studies have consistently shown that, apart from slight variations between people of different age, sex, and social class, there exists a high degree of consensus amongst British people on this topic. That is, the vast majority of those
surveyed expressed support for the institution (see also Nairn, 1988; pgs. 19–20).

Despite the 'failings' of these studies, there is an important place for quantitative work in this area. To begin with, the ubiquity of Royal representations referred to at the beginning of chapter 2 and elsewhere (eg. Wilson, 1989; and Nairn, 1988) remains, nevertheless, empirically undocumented. More specifically, while there might be a general awareness of Royal stories in the popular press, there has been no work which seeks to quantify this data. Just how much Royal related news gets into the papers, its form, and the positions it takes there are all unknown. Furthermore, the nature of this material has yet to be analysed. What do Royal news items actually 'talk' about?

It is with a view to answering these questions that Chapter 4 is oriented. To begin with we will attempt to discover the volume of Royal related material which finds its way on to the pages of our national newspapers. We will then analyse the form and position of these news items. Then, in the final part of the chapter, we will sort this material into a number of subject matter categories. In so doing we will get an idea of the nature of press representations of the monarchy/ Royal Family.

As well as serving to fill a small corner of the yawning gap in research in this area, Chapter 4 will simultaneously 'set the scene' for the rest of this thesis. For even a limited quantitative analysis of popular press representations of monarchy/ Royal Family might help to provide a broader perspective or context in which specific qualitative questions might be grounded. In this way we might defend ourselves from one of the most fundamental charges aimed against qualitative approaches to social research; namely that detailed analyses of individual cases do not allow for the generalization of findings. By being able to situate particular qualitative studies within the broader patterns or regularities as identified by our quantitative analysis, we might be able to enjoy the best of both methodological worlds (see Bryman, 1988, for a discussion of the relative merits and the potential for combination of quantitative and qualitative methods in social research).
The Sample Data

From 29/11/87 to 29/2/88 the following newspapers were purchased and analysed:

- The Sun
- Daily Mirror
- Daily Mail
- Daily Express
- News of the World
- The People
- Sunday Express

The only disturbance to this purchasing pattern occurred around the Christmas period. On Christmas Day (a Friday) none of the above four dailies appeared, and on the Boxing Day only The Sun and the Daily Mirror were published. Hence, our sample consisted of:

352 newspapers – comprising of:

- 78 editions of The Sun and Daily Mirror
- 77 editions of the Daily Mail and Daily Express
- 14 editions of each of the above Sunday papers.

Method

Each newspaper was carefully examined for material pertaining to the topic of the monarchy/Royal Family. In order to be included (i.e., be recorded and classified) an item had to refer to the Royal Family as either an institution, as a collectivity or to any of the Family's more major figures (the major Royal characters about whom material was collected are listed
An item was not included in the database, however, if this reference was only an 'aside' to the main topic of the item. As a working definition, it was decided that a Royal item was one in which this reference to the monarchy/ Royal Family appeared within the title and/or leading paragraphs of the newspaper item.

However, even by these criteria certain items qualified for inclusion which were not directly concerned with the Royal Family. These were one which, while making salient some connection within the title or leading paragraphs, nevertheless focused upon actors and events who/which were essentially nothing to do with Royalty. For example, an item appeared in the News of the World (27/12/87) entitled: 'Faith Healer Cures Peer's Stricken Son.' It tells of how a cure was effected upon 'the son of Princess Margaret's best friend'. Other such items included stories about the adventures of Royal associates or the fortunes of schools and regiments attended, at some point in the past, by one or another of the Royal Family. These are referred to here as 'linked' items.

In general, an item's concern with Royalty was typically signalled within the title. For example, the Daily Mirror (27/1/88) featured an item entitled, 'Fine for Fergie' in which, predictably, the Duchess of York was the focus of debate. Other items were signalled more by photographs than by titles. The Daily Mirror (15/2/87) printed a letter called 'Jester couple of pranksters' concerning the antics of the young Prince which was accompanied by a photograph of Prince Harry. However, even in the absence of such cues, an item's leading paragraphs were scanned for material about the Royals. Once it was decided that an item warranted inclusion by the above criteria, it was measured (column inches to the nearest half inch) and classified according to its type, subject matter and constituent themes (The latter of which is not dealt with in the present chapter, at least in any depth).
Table 1 – Members of the Royal Family about whom data was collected

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Queen</th>
<th>Sarah Ferguson</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Queen Mother</td>
<td>Prince Edward</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prince Philip</td>
<td>Princes William and Harry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prince Charles</td>
<td>Princess Margaret</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Princess Diana</td>
<td>Viscount Linley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prince Andrew</td>
<td>Cpt. Mark Phillips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Princess Anne</td>
<td>Duke and Duchess of Kent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prince and Princess Michael of Kent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results

By the above criteria, the sample produced a total of 965 items concerned with the Royals at an average of 2.75 items per edition. In addition, there were another 130 items which were classified as being linked (see above). Furthermore, only 23 out of the 352 newspapers (6.5%) were completely devoid of Royal items. Of these, 11 were editions of The Sun (14% of all The Suns in our sample), 5 editions of the Daily Mail (6.5%), 3 editions of both the Daily Express and Daily Mirror (4.0% of each) and 1 edition of the Sunday Express (7%). In other words, the overwhelming majority of British popular newspapers (93%) have something concerning Royalty within their pages.

Item Types

Each of the 965 items was assigned to one or another of the following seven categories. These "item types" correspond closely to the formal categories as used by journalists themselves (see Williams, 1966).
(i) 528 – conventional 'news' items  
(ii) 123 – diary items  
(iii) 93 – letters to the Editor  
(iv) 89 – features  
(v) 76 – items based around photo.  
(vi) 41 – cartoons  
(vii) 15 – editorial column items

The allocation of any given item was largely unproblematic. The majority of these categories represent space which is specially set aside or designated as such. For example, Letters to the Editor were usually grouped together in a section positioned just following the centre pages of a newspaper (and before the sports section). Often titled 'Letters' or 'Letters to the Editor', they were usually short pieces accredited to some named author, located by residence eg. 'Mr. N Edley, Leics.'

Similarly, diary items appeared on the designated diary pages of either the Daily Mail, the Daily Express or the Sunday Express. It should be noted that the total of 123 diary items, represents 12.7% of all Royal items collected over the sample period. As such, the diary pages represent a relatively high density location for Royal items. Editorial column items represent another category which shares this spacial distinction. Generally found within the first few pages of the newspaper, the columns were usually presented as being the opinion of the paper itself eg. 'The Sun Says:' or 'Daily Express Opinion'. Sometimes the column would be headed by the newspaper's crest or motif. Equally, if not more distinctive were Royal-related cartoons. Typically boxed line drawings undersigned by the cartoonist, these items appeared in a variety of positions within the papers.

The remaining three categories perhaps require a little more definition. A feature here is taken to mean a specially prepared item, often having as its subject, something basically unrelated to the timing of the edition in which it appears. So, while a feature may be prompted by a current event,
it cannot be, in the literal sense, genuine 'news' (ie. something that happened only the previous day). For example, although a feature on Royal babies past and present might appear, prompted by the rumours of a Royal pregnancy (as occurred in The Sun, 21/7/88), the material presented has been researched, dug out of old 'news' archives etc. and, as such, is not tied to the specific date of publication. Another such item appeared in the Daily Mirror (10/12/87) entitled: 'The Old Firm'. Basically this item examined the annual workload of each of the major Royal characters and compared these to the Civil List 'outgoings' in order to ascertain whether we (ie. the British public) were receiving value for money.

It was found that 58% of all the 965 items were accompanied by at least one photograph. Of the 965 items, 76 were classified as being an item based around a photo. These were items in which the details of the photographic image formed the basis of the item's text. These items ranged from specially arranged photo-sessions called by the Royal Family eg. Daily Mail (4/1/88) - 'Why the Royal Fire Brigade Turned Out at Sandringham', to surreptitious snapshots of a Royal rear-end eg. News of the World (13/12/87) - 'Who's a big bum, then!' - in reference to the Duchess of York. This distinguishes them from other articles which might be said to be 'accompanied' by a photograph. That is, where the visual image is not essential for understanding the meaning of the text. Finally, we have the category conventional news items. This is basically a residual category containing all those items which lack the distinguishing features of the other six categories.

**Measurements**

Between them, the 965 items accounted for a total of over 6,000 column inches (c.i.) of newspaper text. In fact, to be more accurate, this volume derived from just 924 items, as the 41 cartoons included in the item count could not be converted into a c.i. equivalent. This was because it was found that there was considerable variation in column widths within the newspapers themselves. For the same reason, the space taken up by item
headlines and accompanying photographs does not form part of this c.i. total. While bearing this in mind, we can still say that the average length of a Royal item in our popular press newspapers is around 7 c.i. Hence, the average paper contains about 19 c.i. of Royal-related material with a further 2.4 c.i. of text which is linked in some way. This information is presented below, broken down for each newspaper title in our sample, thus allowing for a comparative analysis.

Table 2 – Volume of Royal Material in terms of item numbers and item lengths broken down for each sample newspaper

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Newspaper</th>
<th>Total No. Royal items</th>
<th>Av. No. of Royal items per issue</th>
<th>Tot Length Royal items (c.i.)</th>
<th>Av. Length of item (c.i.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Sun</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>840.0</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily Mirror</td>
<td>206</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>1145.0</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily Mail</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>1139.5</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily Express</td>
<td>239</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>1757.0</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday Express</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>327.5</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>News of the World</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>601.5</td>
<td>11.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The People</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>356.5</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sum Totals</td>
<td>918*</td>
<td></td>
<td>6167.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Does not include the 41 cartoons and 6 Sunday colour supplement items.

Before we can say anything really useful about these figures it would be wise to standardise them in terms of the relative volumes of editorial space available in each of the above newspapers. This was accomplished by drawing, at random, five editions of each of the above titles, measuring the total amount of available newsprint (ie. everything apart from the
advertisements) and calculating an average figure by dividing each total by five. In line with the procedure for measuring the specifically Royal material, the calculations did not include the space taken up by headlines and photographs, as well as graphics, crossword puzzles and the T.V and radio sections.

Again this information is presented in tabular form (see Table 3 below) broken down for each title in our sample. From these values it was possible to calculate that, upon average, a popular newspaper from our sample contained 739 c.i. of editorial newsprint. As such, we can work out that, again on average, Royal-related material constitutes around 2.5% of this space.

Notice also that a formula had to be applied to the data in order to work out the overall average figure for the total available editorial space. Effectively it takes into consideration the fact that only one in every seven papers was a Sunday paper, and so amplifies the weightings of the values from the daily papers, in order to compensate. The formula used, in which A, B, C and D represent the four daily newspapers and E, F and G represent the three Sunday papers, was as follows:

\[
\text{Overall} = \frac{6(A + B + C + D) + E + F + G}{27}
\]

We can now see that, for instance, the apparent differences between The Sun and the Daily Mail in terms of the amount of Royal material disappears when seen as a proportion of the available newsprint. Conversely, the Daily Mail and the Daily Mirror, which at first appeared to have a very similar volume of Royal-related news, now seem to differ. Indeed, seen as a proportion of the total available editorial space, the Mirror appears to donate twice the amount to Royal stories compared to the Mail. However, with the exception of the News of the World, all of our sample newspapers fall into a range of 1.5% running between 1.5 and 3.0% of the total editorial space. The News of the World appears to concern itself much more with the topic of the Royal Family compared
with all the other sample papers. This coincides with the earlier finding that the News of the World publishes considerably longer items on the Royals compared to the other titles (see Table 2).

Table 3 — Average editorial newsprint and percentage of Royal-related text for each sample newspaper

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Newspaper</th>
<th>Average Newsprint (c.i.)</th>
<th>Approx Tot Newsprint in sample</th>
<th>Tot Length all Royal items</th>
<th>% of Royal material</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Sun</td>
<td>621</td>
<td>48,400</td>
<td>840.0</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily Mirror</td>
<td>503</td>
<td>39,200</td>
<td>1145.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily Mail</td>
<td>884</td>
<td>68,100</td>
<td>1139.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily Express</td>
<td>857</td>
<td>66,000</td>
<td>1757.0</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday Express</td>
<td>1133</td>
<td>15,900</td>
<td>327.5</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>News of the World</td>
<td>760</td>
<td>10,600</td>
<td>601.5</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The People</td>
<td>866</td>
<td>12,100</td>
<td>356.5</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Salience of Royal News Items

This Royal-related material appears to take quite a prominent place within the newspapers themselves. Over the sample period, 144 separate items appeared on the front pages of the newspapers. This represents 12.5% of all the Royal items collected over this time. Put another way, 39% of the 352 newspapers had something about the Royals on the front page. Furthermore, of the 352 newspapers, 36 (10%) were led by a Royal item (see Table 4).

There are a number of points which need to be kept in mind when interpreting the values in the table below. Most notably, the Sunday
Express differs from all the other newspapers in our sample in not being of tabloid size. As such, its front page can carry many more items. This, of course, raises the probability that a Royal item will appear there. This would also explain why it can have the highest percentage of front page Royal items whilst having the lowest value in terms of leading items.

Secondly, The Sun, Daily Mirror, News of the World and The People all have front pages which rarely feature more than a couple of items.

Table 4 – Salience of Royal material within sample newspapers in terms of leading and non-leading front page items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Newspaper</th>
<th>No. of Page One items</th>
<th>% with Page One item</th>
<th>No. of Lead items</th>
<th>% with Lead item</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Sun</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily Mirror</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily Mail</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily Express</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday Express</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>News of the World</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The People</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hence, if a story (Royal or otherwise) manages to make the front page of these papers, it is very likely that it will lead. Having said this, comparing Tables 3 and 4 we can see that Royal—related news items are disproportionately represented (i.e. over represented) on the front pages of the popular newspapers.

The relative frequency with which particular members of the Royal Family formed the subjects of items was also calculated, the results of which are

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presented below in Table 5. Inevitably, there was a large degree of overlap, particularly where Royal couples such as The Prince and Princess of Wales or The Duke and Duchess of York were featured together in the same item. As the study was intensively conducted over a short period of time, there will be problems over the generality of the results given in Table 5. Indeed, there were a couple of events during the sample period which would have distorted the picture away from that produced by a more representative longitudinal study. For example, Prince Edward's frequent recurrence was largely due to his appointment as production assistant in Andrew Lloyd Webber's theatre company. Similarly, and again during the sample period, came the announcement that the Duchess of York was pregnant. The announcement was greeted with exhaustive treatment in the press, from features looking back to previous Royal babies, to pieces speculating as to the name, weight and hair colour of the eagerly awaited Royal addition.

Having said this, it seems likely that for any sample period there would be events which would skew the results in this manner. Indeed, that Viscount Linley figured so prominently is indicative of the fact that his relationship with Susannah Constantine was, for the popular press, one of the more noteworthy episodes in what was a rather lean time for Royal news. Take the case of the Daily Mail (9/8/88), which, on the morning following the birth of the Princess of York printed a tiny item of no more than a half a column inch announcing that there had been a 'Gun Death' of a worker on one of the Windsor estates. Perhaps on any other day such news would have been the basis of a much more substantial report, if not front page news. For example, The Sun (9/12/87) devoted over half of its front page to a story about Prince Edward's valet getting arrested for failing to pay a taxi fare ('Edward's Valet in Taxi Rip-Off').
Table 5 – Frequency with which specific members of the Royal Family were the main subject of a newspaper item

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Royal Member</th>
<th>No. of items</th>
<th>% of all items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Queen Mother</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prince Philip</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prince Charles</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>15.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Princess Diana</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>16.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Princess Anne</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cpt. M Phillips</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prince Andrew</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duchess of York</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prince Edward</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>9.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prince William and Harry</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Princess Margaret</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Viscount Linley</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prince and Princess Michael of Kent</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duke and Duchess of Kent</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Royals as a Group</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Then, ten days later, The Sun (19/12/87) again lead with a Royal story. Taking up virtually its entire front page, it reported how Ned Cecil, a former page boy to the Queen, had been expelled from public school ('Queen's Page Kicked Out Of School'). The story, announced by a headline of letters standing 1.75 inches tall, consisted of a 7" by 5" photograph and 11.5 c.i. of text beginning on page 1 and continuing on page 7.

So far we have dealt with the questions of how much Royal material gets into the popular press, the types of items which make up this content and the salience of this material within the newspapers themselves. We have
also looked to see which of the Royals most frequently form the subjects of 'news' items. It is now left for us to examine the subject matter of this press coverage. ie. What sort of Royal 'news' gets into the popular press?

Subject Matter

Unlike the categorization of items according to their form (ie. item types), creating and assigning items to subject matter categories was a much more problematic exercise. The categories that follow are by no means exclusive. Another researcher might well have decided upon different titles under which to place the data.

Moreover, there is no reason to suggest that an alternative system to that presented below need be any less accurate or insightful. However, while there might exist a multiplicity of possible categorizations, this does not mean that the choice of categories is simply arbitrary. There are certain broad patterns within the database which would most likely be reflected by any chosen system of categorization. For example, many items reported upon or speculated about the private lives of the Royals. This broad collection of items could be seen as distinct from another group of items consisting of those that report upon the Royals formal, public duties. This public/private distinction could provide the basis of a most basic system of categorization. However, while this would make for relatively easy item allocation, the sheer breadth of the categories would seriously limit their analytical use. Conversely, much more sophisticated systems, whilst seemingly providing much more information about the data, are likely to involve more problematic points of distinction.

The system presented below consists of nine subject matter categories. They are listed in the order they appear, along with an indication of their size (No. of items):
Official Business 54 items
Unofficial Outings 91 items
Royalty and Social/ Political Issues 54 items
Evaluation of Royal Conduct 140 items
Character Portraits 49 items
Family Fortunes 146 items
Royals in Danger 26 items
Fashion 25 items
Health and Beauty 25 items

Clearly these nine categories fail to completely exhaust the database. To be precise, the above system enabled 610 out of the 965 items (63%) to be successfully allocated. The remaining 37% are treated as a heterogeneous collection of items. There seems little doubt that it would contain a number of small groupings of similar items (indeed, some are mentioned below). However, it was decided that only groups of 20 items or more (approximately 2% of the database) would be made into a formal subject matter category. For too many categories, just like too few, detracts from the usefulness of the analysis.

Item Allocation

In order to allow a picture of the most commonly recurring subjects to emerge, each item was assigned to a single category. There could be, and probably are cases where an item could reasonably belong to two or more of our subject matter categories. For example, a story about an extramarital affair might simultaneously describe the relationship and complain that this is no way for a member of the Royal Family to behave. As such, the item would equally qualify for the 'Royal Romance' or 'Evaluations of Royal Conduct' categories (see below). In this event, the first factor considered in making decisions about categorization concerned the headline and leading paragraphs of the item. If these, most salient aspects of the item, suggest it to be more of an evaluative, rather than just descriptive piece, then the item would be placed into the Evaluations of Royal Conduct category.
However, if the headline and leading paragraphs prove inconclusive guides, then the subject matter category which commanded the greatest proportion of the text was singularly credited. So, for the above example, if the item said more about the impropriety of the Royal affair, rather than neutrally describing it, then again the item would be assigned to the Evaluations of Royal Conduct category. Inevitably, such judgements can still remain problematic. Praise and criticism of the Royal Family can be implied as well as stated. Therefore, the numbers assigned to each subject matter category cannot be thought of as precise. However, in general an item's allocation was relatively straightforward. Hence, what might be, at most, a small margin of error, should not detract from what is an enlightening part of the analysis.

We will now turn to the categories themselves. Each in turn will be introduced, defined and furnished with a few illustrative examples.

1. **Official Business** (54 items)

This category contains all those items which describe the members of the Royal Family as engaged in activities in an official capacity. These include the bestowing of honours and awards, the opening of schools and hospitals (etc.) as well as formal visits to various institutions, charity events and community projects. For example, the *Daily Mirror* (9/2/88) printed an item called: 'Porridge for Princess Anne' which told of the Princess Royal's visit to a British top security prison. Many of the items covering the tour to Australia by the Prince and Princess of Wales to celebrate the country's bi-centennial year were assigned to this category (and their subsequent trip to Thailand) eg. *Daily Express* (26/1/88) 'Double Delight as Princess makes it a Di-Centennial' and *Daily Express* (30/1/88) 'Whistle Stop Diana'. Also included were items noting the conferral of an honorary knighthood upon Casper Weinberger by the Queen (*The Sun*, 24/2/88) and the news that Princess Diana was to attend the F.A. Cup final at Wembley to present the trophy to the winning captain (*Daily Express*, 80
2. Unofficial Outings  (91 items)

This category is composed of items which have as their subject outings made by the Royals while not in the capacity of HRH. Wherever the Royals are reported going on holiday, out on the town, or into the countryside etc. the item was assigned to this category. A typical example from this category appeared in the Daily Mail (22/2/88). Entitled 'Prince and the Showgirls' it told of Prince Edward's visit to the Moulin Rouge show in Paris.

The distinction between Unofficial Outings and Official Business was generally clear. However, certain items seemed to locate themselves equally well in either category. For example, items covering informal visits (eg. sightseeing trips) or entertainments laid on for the Royals while on official tours could reasonably be placed in either category. In this event the item was singularly assigned to the category of Unofficial Outings. Hence, items about Princess Diana's visit to see a lifeguards' boat race and another to a crocodile farm while on tour in Australia were included here. (Daily Mail, 1/2/88 and Daily Mail, 4/2/88 respectively).

3. Royalty and Social/ Political Issues  (54 items)

This subject category contains those items which report upon where members of the Royal Family engage in activities or debates pertinent to current social and political issues. As well as including items which record the opinions expressed and the actions performed by the Royals, this category also contains items which themselves respond, or that report responses, to this Royal involvement. For example, during the sample period easily the two most recurrent issues involved Prince Charles
speaking out on modern architecture and Princess Anne doing the same on the AIDS problem. Specific examples include the relatively straight-forward description of Royal opinion eg. Daily Mail (3/12/87) 'Revealed, the Prince of Wales' guide to good building sense' and critical reactions eg. The Sun (27/1/88) 'Gay Fury Over Anne', to cartoon representations of these Royal stances such as appeared in the Daily Mirror (3/12/87). Any item which primarily challenged the right of Royalty to offer their opinions on such issues would be assigned instead to 'Evaluations of Royal Conduct'.

The boundary between this category and that of Official Business is also one upon which certain items can be seen to balance. For example, the Queen's Christmas speech as well as that given at the opening of Parliament can involve statements of a social/political nature made while in an official capacity. In this event, the items were assigned to the Official Business category. This left items such as The People (20/12/87) 'Di Wants To Work On The Wards' in which a Royal apparently elects to speak out upon an issue (in this case the state of the N.H.S) as if they were merely a concerned member of society.

4. Evaluations of Royal Conduct (140 items)

These are items which define behaviour appropriate to the Royals, either by the overt praising/criticising of the things Royalty do, or by the proffering of an idealized prescription for Royal behaviour. Typically then, rather than their being simple 'news', these items would be ones in which opinions are being expressed about the standards kept, or the role to be played by the Royal Family. This is borne out by the fact that 46 of the items were readers' letters to the editor, another 32 items were attributable to named columnists, and a further 3 items appeared in the editorial column (ie. the 'opinion' of the paper itself). These, between them, represent 65% of all 'Royal Conduct' items.
The letters often criticised the Royals for setting a bad example; for instance, by participating in blood sports (Sunday Express, 7/2/88), breaking the law (Daily Mirror, 8/12/87 - concerning Viscount Linley's driving offences), or being overly extravagant (Daily Express, 23/2/88). Conversely, they are also praised for setting a good example eg. News of the World (21/2/88) 'So Caring' – in reference to the Duchess of Kent. Other letters, as well as items found on columnists' pages and editorial columns, go further, offering an image of how the Royals ought to behave. For example, Anne Robinson, columnist in the Daily Mirror, complained that 'Being lovely Di, is no real help' (Daily Mirror, 17/2/88), calling clearly for an industrious, rather than decorous, Princess. Similarly, in its editorial column, the Daily Mail (15/12/87) spoke of 'A properly Royal concern' for Prince Charles. Three items which reported the Prince's own thoughts about his role – 'Danger in opening my mouth - by Charles', 'Should I lead a quieter life? - asks Prince Charles', and 'Charles: I must keep speaking my mind' – all in the Daily Mail 4/12/87, 5/12/87, and 22/2/88 respectively, were similarly included.

In addition, there were over 20 items in which views upon the conduct of the Royals were reported as accredited to some third party. eg. The People (10/1/88) 'Di lashed over Wills at the kill' and the Daily Express (25/1/88) 'Royals "are goons" says top novelist'.

5. Character Portraits (49 items)

This category contains items which describe what the Royals are like as people. Some of them do this in a relatively straight forward way such as the Daily Mail (22/10/88) piece 'The real Prince behind the mask'. Others more obviously entail an evaluative aspect. For example, the News of the World (7/2/88) printed a piece of over 25 c.i. called: 'Out of my way, morons!', claiming that the Duchess of York was fast becoming a brash and arrogant ogre. In contrast, a much more flattering portrait of the
Duchess was painted by a *Daily Mail* (26/1/88) item entitled: 'The All-Action Duchess'. Similarly included was an item which appeared in the *Sunday Express* (3/1/88) called: 'William, the finest court jester of all' describing the Prince as 'a bundle of mischief and fun'.

As such, these items could equally qualify for the Evaluations of Royal Conduct category. However, either where the object of evaluation was itself the character of a Royal or else where the praised/ criticized behaviour is represented as deriving from their characters, the item was assigned to this category alone.

6. **Family Fortunes** (146 items)

This category contains items which cast the Royals in their familial roles as mothers, husbands, brothers etc. Of these however, 80 were purely concerned with the 'love-lives' of the Royals. As a consequence 'Royal Romances' will be considered subsequently as a separate sub-category. The remaining 66 items include those which describe the Royals as engaged in family get-togethers such as at Christmas time. Much of the material concerned with the Duchess of York's pregnancy was also assigned to this category. A typical example of a 'Family Fortunes' item appeared in *The Sun* (16/1/88) entitled: 'Mum and Andy in a day of babtalk'. Another item which appeared in the 'Mirror Women' section of the *Daily Mirror* (12/2/88) called: 'How missing mum Diana keeps her boys happy' was similarly included.

A less obvious example, perhaps, appeared in the *Daily Mirror* (16/12/87). It was called 'William, the little drummer boy', and told of how Charles and Diana went to see William in a school play. The item was classified 'Family Fortunes' rather than 'Unofficial Outings' because the opening line referred to the Prince and Princess of Wales as 'proud parents'. As such, the participation in an ordinary family event seemed to be the more salient theme rather than the simple news of another Royal outing.
6(ii). Royal Romances (80 items)

As mentioned above, 'Royal Romances' exists as a sub-category of 'Family Fortunes'. It includes items about existing Royal marriages as well as pre and extra-marital relationships. These vary from the monitoring of the development of relationships involving Royal bachelors, Prince Edward and Viscount Linley (eg. Daily Express, 5/1/88 'Perfect Casting' and The Sun, 1/1/88 'Linley to wed at last') to the scandal of a supposed affair between Princess Anne and the actor, Anthony Andrews, 'revealed' in the News of the World, (13/12/87). Also included were a couple of astrological forecasts about the prospects for the marriage between the Prince and Princess of Wales (eg. The Sun, 7/12/87 'Heavens! Charles and Diana are star partners').

7. Royals In Danger (26 items)

This dramatic sounding category is a collection of items which have as their subject the security of the Royal Family. This includes reports about both feared or actual attacks upon the Royals themselves and measures taken to ensure that such attacks do not occur. For example, in The Sun (11/12/87) appeared an item with the self explanatory title: 'Bomb threat is kept from Di' and likewise from the Daily Mail (1/2/88) came an item called 'Missile secret of Fergie's jet', both of which qualified for inclusion.
8. **Fashion** (25 items)

The items which go to form this category are ones which focus on either the clothes or jewellery worn by the Royals. This includes both items that congratulate as well as deride the Royals for their dress-sense. For example, an item which appeared in the *Daily Express* (4/1/88) asked Prince Edward somewhat sardonically: 'Where did you get that coat?' The item was accompanied by a photograph of Edward sporting the offending garment. The *Daily Mail* (31/12/87) printed an item in its 'Femail' section called 'It's a tiara boom de-ay!' celebrating the creative use of both genuine and fake jewellery by the Duchess of York and Princess Diana. Also, earlier in the sample period, Princess Diana's appearance in public wearing wrinkled woollen tights prompted an avalanche of items, many of which come under this category heading eg. *Daily Express* (3/12/87) 'Her Royal Wrinkle Knees' (NB. Some other items referring to this event were more appropriately placed in the Evaluations of Royal Conduct category, as they were primarily complaints about Diana's standard of appearance).

9. **Health and Beauty** (25 items)

This, our final category, consists of all those items which focus upon the physical condition of the Royals, whether to reveal their deficiencies or to celebrate their qualities. Items ranged from the simple report that Princess Margaret had developed a sore throat (*The Sun*, 3/12/87) and the irreverently titled item: 'Who's got a big bum, then!' (referring to the anatomical constitution of the Duchess of York) to the news that Princess Diana had been voted the world's most stunning woman (*Daily Mirror*, 30/12/87). It also includes items which detail the cosmetic techniques used upon, or by the Royals. For example, one such item appeared in the *Daily Express* (24/2/88) giving away the 'stunning secrets of Fergie's beauty'. Obviously, items about the use of cosmetics could equally well go into the
previous category. However, Fashion items were restricted to those making reference to the clothing of the Royals.

The remaining 355 items form something of a largely undifferentiated mass. Many of them offered a simple piece of information or an anecdote about the Royals. However, the subject of these items were many and varied. They ranged from a single column inch about the fact that Prince Charles was growing vegetables organically (Daily Mirror, 8/1/88) to the news that pop star Michael Jackson wanted Princess Diana to star in his latest video (The Sun, 24/2/88).

There were also quizzes, results of readers' polls and astrological forecasts concerning the Royal Family. In a few cases there were particular episodes or incidents, involving the Royals, which prompted a series of items in the popular press. Such episodes included the appointment of Prince Edward as production assistant in Andrew Lloyd Webber's theatre company; the attainment of a helicopter pilot's licence by the Duchess of York and the discovery that Princess Diana had formerly worked as a housemaid.

Furthermore, there were 15 items which complained that various bodies, such as the police and law courts, were giving preferential treatment to the Royals. (NB. As the Royals weren't themselves the target of the complaints it would be inappropriate to place these items in the 'Evaluations of Royal Conduct' category). There were also 11 items that expressed sympathy for the Royals; particularly for having to put up with intrusive media people. Of these 26 items, over 80% were either readers' letters or came from the columnists' pages.

In addition there were features such as one that appeared in The Sun (18/12/87) consisting of a collection of readers' ideas about appropriate Christmas presents for Prince Charles. Other items were no more than snapshots of Royals walking their dogs or getting in and out of cars, and which were accompanied by just a couple of lines of text e.g. Sunday Express, (27/12/87), Daily Express, (30/12/87). There were also cartoons
that featured the Royals in ways not covered by the above list of categories. For example, while the Prince and Princess of Wales were on tour in Australia, several cartoons, making reference to one of the more notorious details of that country's history, depicted the Royal couple surrounded by convicts e.g. *Daily Mirror* (25/1/88), *The Sun* (25/1/88) and *The People* (31/1/88).

Finally, there were a number of items which, while focusing upon non-Royal figures, were, nevertheless, inextricably bound up with the Royal Family and so could not be said to be 'linked'. For example, the death of 'Crawfie', a former nanny to the Queen and Princess Margaret, was the topic of half a dozen items e.g. *The Sun*, *Daily Mirror* and *Daily Mail* (all on 18/12/87). Similarly, the 'leaking' of the Queen's Christmas address by BBC employee, Michael Cole, was the subject of another 7 items e.g. *The Sun*, *Daily Mirror* and *Daily Express* (all on 21/12/87).

**Conclusions**

So what can we conclude from our quantitative analysis of popular press representations of the Royal Family? Let us first consider the volume of Royal 'news' in the newspapers. The topic of the Royals appears in the national press with with remarkable regularity. If we were to select at random twenty editions of the nation's most popular newspapers, on average nineteen of them would contain something about the Royal Family. Eight of these twenty would, again on average, have something about the Royals on the front page, and two issues would lead with a Royal story.

Our analysis has also shown that, as a conservative estimate, of what other researchers call the total 'editorial space' of a newspaper (i.e. all that isn't advertising — R. Williams, 1966) 2.5% is taken up with Royal-related material. More general content analyses of the press can help put this, otherwise, fairly meaningless figure into perspective. Williams, for example, breaks the newspaper content down into the following sub-sections: news,
features, leaders (ie. front page main story), letters, pictures, and miscellaneous (incl. puzzles and cartoons etc.). We can immediately appreciate the fact that items about the Royals enter into all of these categories. This also raises an important point about pictures in the press.

One of the few changes in the format of newspapers since the study of Williams in 1965, is that the space taken up by pictures has increased over the 10% level found at that time (Small, 1982). The point being that the space taken by pictures was not included in our calculations and, as such, constitutes no part of the 2.5% figure. So if, as seems likely, Royal items are accompanied by pictures more often than are other items (ie. on average), then our 2.5% figure will be an underestimate.

In their study of racism in the media, Hartmann and Husband (1974) concluded that the 1.5% of editorial space given to items about race, constituted 'a noticeable amount'. If, like them, we had excluded the sports sections of the papers from our analysis, the final figure for Royal material would have been of the order of 4%. Consequently, we could say that there is a consistent and quite substantial amount of popular press material given to the topic of the Royal Family.

The remainder of our quantitative analysis seems to shade into a more qualitative approach. Certainly we can say that the subject matter of Royal-related items is highly varied. In addition, we can confidently conclude that only a small proportion of this material concerns itself with reporting upon where Royalty are fulfilling their constitutional roles and duties (54 out of 610 or 9%). The press keep us informed of where the Royals have been and of the things they have been doing. The newspapers also report to us the things that the Royals have said. In general, however, it seems that there is much more material which takes a 'human' angle upon the Royals, representing them as a collectivity of personalities.

However, over and above these general conclusions, we are able to say little else. What these newspaper items are doing when they either describe a Royal personality or complain about Royal behaviour is beyond
the scope of a quantitative approach to the topic. So, it is with a view to these sorts of questions that we now turn our attention towards a series of more in depth, qualitative analyses.
CHAPTER 5

THE ROYAL GENERATION GAME

We have seen in Chapter 4 how much Royal-related material there is in today's popular newspapers. We have also seen how this material covers a wide range of topics from grand State visits to the smallest detail of the Royals' domestic lives. Chapter 5 marks the beginning of a new emphasis. For along with the following two chapters it focuses upon the details of particular newspaper items. In taking these media representations seriously these chapters go against the legacy of Walter Bagehot (see Chapter 2). More specifically, Chapter 5 will show that 'Royal talk', in both its spoken and textual forms, is characterized by an inter-play of cultural/ideological themes.

Instead of prompting serious consideration about the significance of the monarchy/Royal Family in contemporary Britain, the proliferation of Royal-related material in the press can easily be 'written off' as further evidence of the degeneration of the 'Fourth Estate'. For it is thought that today's reader is provided with only the most simplistic of political analyses in amongst the photographs, sensational stories and bingo (for example 'personality politics' of Mrs. Thatcher versus Mr. Kinnock). Similarly, it could be thought that while Royal stories amuse and titilate the reader, at no point do they require much in the way of thinking. This is another notion which the following chapters seek to challenge.

In going about this task I will begin, not with the newspapers, but with some other Royal talk. It comes from one of a set of sixty three tape recorded interviews conducted with families living in the East Midlands of England. The interviews, which were conducted between 1988 and 1989, generally took place in the family homes of the various respondents. The families were informed that the interviewer was interested in hearing about their views on the Royal Family. They were also told that the interviews would be recorded, and that their anonymity would be ensured (NB. All
extracts reproduced within this thesis have had the names of the participants changed).

The interviews themselves were relatively unstructured. Towards the end of the interviews the families were asked a number of questions to ascertain their ages, occupations, educational backgrounds, political affiliations and the newspapers they read. They were also asked a couple of questions taken from a MORI survey (October, 1987). They were firstly: On balance do you think Britain would be better off/ worse off/ no different if the monarchy was abolished? and secondly: How interested are you in news about the Royal Family? Apart from these questions, the instructions to the interviewer were to merely prompt the family into discussion about the Royal Family and thereafter take a 'back seat'. Her primary function was to keep the conversation flowing. When it faltered, as it sometimes did, she would raise another related issue in the hope of initiating further debate. While she might use similar prompts to refocus the discussion where it seemed to have strayed a long way from the subject of the Royal Family, this was not to be done at the expense of the conversational flow (see Billig, forthcoming, for a more detailed account of the study).

The 'writing off' of Royal news as trivial is not, it seems, the sole preserve of the academic community. On a number of occasions within these interviews it was similarly claimed that the press coverage of the Royal Family lacked any real substance. Take, for example, the comment made by a person called Jane, aged 19, from one such interview [No. 035].

Jane: But it verges on the ridiculous who wants to know on the front page of a newspaper that Sarah Ferguson looks fat in her new dress when she goes to church in the on a Sunday morning who wants to know that Lady Diana can sunbathe on the beach

Clearly, Jane does not feel that these stories warrant the name 'news' (indeed, she says exactly this later in the interview – see below), as for her they are devoid of anything interesting. She seems to echo the sentiments of many more academic commentators when she expresses her frustration concerning the apparent misuse of the institution of the press.
However, in all this there seems to exist a paradox. For Jane made her claim in the context of an interview about the monarchy, lasting well over an hour, in which she participated fully. More specifically, for someone who claims to be so lacking in interest about the Royal Family, Jane seems to have a surprisingly detailed recollection of Royal–related press reports. The point being made is not that Jane has unwittingly revealed herself to be a secret Royal fan. Our task is not to wonder about whether or not she is 'genuinely' interested in the topic. Instead, we are concerned to discover just what it is that helps to sustain what appears to be a consistent and significant portion of our national newspapers. It is my contention that those things which sustained Jane's interest for the hour or more of the interview also operate within and sustain the bulk of the column inches written about the Royal Family. It is to a demonstration of this argument that we now turn our attention.

To begin with we need to examine the wider passage of discourse in which Jane’s claims are made. This passage is reproduced below (Extract No. 1) using typographical conventions as explained in Appendix A. The participants in the discussion consist of Peter (aged 44, a manager and qualified electrical engineer); Carol (married to Peter, aged 43, sales assistant); Jane (daughter of the above, aged 19, attending University); Rupert (son of the above, aged 17, apprentice avionics technician); and David (partner to Jane, aged 19, at same University).

We join the interview almost exactly one third of the way through its full course. For the most part, the family have been engaged in lively debate in which the 'battle lines' are clearly drawn. In one camp we have Jane and her boyfriend, David. They seem to share the rare distinction of considering themselves anti–monarchists. In the other camp we have the rest of the family. While they all seem to see themselves as in favour of the monarchy, and this distinction provides the basis of several argumentative exchanges, these same camps remain largely fixed across a range of discussed and disputed topics.
Just prior to the point at which we join the interview the family have just been talking about how other countries feel about Britain and its monarchy. It continues:

Extract No. 1.

Peter: I'm talking about any country not just India this country (.) the average person in the street in this country hasn't a clue about the Royalty and and probably hasn't even got a view about it

Jane: I think [ I think they have

David: [ I think everybody's got a view about the Royal Family because it's so like high it's always in the news it's always in the newspapers=

Jane: = You can't get away from the Royal Family in [ this country

David: [ I think every everybody's got their own own view about the Royal Family cos it's a=

Peter: = People don't watch telly or read newspapers

Jane: Well very few people would not do one or the other

Interviewer: Is there more in the newspapers now than there used to be

Rupert: No it's just now it's broadcast more there are more view there is more different types of media

David: I think that there's more of the less important things that the Royal Family do in the media things like what Fergie was wearing to such and such and Princess Diana's new hat [ I think that

Rupert: [ That's just cos technology's improved and you can that is broadcasting more=

Jane: = But it verges on the ridiculous who wants to know on the front page of a newspaper that Sarah Ferguson looks fat in her new dress when she goes to church in the on a Sunday morning who wants to [ know that Lady Diana can sunbathe on a beach and there can be a pic Sun or the Mirror or whatever newspaper you can get a pic

Rupert: [ Well what paper's what paper's that what paper's saying that well then the Sun or the Mirror [ how many people

Jane: [ Yeah but who's who's interested it's in other papers besides that=

David: = The Sun and the Mirror=

Jane: = It's even been in the Guardian what er Sarah Ferguson wore to the latest ball [ it's just not news

David: [ The Sun and the Mirror are the two biggest circulated newspapers (.) [ in

Rupert: [ And how much true fact is in the Sun and the Mirror

Peter: How much true fact is there in any newspaper

Jane: What I'm saying is whether it's fact or not do people really want to know that I mean does the world revolve around on the front page news what Sarah Ferguson looks like after she's had a baby or whether Princess Diana's pregnant again

David: You'd think it would be more important to put in the newspapers [ things like

Peter: [ Well the newspapers obviously think they do otherwise they wouldn't [ print it would they

Jane: [ Only cos it sells so many cos this country's so [
ridiculous

Peter: therefore they've so therefore the Royal Family add to the economy because people want to buy papers to read about them [ so that can't be bad can it

David: buy ( ) [ They'd buy the newspapers anyway

Jane: They'd buy the newspapers whether it had it in or not just for the fact that it had a page three or whatever what other ridiculous news the newspaper can think of

The first thing to notice is that although the family is talking about press representations of the Royal Family they are doing much more besides. Most importantly, perhaps, they are engaged in an argument or series of arguments. This should come as no surprise in view of the fact that the family consists of a mixture of self-acclaimed monarchists and anti-monarchists. As such, we might very well expect this interview to be one rich in argumentative discourse. However, in view of the survey data referred to briefly in the previous chapter, we would expect this interview to be the exception rather than the rule. For there we heard how the British public appear to exhibit a remarkably consistent or consensual set of views about the Royal Family. That is, they were generally very much united in their support for the institution.

It is interesting to note, therefore, that almost every one of the sixty-three interviews, where most of the participants expressed the usual level of support for the monarchy, was similarly marked by argument (see Billig, 1989 for a more extensive discussion of the argumentative nature of this Royal talk).

Arguments revolve around controversial issues. Protagonists take up positions upon these controversies and argue for them. In the above extract the family begin by arguing about whether or not the British public have any interest in the Royal Family. Peter claims that the average person is not interested and 'probably hasn't even got a view about it'. Jane and David, acting as argumentative allies, disagree with Peter. Rather than merely asserting the opposite position, David constructs his argument as reasoned. He achieves this through the use of the conjunction 'because'.
David: I think everyone's got a view about the Royal Family because it's so like high it's always in the news it's always in the newspapers =

Schiffrin (1987) and Antaki and Leudar (1990) demonstrate how this term (along with 'so') serves a dual conversational and rhetorical function. Firstly, it marks that which precedes it as controversial and secondly, it constructs that which follows it as a warrant for the truth or reasonableness of the advocated position. Hence, David simultaneously acknowledges the existence of a debate about whether or not people have views about the Royal Family and 'backs' his claim that they do.

In the middle section of the extract the family are again arguing. This time the debate is about what constitutes real or legitimate news. Both Jane and David dominate the floor, jointly constructing a critical image of newspaper coverage of the Royal Family as trivial. Rupert, although not allowed the opportunity to elaborate upon his views, seems to be attempting to offer an alternative analysis. Certainly his comments are interpreted as counter-explanations by Jane who twice comes straight back at him with turns marked as oppositional by the words 'but' and 'yeah but'. Then, at the end of the extract the family begin arguing about whether or not people buy newspapers just to read about the Royal Family. More generally, we can see in the extract what Billig (1989) calls the 'dual nature' of such argumentative discourse. For on the one hand, the participants are doing arguments (ie. critical and justificatory work) while on the other hand, they are simultaneously constructing accounts of the social world.

The rhetorical work done in this short sequence is both rich and complex. To examine even a few of the interesting questions arising from it could easily take up the remainder of this chapter. However, I would like to focus upon and consider what might be thought of as the two most remarkable features of the discourse. These are firstly, how Peter can move from a position of saying that 'people don't watch telly or read newspapers' to the argument that the Royal Family 'add to the economy because people want to buy newspapers to read about them' and secondly, how Jane shifts in the opposite direction, saying first that Royal stories sell
newspapers and then flatly denying it. The analysis will try to be sensitive to the discourse at both of the levels mentioned above (ie. the rhetorical and the thematic). For both the rhetorical context and the discursive object exert pressures upon the speakers, shaping their talk.

Interview 035 Extract No. 1 – A Fine-Grain Analysis

Early in the extract, Peter makes the comment that 'people don't watch telly or read newspapers' as part of an argumentative exchange with Jane and David. The young couple have been disrupting the image of a universally loved Royal Family by talking about negative foreign attitudes to the Family. Peter counters that people are not so interested in the Royal Family so as to have such strong feelings. He specifies the people of India to illustrate his point, but has to generalise his argument under Jane's attack that he has no direct experience of India and its people.

It is then David who enters the argumentative arena, disagreeing with Peter's claim that even British people are without views about the Royal Family. We can now see how Peter's bold assertion about nobody reading newspapers or watching television acts to counter David's counter.

The discussion moves on to where David and Jane are talking about media representations of monarchy. It is at this point that Jane makes her point about the triviality of these representations. On several occasions she uses the phrase 'who wants to know' or 'who's interested'. Notice that while she could have used the more personal alternative – 'I don't want to know', she elected not to. By choosing to use the 'who' form Jane achieves several things.

On a rhetorical level we can see that, although her words take the grammatical form of an interrogative, Jane is constructing what is commonly referred to as a 'rhetorical question'. In other words, her 'question' is not one which demands information or, indeed, any other kind
of response (NB. Conversation analysts would point to the fact that no sort of reply is forthcoming from any of the other participants and also that Jane pays no verbal attention to this lack of a response. In other words, her statement was both constructed and interpreted as a rhetorical question. See, for example, Heritage, 1984 Ch. 8).

Rather than demanding answers, rhetorical questions are used as strategic elements within the construction of arguments. In this part of the extract Jane is constructing an image of a mass of uninterested people – the question implying, of course, that nobody is, or indeed, should be interested in press reports of the type she has identified. Further, in lending a moral quality to the issue, she manages to re-construct an interest in these press reports as something bad or destructive. Hence, anybody trying subsequently to express an interest in the Royal stories, has first to attend to and ‘unpack’ (or deconstruct) this moral evaluation if they are to avoid representing themselves in a negative light.

At the end of the turn in which Jane first poses the question she, and her younger brother Rupert are obviously competing for the floor. Their talk overlaps for a relatively prolonged period (see Schegloff, 1987).

Jane: = But it verges on the ridiculous who wants to know on the front page of a newspaper that Sarah Ferguson looks fat in her new dress when she goes to church in the on a Sunday morning who wants to know that Lady Diana can sunbathe on a beach and there can be a pic Sun or the Mirror or whatever newspaper you can get a pic Rupert: Well what paper’s what paper’s that what paper’s saying that well then the Sun or the Mirror how many people

Rupert’s turn is marked as a disagreement (with his sister’s view) by virtue of the preface ‘well’ (Pomerantz, 1984; see also Schiffrin, 1987 Ch. 5 for a typology of functions performed by the term ‘well’ within conversations). As a disagreement Rupert’s question ‘what papers?’ appears more than a straight-forward request for information. Instead, Rupert appears to to be conducting something of a cross-examination. His question puts his sister on the stand to testify as to the objects of her complaint. Rupert, however, seems to suspect that she is referring to the tabloids and has already set
about formulating a dismissal of Jane's criticisms as concerned with newspapers unworthy of serious consideration.

Moreover, there is evidence to suggest that Jane recognises this rhetorical manoeuvre. In order to counter it she attempts to generalize the focus of her attack away from just The Sun and the Mirror. At first she does this quite vaguely:

Jane: Sun or the Mirror or whatever newspaper

However, several turns later she is much more specific:

Jane: = It's even been in the Guardian what er Sarah Ferguson wore to the latest ball [it's just not news

In so doing, Jane attempts to dismiss Rupert's dismissal, claiming that other, so called 'quality' newspapers, are also printing the same mindless stories.

David similarly tries to dismiss Rupert's dismissal, although using a different tack. After being interrupted by Jane he regains the floor to make the point that The Sun and Mirror 'are the two biggest circulated newspapers'. By claiming that these two papers reach a very large number of people David is emphasising the magnitude of their influence as media. However, there is another reading available from David's comment, one which puts him in a potentially contradictory position with respect to his ally, Jane. For this comment of his can be interpreted as saying that a large number of people voluntarily purchase these two popular newspapers.

Jane had originally asked the rhetorical question, 'who wants to know?', implying, as argued above, that nobody is, or should be interested in the press' representations. But David's counter attack upon Rupert's attempted dismissal, has the inadvertent effect of answering that plenty of people want to know about royal trivialities.
This division within their camp is, perhaps, occluded slightly, by David's use of the term 'circulated' rather than 'selling'. For as with a human heart, circulation implies a flow driven from a single source. Accordingly, the newspapers are seen as being dispersed; passed on from source to receiver. Although 'selling' shares the connotations of dispersal, it also invites a *transactional* image. By this, the newspapers are seen as being to some extent actively sought out. Hence, by using the word 'circulated' as opposed to 'selling', David constructs an image of *The Sun* and *Daily Mirror* being passively received by the public rather than actively sought.

Anyway, it is only after other questions about the epistemological status of newspaper reports have been asked and brushed aside (by Jane who sees this debate as leading away from the thrust of her argument) that this contradiction comes further into view. In the meantime, Jane reasserts her original complaint: 'does the world revolve around... what Sarah Ferguson looks like after she's had a baby' etc. backed up by David who argues that other, more important topics should receive front page treatment.

Interestingly, both Jane and David are here constructing a view of the world as 'inter-subjective' (ie. something upon which different people's views will correspond – Pollner, 1974, 1975). They do this simultaneously on two levels. Firstly, in implying that nobody is interested in the Royal stories, Jane constructs an image of inter-subjectivity. Secondly, in the very act of arguing, inter-subjectivity is implied. For argument involves the attempt to persuade another to share your views. However, when dealing with what Schumacher (1977) called 'divergent problems', the process of argumentation also implies the opposing concept of multi-subjectivity (the idea that different people will have different perspectives upon the same world).

Schumacher makes a distinction between 'convergent' and 'divergent' problems where the former are characterized as having single, correct solutions. For example, we might be able to work out a mathematical formula to describe and predict planetary motion. In the process of arriving at this formula, we might have found ourselves engaged in a
debate about the suitability of various candidate formulae. However, in the end, the solution is discovered or converged upon, and the debate ceases.

Unlike the convergent variety, divergent problems have no single, correct answers. Questions about what sort of news is appropriate for the front page of a national newspaper concern matters of opinion, not absolute solutions. However, people do not have or hold opinions like they do shirts in a wardrobe. Opinions are constructed both for and from argumentative battles. They are always held and produced in opposition to counter-views. Hence, while on the one hand we acknowledge a debate to involve 'matters of opinion', on the other hand we send our views into battle, defending them and attacking others with the implication that (in keeping with the metaphor) we, or our views, might emerge victorious to become the common sense (see Billig, 1989).

Peter utilizes the notion of a multi-subjective world in order to argue against Jane and David in the following turn of the extract.

David: 'You'd think it would be more important to put in the newspapers things like
Peter: [ Well the newspapers obviously think they do otherwise they wouldn't [ print it would they

He rejects their attempt to invoke a shared perspective upon news values and the public's demand for news. Without declaring a personal position on the issue (ie. whether or not he himself enjoys such front page Royal stories), Peter represents the press ('newspapers') as having a different perspective to Jane and David. The press, he says, 'obviously' think that these Royal stories are important otherwise they would not give them front page status.

Jane's concession of this point is made even before her father has had chance to complete its full articulation.
Peter: [ Well the newspapers obviously think they do otherwise they wouldn't print it, would they.

Jane: [ Only cos it sells so many cos this country's so ridiculous

Her eagerness to do so could be explained by reading her next turn as a counter-attack against the press, and more locally against her father, using an anti-capitalist discourse. She constructs the press as being dominated by profit motives such that they will print anything in order to sell more copies. She simultaneously constructs an image of the British public as 'ridiculous' in wanting to read such nonsense. In so doing, she joins with David in answering the question she herself posed in the middle of the extract. However, while she now seems to be agreeing that many people do want to know about the trivialities of the Royals' lives, the moral force, or aspect, of her objection remains. That is, the British public ought not to be interested and are ridiculous for being so.

It is now that the contradiction between David and Jane, noted earlier, begins to emerge. We can see that Jane's moral discourse has come into conflict with another moral discourse, this time stemming from the economic theme of supply and demand which suffuses the second half of the extract. These two discourses can be used to construct contradictory representations about the role of the media. Jane's moral discourse of the role of the media is the traditional, paternalistic perspective. It is a view typified by the BBC, especially in its earlier days, when it saw its role as attempting to raise the educational levels of its audience (Whale, 1977). However, the economic concept of supply and demand, existing as a seed within David's comment about 'circulation', entails a different, more democratic moral basis. It holds that popular tastes, rather than some supposed set of eternal moral values, should shape the content of media output. It seems somewhat ironic, then, that the cultural/ideological clash in the above extract sees the father rejecting the paternalistic model and championing the democratic, which, in turn, is being rejected by two of the more junior members of the family.

The final part of the extract sees Peter drawing upon another economic theme in order to challenge the family's anti-monarchists.
Peter: So therefore they've so therefore the Royal Family add to the economy because people want to buy papers to read about them [so that can't be bad can it]

Constructed as if a logical extension to their argument, he offers Jane and David the conclusion that the (agreed) popularity of Royal stories in the press makes the Royal Family itself an invaluable contributor to Britain's Gross National Product. Rather than concede this final humiliating defeat, Jane and David jointly produce an account of newspaper sales in which Royal stories are seen as inconsequential.

David: They'd buy the newspapers anyway
Jane: They'd buy the newspapers whether it had it in or not just for the fact that it had a page three or whatever what other ridiculous news the paper can think of

Hence, within these last few turns, the contradictions made by both Peter and Jane have been revealed. In order to reject the idea of the Royal Family playing a vital role in the British economy, Jane and David dismiss the claim that Royal front page stories sell newspapers – a claim made by Jane in her previous turn. Also, Peter's development of this economic raison d'être of Royalty entails the contradiction of his prior argument that people do not read newspapers.

As it happens, neither of these contradictions is attended to within the interview itself. No doubt had they become the focus of family debate we would have seen some subtle qualifications, justifications and criticisms made in order to heal these apparent weaknesses in their arguments. However, it is important that we do not treat these variations and contradictions in the expressed attitudes of the family members as symptomatic of some mental confusion on their parts. This analysis should help us to appreciate that when people express attitudes in everyday situations, they are not, as assumed by traditional social psychological theories of attitudes, merely giving voice to some already formed and stable evaluation. They are, instead, constructing views from moment to moment within a given social and rhetorical context. As these contexts change, so too does the meaning of the words there spoken. Therefore,
such variation in expressed attitudes is to be entirely expected (see Billig, 1989; and especially Potter and Wetherell, 1987 for a more developed argument against traditional attitude research).

Nevertheless, it is equally important not to over-estimate the role of the rhetorical context in shaping discourse. In the above extract we can see how both the two moral themes of the role of the media (paternalistic and democratic) and the contradiction between inter- and multi-subjective views of the world figured as resources which, while being utilized, gave form to the discourse.

In summary, we can say that it is very easy for people to greet with incredulity the idea of talking about the Royal Family at any length. Such talk, we might imagine, would be trivial and empty. Consequently, one might think the entire topic unworthy of serious academic attention. However, without wishing to generalize unduly, the analysis of the above interview extract should, at least, make us wary of such easy conclusions. There we saw how 'Royal talk' was generated and given shape by certain cultural and ideological themes as well as by the rhetorical context in which the discourse was situated.

Following from Billig et al (1988), this thesis has, as one of its primary hypotheses, the idea that any given newspaper item about the Royal Family/monarchy will spring from certain cultural/ideological tensions. For without such tensions, there would simply be nothing for us to talk about. Furthermore, the chapter is an attempt to answer the empirical question about whether or not there can be said to be a discourse of monarchy (i.e. a set of cultural/ideological themes common within Royal talk which exhibits at least some degree of closure) and, if so, to sketch something of its nature. In so doing, the following analyses will pay particular, although not exclusive, attention to the ideological/cultural level at which discourse operates (see Chapter 3 for a discussion of the three levels of discourse).
A Methodological Note

To argue that each and every item of our archive derives something of its form and substance from an inter-play of cultural/ideological themes is to claim much. Consequently, it would hardly have been a fair test of such a bold hypothesis to analyse just a few choice examples from our archive of newspaper materials concerning the Royal Family. Even the most cursory of examinations reveals there to be a considerable range between the most and least substantial items. To do justice to such a claim, I decided that an analysis of a random sample of items should be conducted. Hence, a method of selection was employed which gave an equal chance of being chosen to each of the (approx.) 1100 items in the archive. [These items consist of the 965 analysed quantitatively in the last chapter plus a further 130 items gathered haphazardly from various popular newspapers both before and after the three month sample period of 29/11/87 to 29/2/88].

Each item of the archive was allocated a serial number at the time of initial data collection in order to facilitate the classification and indexing procedures. Corresponding numbers were later entered on to small pieces of card which were placed together in a cloth bag. After the contents of the bag were suitably mixed around a sub-sample of eight numbers were drawn out. If the above hypothesis is borne out by an analysis of these randomly selected items, then we might more confidently claim that any Royal-related item is so structured. In other words, this represents another methodological manipulation which aims to minimize what is commonly held to be one of the major problems with qualitative work: namely, the inability to generalize one’s findings (see Chapter 4 for a brief discussion about the relative merits of quantitative and qualitative methods in social research).

This chapter looks at the two newspaper items corresponding to the first two randomly selected numbers.
Item No. 1: Stay At Home Fergie!

Our first randomly selected item came from The Sun newspaper dated 15/7/88. Entitled: 'Stay At Home Fergie!' it forms a double page spread of about 34 column inches (not including the space taken up by the title and photographs) located towards the centre of the paper (pages 20 and 21 – see Appendix B).

Since the announcement of her pregnancy, there had been a flood of newspaper items monitoring the pre-natal development of the Duchess of York. She had come under heavy criticism for continuing to take trips abroad, particularly when these were skiing holidays. The item to be analysed appeared after the Duchess announced that she planned to leave her baby, six weeks after its birth, in order to join her husband on a tour of Australia. In terms of our item type and subject matter categories (of Chapter 4) this item would classify as a feature belonging to the Evaluations of Royal Conduct category. Although the item exhibits several of the features which would seem to tie it to the Family Fortunes category, the main emphasis of the item is evaluative – what ought the Duchess do?

Perhaps the first thing to note is that the title is something other than an indication of the text's subject matter. Over and above being a simple statement, the title takes the grammatical form of a command. In other words, Fergie is being ordered to stay at home. Indeed, the title is supposed to represent an imperative from the primary author of the article, Deidre Sanders, to Sarah Ferguson (Fergie), the Duchess of York. However, at the same time as being an order, the words 'Stay At Home Fergie!' represent the voicing of an opinion. That is, Sanders is giving the Duchess her view about whether or not she should leave her new born baby. Hence, although Sanders' opinion could be seen as the preferred solution to the dilemma (by virtue of its headline status and her acclaimed authority as 'Britain's No. 1 advice columnist') it exists only as one view amongst others. Indeed, the existence of a debate is signified by the very structure of the article.
The basic outline of the debate is sketched in the paragraphs found in the top left corner of the article where, according to Western literary conventions, it ought to be read first.

* HEAVILY pregnant Fergie is facing the sort of dilemma that strikes fear into the heart of any married woman with a family — should she put her role as a wife or a mother first? In September, she is to tour Australia with the Duke of York when her baby is just six weeks old.
* After much soul searching, the duchess has decided the trip will prove too tiring for her new-born baby. Her controversial decision to leave her baby behind at such a crucial stage has brought criticism from medical experts.
* The Sun's agony aunt Deidre Sanders offers her advice and some famous mums say what they think about the duchess's dilemma.

It is through a relatively neutral voice that the argumentative scene is set, being neither that of Deidre Sanders nor any of the other protagonists identified in the article. This impartial voice spells out Fergie's 'dilemma'. Furthermore, it constructs this dilemma as being of the sort 'that strikes fear into the heart of any married woman with a family.' It constructs this question as being one for which there is no completely satisfactory answer. Of course, it is of the very nature of dilemmas that the two or more possible solutions are of roughly equal weighting. Semiotically, this is symbolized by the graphic representation of the scales found towards the bottom, right-hand corner of the item (more of which later). Nevertheless, while there is no once and for all correct answer, it is possible to judge that, in a particular instance, one option is preferable. Clearly the 'medical experts', who have supposedly criticized Fergie's decision to leave the child, felt that she had made the least satisfactory judgement.

The major part of the article consists of an argument upon the dilemma, attributed to Deidre Sanders, and then four other, more minor, arguments attributed to various 'famous mums'. Between them, Deidre Sanders and the four famous mums provide Fergie with a selection of competing alternatives for action. Very roughly, one agrees with Fergie that the child can be harmlessly left behind; two argue that she should stay at home with the child; and the remaining two urge the Duchess to reverse her decision.
and take the child along on the trip. The symmetry of there being two advocates for each of the three possible solutions to the problem maximizes the emphasis upon the fact of there being a multiplicity of positions upon the issue. In other words, just as with the interview extract analysed at the beginning of this chapter, the themes of inter- and multi-subjectivity, inherent within all debates and arguments, are again in evidence.

The multisubjective aspect is further emphasized by the fact that, at the end of it all, when everybody has been heard, the scales positioned in the bottom, right-hand corner of the page are in equilibrium. However, it is at this point that the multisubjective aspect of the debate comes most clearly into opposition with its intersubjective antithesis. The scales, whilst expressing the balance between the two opposing solutions to the 'wife versus mother' dilemma, simultaneously symbolize justice. Certainly the twin symbols of the sword and scales atop the Old Bailey are meant to signify the dilemmatic nature of the cases heard there. Nevertheless, the judicial system demands that verdicts are made; that the twelve independent minds come to some shared understanding. Similarly, the Sun readers are explicitly invited to play the part of jurors, to pass verdict upon the Duchess.

YOU THE JURY

WHAT do you think Fergie should do?
Is she right to leave her new-born baby behind when she goes off to Australia?
If you think she is right vote YES by ringing: 0898 555448
If you think she is wrong vote NO by ringing: 0898 555449

That is, while it invites the reader to consider the evidence, taking into account the statements made by various experts, it is left to us, the British public, to decide whether or not the Duchess is to be found guilty of wilful neglect.

Closely allied to this is another cultural/ideological dimension. Notice how
Sanders' argument is constructed in the form of a personal letter — beginning 'Dear Fergie' and signed off 'Yours Deidre' — as if sent from one friend to another. Just as with 'problem pages' in women's magazines, the use of first-name terms signals the personal nature of the matters at hand. Similarly, the title 'agony aunt' ushers forth the image of someone, within the family, to whom we can turn for advice upon our most intimate problems (see Winship, 1978). In other words, the dilemma about whether Fergie should put 'her role as a wife or mother first' is being constructed as something which concerns her private, personal life.

While the item makes it clear that this dilemma is not unique to the Duchess, it nevertheless fails to transcend the domain of the personal. That is, while it implies that women everywhere are experiencing similar dilemmas, it fails to recognize the political aspect of the whole issue.

The point is, that within our culture there exists a dualism between the realms of the personal and the political. For some time now feminists have been trying to dissolve this dichotomy. For the concept and experience of motherhood is fundamentally political. To begin with, the concept has a history, dating back to the Victorian period and the Industrial Revolution. Since then, the role of the mother has been mystified; constructed as something magical, inexplicable and, most importantly, something men can never be or 'enjoy' (Dally, 1982).

Since Victorian times we have seen the emergence of two more influential and complementary ideas. Firstly, it has become widely believed that to give birth is to fulfil a woman's role in life. Secondly, for several decades following the end of the Second World War, the idea that once a child has been born, the mother's constant and undivided attention is required to ensure its physical, emotional and psychological health enjoyed a period of wide acceptance (Rich, 1976). Significantly, all of these ideas emerged, and settled into the 'bedrock' of our common sense, at a time when, due to the rapid changes in working practices, there was increasing competition for jobs despite the removal, by law, of 'children' (another historically constructed concept) from the labour market. Of course, the usefulness for
men of these new ideas about a woman’s place; keeping them out of the competition for jobs and at home looking after the children, is obvious.

Our newspaper item constructs the Duchess as a woman and then represents her as being in the dilemmatic position of having to decide whether her first duty is to her child or husband. Such a construction has much the same symbolic and political import as the concept of motherhood examined above. For the item defines the woman exclusively in terms of her relationship to others. In other words, her life is, by definition, not her own. This appears to be an example of the 'traditionalist standpoint' that Coward (1984) argued typifies media representations of the Royal Family (see Chapter 2). Clearly then, the item is party to, and helps propagate a patriarchal cultural or ideological order.

There is a third set of cultural/ideological themes also in evidence within the text. A dialectic between the ordinary and the extraordinary appears to be an almost ubiquitous feature of press coverage of the Royal Family (Nairn, 1988). Our article is concerned with an extraordinary member of society experiencing a dilemma with which any other married mother can identify. It is this meeting of the ordinary and the extraordinary which we as readers find interesting. Roland Barthes argued in an essay called 'The Blue Blood Cruise' that:

if one is amused by a contradiction, it is because one supposes its terms to be very far apart. In other words, kings have a superhuman essence, and when they temporarily borrow certain forms of democratic life, it can only be through an incarnation which goes against nature, made possible by condescension alone. To flaunt the fact that kings are capable of prosaic actions is to recognize that this status is no more natural to them than angelism to common mortals, it is to acknowledge that the king is still king by divine right.

[That kings shave themselves]... was reported by our national press as an act of incredible singularity, as if in doing so kings consented to risk the whole of their royal status, making thereby, incidentally, a profession of faith in its indestructible nature. King Paul was wearing an open-neck shirt and short sleeves, Queen Frederika a print dress, that is to say one no longer unique but whose pattern can also be seen on the bodies of mere mortals. Formerly, kings dressed up as shepherds; nowadays, to wear... clothes from a cheap chain-store is for them the sign of dressing up. Yet another sign of democracy: to get up at six in the morning. All this gives us, antiphrastically, information on a certain ideal of daily life: to wear

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cuffs, to be shaved by a flunkey, to get up late. By renouncing these privileges, kings make them recede into the heaven of dream: their (very temporary) sacrifice determines and eternalizes the signs of daily bliss (Barthes, 1973/1988).

When we see a Prince in a Burton’s suit or a Duke riding a number ten bus we find something fascinating about this descent into the realm of the ordinary. Similarly, to imagine Fergie knee deep in dirty nappies or being woken at all hours of the night represents an instance of where the ordinary and extraordinary come together. In this way, the article constructs an image of equality built around the experience of motherhood; an equality between the otherwise inequitable. Indeed, in this instance the Duchess must stand behind the ordinary mums. For Fergie was, at the time of writing, only an expectant mother. The others, as if to underline this discrepancy, are pictured with their respective children close by their sides. Furthermore, these mothers are giving the Duchess advice—something usually done when the advisor considers herself to have a surplus of relevant knowledge compared to the other.

In summary, we can already see, without actually looking in any detail at the level of content, that there are several cultural/ideological themes and tensions which underpin and pattern the text. At the most obvious level we have the debate about whether a married mother’s primary duty lies with her husband or her children. Secondly, and less obviously, we have the inter-play between an understanding of the world as multi-versus inter-subjective. Finally, we have a complex of dimensions identified above as the personal versus the political, the extraordinary versus the ordinary and equality versus inequality.

We will now turn our attention from the form of the article to the level of content. As has already been identified, the article itself is concerned with a dilemma. It is first introduced by an anonymous and impartial speaker. This is then followed by a collection of divergent views upon the dilemma, each attributed to a named authority. For each protagonist there appears an argument for their particular position. In the next section we shall attempt to analyse the composition of these arguments, paying particular attention to the ways in which the cultural/ideological systems,
from which the protagonists draw, give shape to the various rhetorical productions.

**Speaking Naturally**

Deidre Sanders, in agreement with the view of the Duchess, argues that a six week old baby could not comfortably cope with a trip half way around the world. In so doing she acknowledges the existence of the dilemma as introduced (as we shall see, not all the protagonists do accept its validity). Having done this, Sanders' argument can be seen as consisting of three 'positive' reasons why the Duchess should not leave the baby behind, followed by the dismissal of another three reasons why it might be thought that she should abandon the child. Once again we can see how the construction of the argument is simultaneously sensitive to the existence of many competing views while advancing just one of the many alternatives as evidently superior.

**Three Good Reasons To Stay**

Perhaps the major reason Sanders gives for why the Duchess should stay at home with the child is that leaving her baby would prove a very painful experience.

You (Fergie) will find it devastating to be parted from your first baby after just six weeks

and later:

you will find the parting extremely upsetting and painful

The pain that the Duchess will suffer, Sanders claims, will come from a disruption to the bond which forms between a mother and her children - the 'loving development' of which a mother really enjoys. Already we can see how Sanders' argument is constructed around a potent concept of Nature. The mother-child bond is a natural bond, and the idea of violating or going against Nature has almost universally negative connotations (and increasingly the case in view of the West's mounting
concern with 'green' issues). For example, Sanders argues that mothers who take early leave of their babies will suffer the consequences.

I know that there are committed career women who go back to work after two weeks or even two days... [but]... even those career mums would admit that they return to work at the cost of being able to enjoy the loving development of a really close mothering bond with their baby.

The second reason that Sanders gives for why Fergie should stay is also tightly bound to the concept of nature. She claims that going on the trip would mean the premature cessation of breast-feeding, which, she goes on, would have several negative consequences.

[It would take away] a potential source of great comfort and pleasure to mother and baby. It also puts the baby at greater risk of illness since breastmilk gives the protection of your immunity. [And]... it will be far harder to regain your figure, which will be even more of a worry with an official tour looming.

All of these aspects are again grounded on the idea of 'going against nature' as unwise. Nature, here, can be understood as a wonderfully mysterious force for good (as opposed to the going against nature which is evil). The mother–child bond and the post-natal recovery of a woman's body are just two of Nature's miracles. Moreover, nature itself is commonly personified in terms of the Mother. We talk of 'Mother Nature'. The two concepts feed on each other connotatively. Nature becomes understood as a caring and sustaining force, while motherhood borrows the sense of being fundamental, eternal and mysterious.

Further, this discourse of nature can be seen to combine with a pragmatic discourse in the above extract. Staying at home with her baby would be both the most natural and the most sensible or reasonable thing for Fergie to do. It would promote her own psychological health as well as the physical condition of her child (of course these two discourses are intermeshed ie. the natural choice appears to be the most practical or sensible).
The third and final reason given for why Fergie should stay is that while some other women might be able part from their babies without too much trauma, Fergie is not the type who can.

I know that there are committed career women who go back to work after two weeks or even two days, but I don’t think you’re out of that mould.

And later in her argument again Sanders claims that Fergie 'hasn’t come across as... [the] sort of person' who, unlike some 'cool customers', can remain unemotional about their babies.

One of the most interesting features of this section of the argument is the use of both psychological and sociological theories of the self (This topic is taken up in much greater detail in Chapter 7). The dilemma that Fergie faces is whether to 'put her role of a wife or a mother first' (as described in the item's opening paragraphs). The use of the sociological concept of roles here is particularly suited to its construction. Borrowing, as it does, from a theatrical metaphor, the dilemma becomes represented as a choice of parts to be played. Being a versatile actress, Fergie can as easily opt for one costume and set of lines as another.

Interestingly, however, instead of arguing that Fergie should, in this instance, be a mother before a wife, Sanders shifts between a sociological and a psychological discourse. To be more precise, she adopts what might be called a 'humanistic' understanding of the self. This conception sees the individual as consisting of a single, private self surrounded by multiple public selves. Once again we might usefully think of a theatrical analogy. The humanistic theorist would want to argue that the actor/actress has a personality (a psychological concept) which s/he takes from one role to the next. However, although the humanistic school combines psychological and sociological concepts, it prioritizes the former. This is because while there might be an almost infinite number of roles that can be played, the performance must always be limited by the constant factor of the
individual's personality. Therefore, once again we are back to nature. For to say that Fergie isn't the type of woman who can painlessly and easily take leave of her baby is to say that for her such a course of action would be unnatural.

Three Not Good Reasons To Leave

Sanders' argument does not consist solely of a list of reasons why the Duchess should remain with her baby. She also anticipates and gives voice to a number of counter-arguments as might be made by an argumentative opponent. The first instance of this appears in the text under the sub-heading 'Sacrifice'. In reference to mothers leaving their new-born babies it reads:

Women who can't afford to lose their jobs have to make this sacrifice. But surely you don't?

Notice how Sanders is careful to construct this practice as the 'poor relation' to staying at home with the child. Going out to work is seen as a 'sacrifice' - something that is regrettable but sometimes necessary. However, Sanders is able to invoke the particularity of the Duchess' circumstances (ie. the fact of her being Royal and so having access to all kinds of resources) to dismiss this argument. There is simply no need for Fergie to make such a sacrifice. It is an instance whereby the particularity of being Royal supplements and facilitates the natural and universal experience of motherhood.

In contrast, the next two arguments offered for why Fergie might need to leave her baby are instances of where the particular demands of being Royal obstruct and frustrate this experience. The first instance sees Sanders engaging in a bit of speculation:

Perhaps you've been given the impression that it's your duty to go as a royal wife.
Her dismissal of this view involves the manipulation of yet another cultural/ideological dimension. She continues:

However, I'd have thought this is one time to dig in your heels. The Queen comes from a generation which accepted that children were handed over to nannies, so she may see little wrong in your leaving your baby so young. But I'd have thought that Princess Diana and Princess Anne would back you up.

Notice how Sanders attributes the blindness of the Queen to see how this duty goes against nature to a misguided traditionalism. The notion that a mother can just take leave of her baby without putting at risk the physical and psychological health of the child is constructed as old-fashioned and ignorant. Fergie is advised to 'dig in her heels' and enlist the support of other modern-minded mothers — the Princesses Anne and Diana — to resist the Queen. Aside from the interesting way in which these differing philosophies of child-rearing are constructed around generational rather than class distinctions (as if everyone's grandparents were nursed by nannies) there is something quite ironic about a call for modernity in which the ideas of maternal deprivation, as advocated by Bowlby (1951) figure centrally. For Sanders' 'modern mum' is someone who stays at home with her children; an image which in twentieth century Britain is more conventionally thought of as traditional (see, for example, the arguments of some of the 'famous mums' analysed below).

In constructing this argument, Sanders is drawing upon a particular version or representation of history. According to this version, history is a story of progress. The past is seen as a dark and barbaric time characterized by ignorance and poverty. The present, by contrast, is seen as more enlightened and civilised. It is interesting, and perhaps significant, that Sanders did not use an alternative, and opposing version of history in order to construct her argument. This representation sees the past as a golden age; 'the good old days'. It holds that years ago, although life might have been harder, it was somehow more wholesome. People were neighbourly and lived according to proper values. Today, by contrast, is a fast, throw-away and immoral world. Situated within this perspective, Sanders could have represented her argument as the traditional solution to
the dilemma (as it would be more conventionally understood) set against Fergie's mis-guided modernism.

Towards the end of her argument Sanders seems to imply that there might be a potentially good reason for her to go on the trip to Australia.

Only if this visit to Australia was essential to the well-being of the nation, could I understand that you might be expected to leave your baby at such an early stage.
But surely we can stump up another royal to wave your flag at the Australian Bicentennial - one who hasn’t got a tiny new baby?

However, as we can see from the extract, Sanders constructs this eventuality as an extreme case (Pomerantz, 1986). Only if the tour was essential to the well-being of the nation, she says, would her duty to the nation override her duty to her child. Even then, what Sanders claims to understand is the expectation of others that the Duchess should abandon the baby. As it is, however, this particular visit is not deemed essential; reduced and demystified to the mere waving of flags.

At the most superficial level Sanders’ argument is clear and simple. She claims that the Duchess should stay at home with her baby. However, at a deeper, fine grain level, we can see that, just as with the analysis of the item's structure, her argument is constructed out of a complex of what I have called cultural/ideological themes and dimensions. Furthermore, each of these themes and dimensions represent constructions which have the potential for argumentative engagement. For example, in arguing for a modern approach to child rearing, Sanders implicitly gives form to its traditionalist counterpart. Similarly, the equation of Fergie’s maternal and national duties allows for the prioritization of each over the other.

So too do the themes of Nature and the self, as constructed by Sanders, exist as particular versions amongst other alternatives. The view of nature as a system in balance and a force for good can be contrasted with, for instance, the Hobbesian version. Hobbes saw nature as a dark, dangerous
and chaotic force; something to be resisted and suppressed rather than allowed free rein.

It remains for us to examine the less elaborate arguments attributed to the four 'famous mums'. As the identified function of these arguments is the counter-balancing of the various stances that can be taken with respect to the dilemma, we will focus on their inter-connectedness rather than looking at them in isolation. We will examine them to see if and how they engage Sanders' argument at the cultural/ideological points so far identified (ie. by taking different positions on a dimension or reconstructing different versions of a theme). We will also see whether they introduce any novel dimensions/themes into the debate.

Taken together, these four arguments seem to be constructed around three of the dimensions so far encountered. The first involves that of tradition and modernity. One of the more obvious references to these themes comes in the account of Jane Warner. Unlike Sanders' construction of the modern mum, Warner presents herself as a modern mother in the more conventional sense. Working as a model, she has a busy schedule and demands that a baby fits in with rather than dominates her life. Warner argues that Fergie should take her baby abroad with her saying:

"I wouldn't hesitate to take my baby on holiday. I think it's important that a baby fits in with what you want to do, whether it's working, going out or taking a holiday."

Rather than defining herself exclusively in terms of others (ie. as a wife and/or mother) Warner emphasizes her own needs and desires. Indeed, the duties of motherhood are made subordinate to the desires of the woman/mother. This view contrasts sharply with that attributed to Angie Best, placed alongside on the page. For while Best also seems to recognize the conflict between a mother's duty to her children and her own needs, she prioritizes the former:
Angie, 35, says she spent a year stuck at home in California, after her son Calum, now seven, was born. She says: "I refused to do lots of things when he was tiny because I felt he needed me so much."

Best is the argumentative ally of Deidre Sanders, advising Fergie to remain at home with the child. However, this is a very tentative alliance because, while Best constructs mothering primarily as an altruistic rather than hedonistic activity, Sanders sees the interests of both mother and baby as simultaneously served by the same practices. More generally, it is interesting to note that, while Sanders, Warner and Ash all disagree about the most suitable solution to Fergie's dilemma, they all advocate a modern approach to mothering (even where, as we saw with Sanders' argument, it seems less appropriate). However, while they might here speak with a single voice, they seem, nevertheless, in dispute about what constitutes this 'modern way'.

The flexibility of these dimensions as rhetorical resources is again evident in the next case. As was mentioned earlier, the article relies for its interest upon a dialectic between the ordinary and the extraordinary. The Duchess is not just a mother, but a Royal mother. As a whole, the item divides Fergie's extraordinariness into two opposing categories of relations with the ordinary: (i) special privileges and (ii) extraordinary duties or responsibilities. Sanders invokes both sets of relations in order to furnish her argument. The Duchess, she claims, has no financial worries to distract her from the proper duties of motherhood. Also, her potentially competing Royal duties are such that they can be harmlessly shirked. In contrast, both the Warner and Ash accounts point only to the advantageous aspects of being Royal (having numerous qualified helpers to hand) yet in order to advance opposing stances on the Duchess' dilemma.

Warner (of taking a baby abroad): "it's much easier for the Royal Family to do it. They can take nannies with them and so on."

Ash (of leaving a child behind): "I'm sure Fergie's baby will be in good hands."
Finally, Angie Best, who claims that she:

"can't imagine any mother feeling she could leave a tiny baby in anyone else's care for whatever reason."

invokes the notion of extraordinary duties in order to account for Fergie's apparent deviance. Once again constructing an image of duties conflicting with desires, she claims:

"I bet it's the last thing she wants, but she is royalty and she probably has no choice."

The third and final dimension relates back to the central concept of nature. As noted above, the item constructs Nature as a delicate complex of inter-related processes all in equilibrium. Tampering with or going against nature is a recipe for disaster. There is the sense that a healthy and happy life is the inevitable result of 'a natural upbringing'. Conversely, sadness and sickness are the consequences of interruptions or disturbances to the natural course of events. It is with reference to this conceptual system that the meaning of one recurrent feature of the famous mums' accounts may be understood. Three out of the four famous mums include in their arguments what might be called a 'progress report' of their child's health and happiness. Warner's child 'has always been a little angel', Long's baby 'really loves' travelling around with her and Ash's daughter has grown up to be a 'very independent' five-and-a-half year old. In so doing, each report is offering concrete evidence that their modern way of looking after babies does not tread on the toes of Mother Nature.

In summary, we can say that our hypothesis seems to have been well supported by the analysis of our first newspaper item. Just as predicted, we have discovered a number of cultural/ideological dimensions, existing both at the levels of form and content, which appear to pattern the text. Between them they provide a vast potential for argumentation on a number of different topics including arguing itself. We have also seen how discourses can be constructed around key concepts. Each of these concepts
brings with it a collection of ideas, placing them centre-stage as the most relevant resources for the development of the argument.

Although it is much too early to make a decision about whether or not there can be said to be a 'discourse of monarchy', it seems likely that certain cultural/ideological dimensions and/or key concepts have a particular relevance for talk about the Royal Family. Conversely, other dimensions/concepts identified so far seem to have a much more general field of application. Nevertheless, the idea of 'Royal Talk' which sees it as trivial and empty appears, in the light of this analysis, to be transparently false.

However, it might be argued that we 'struck it lucky' with this, our first randomly selected item. Certainly it would rank as one of the more substantial items from the archive. Therefore, we shall immediately turn our attention to the second of our randomly selected newspaper items to see if the hypothesis is again supported.

**Item No. 2: What Beauts!**

This item appeared in the Daily Mirror on 1/02/88. Entitled 'What Beauts!', it formed a double-page spread (pages 14 and 15) consisting of three large photographs and 9.5 column inches of text (see Appendix B). The article was one of a whole collection of reports about the Prince and Princess of Wales' tour to Australia for the celebration of its bicentennial. It was classified as being a conventional news item belonging to the subject matter category Unofficial Outings (see Chapter 4).

The basic storyline tells of the Princess Diana's meeting with the winning team of lifeguards following a swimming and surfing competition. Diana was there to watch the event and to present the prizes. However, while mentioning these details, the article has something quite apart as its central concern. Referring to a scene from one of the photographs in which Diana is pictured standing next to two bare-chested lifeguards, the
item attempts to represent the occasion as one charged with sexual energy. More specifically, it could be said that the preferred reading of the article constructs Diana as a sexual being.

All of the most salient pieces of information combine to create this reading. The largest of the three photographs depicts the Princess peering down towards the genital region of one of the men. The accompanying caption describes the Princess as 'EYEING UP' the lifeguards (emphasis in original). Consequently, the title 'What Beauts!' becomes readable as the sentiments of the Princess in reference to the two guards. Indeed the title functions as a picture comic 'thought balloon', literally telling us what is (or was) on the Princess's mind. Furthermore, the thought 'what beauts!' is ambiguous. On the one hand, it might refer to the two lifeguards (pictured next to her) while, on the other, it might refer to the genitals of the nearest guard (at which she appears to be gazing).

This ambiguity or double entendre of the title has a visual counterpart—part in one of the photographs of the item. Just as the word 'beauts' has two alternative referents, so too has the object of Diana's gaze. For upon closer examination the photograph of the Princess and the two lifeguards reveals there to be a winner's medal in the hand of the nearest guard. However, while, as the French term suggests, there are two meanings or readings available, they are not equally so. For example, in the caption which accompanies the photograph, no mention is made of the winner's medal. Instead, it seems to deliberately favour, or prefer, a reading with a more basic sexual connotation. Furthermore, if we read the article carefully, we discover that the term 'beaut' was used, not by the Princess to describe the lifeguards, but the other way around.

EYEING UP — A pair of prize-winning beach lifeguards get an admiring glance from the delighted royal fan they called "a real beaut" (emphasis mine).

In other words, the item can be seen to have put what were the words of the lifeguards into the mouth of the Princess.
In Chapter 3, when the topic of preferred readings (Hall, 1980) was discussed, we illustrated how the recoverability of alternative, subordinated readings can be more or less easily accomplished depending upon the particular construction of the discourse. What is interesting about this second item is that a subordinated reading is made clear for all to see. The reader, quite literally, need only look to the small print in order to find an alternative reading to that preferred by the text. For it is mainly through the monopolization of the more 'attention grabbing' aspects of the item (ie. title and subtitles, captions and photographs) that the preference is established. However, if we conclude that the reader is being given a full opportunity to re-construct the story-line of the article - to read a non-sexual meaning into Diana's gaze and to discredit her as the author of the words 'real beaut(s)' - then what is the article trying to accomplish other than an abortive or poor attempt at deception?

I would argue that this ambiguity is a central feature of the item's construction as a joke. In his book on humour, Mulkay (1988) claims that in contrast to the 'serious realm' where:

we normally employ a unitary mode of discourse which takes for granted the existence of one real world, and within which ambiguity, inconsistency, contradiction, and interpretative diversity are potential problems... humour depends on the active creation and display of interpretative multiplicity. When people engage in humour... they temporarily inhabit, not a single coherent world, but a world in which whatever is said and done necessarily has more than one meaning.

Mulkay also quotes Paulos (1980) who argues that:

a necessary ingredient of humour is that two (or more) incongruous ways of viewing something (a person, a sentence, a situation) be juxtaposed.

Our second newspaper item operates as a joke in just this manner. It
offers two incongruous ways of viewing Princess Diana. On the one hand, she is an overt an unrestrained sexual being. She eyes men up and down, and publically declares them 'real beauts!'. On the other hand, we have Diana as a model of moral propriety (see below). In the terms of one popular genre of joke, Diana is constructed as both the actress and the bishop. However, as Raskin (1985a and b) argues, the two or more incongruous views or 'scripts' are not equivalent. The ambiguity employed in humour, he claims, is between the real and unreal; the normal and the abnormal or between the actual and the non-actual. In our case, this is to say that a real/normal/actual Princess does not stare at men's genitals in public. The humour of the item derives from juxtaposing this normal (etc.) representation of the Princess with another, abnormal image which utterly contradicts it. Furthermore, this ordering of real and unreal representations is underpinned by the item's 'preference structure' as outlined above.

The notion of the Royal Family as moral exemplaries forms part of a complex of inter-related themes, something of which we have already encountered. The ordinary/extraordinary dialectic, as identified in the analysis of item No. 1, is once more in evidence. The extraordinary element is, as ever, provided by the Royal factor. The ordinary antithesis is provided both by the construction of the Princess as a sexual being, and the image presented, in particular by the photograph positioned on the far right of the item (see Appendix B), which portrays her as 'barefoot' and 'windswept' (ie. appearing no more Royal than you or I). This ordinary/extraordinary dialectic is also in evidence within the subtitle of the article. 'You make my day, says HRH the bonzer sheila' juxtaposes Diana's full, formal title (Her Royal Highness) with an Australian colloquial term ('bonzer sheila') which reduces her to the order of being just another good-looking woman.

It might be argued that the ordinary/extraordinary dialectic would be inoperative in this instance. For while we might find it strange to see a Royal using public transport or sporting garments purchased from a chain store, here there appears to be good reason for our incredulity. The Royals are supposed to be fabulously rich, and as such, can afford to ride
in luxurious cars and wear designer clothes. However, we all know that, as a human being, Diana will most likely experience sexual feelings and emotions.

The problem with this objection is that the dialectic does not always operate upon a rational plane. Take, for example, the curious results of a survey conducted by 'Slimming Magazine', reported in the Daily Mirror (30/12/87). The small article called 'Diana Stuns 'Em!' reported:

Princess Diana is still the world's most stunning woman – but Dallas star Victoria Principal has the best body, legs, bottom and face according to Britain's fatties.

Having won the section prizes for best body, face, bottom and legs, Ms. Principal must have been justifiably confident of carrying off the overall title. It could be the case that although she seems to possess a startlingly beautiful collection of physical attributes, Victoria somehow fails to match the exquisite mixture or complementation of Diana's bits and bobs. In other words, despite having a wonderful pair of legs and a perfect bottom there is something less than satisfactory about their combination. However, the more likely explanation is that Britain's slimmers did not like to think of the Princess in terms of more or less sexy anatomical elements. Whilst it might be fine to divide Ms. Principal up into face, breasts and bottom, our Royals must remain as dignified totalities.

However, we must see this reluctance to 'imagine' the Royals as sexual beings as a product of only half of the dialectic. The other half manifests itself in items which take an obvious interest in the sex lives of the Royal Family. The sheer volume of material which together formed the Royal Romances category of Chapter 4 stands as testimony to this fact.

There is a third element, besides those of ordinariness and
extraordinariness, which completes the aforementioned complex. It emerges in the middle section of the article which sees Prince Charles also being constructed as a sexual being.

Prince Charles got his own chance to admire some prominent figures when he went to a fashion show. He watched a parade of models — and was confronted by one in a see-through top.

However, unlike his wife, Charles is said to have resisted the temptation to lower his gaze. The item continues:

Even though model Kirat's attractions were transparently obvious, the prince calmly remembered his father's advice: Look 'em right in the eyes. And staring straight ahead, Charles told Indian-born Kirat: "You're wearing a beautiful, air-conditioned dress."

This speculative account of the prince's psychology stands somewhat at variance with a subsequent part of the text. It reads:

Afterwards Kirat was asked whether the prince had noticed what was underneath her top. "Yes, of course," she replied. "He's a man. But he's a married man and he's a gentleman."

By saying that Charles is 'a man', Kirat is asserting the inevitability of his appreciating her beautiful body. As much is only natural. The addition of the qualifier: 'But, he's a married man and a gentleman' is to assert that Charles exhibited a degree of restraint befitting someone who is both married (to another) and well-mannered (a gentleman). So while accounts might vary as to whether or not Charles noticed Kirat's breasts, they agree that he controlled his basic instincts and, in so doing, behaved respectfully.

We can see how Prince Charles is being constructed as something of a moral exemplar. Indeed, many of the items which formed the Evaluations of Royal Conduct subject matter category concerned themselves with how
the Royals performed a duty to provide ordinary people with a model of how to live a good and virtuous life. Now we can see how the idea that Diana was looking at the lifeguard's medal (required as a precondition for the joke of the item to work) exists as part of this moral imperative placed upon the Royal Family. (Chapter 7 takes up these themes and issues in much more detail).

As a final point, it is interesting to note that by exhibiting the moral qualities of decency and tact, as well as in appearing somewhat eccentric, Charles is constructed as behaving in a way that is characteristically British. Indeed, the theme of nationalism seems to surface at several points throughout the article. It emerges in a series of contrasts made between stereotypical ideas about British and Australian culture. For example, while Charles shows a (stereo)typically British concern for manners, the Australian men are represented as being much less cultured; more at liberty to express their basic, animal instincts (in the Daily Express report of the same event it mentions that the lifeguards had been told to put their vests on for the meeting with the Princess. 'We weren't having any of that' they were supposed to have replied 'We want to show off our tans and our muscles'). Other contrasts appear as the juxtaposition of Australian and British elements. For example, the subtitle which features the dual characterisation of Diana as 'HRH' and a 'bonzer sheila', and the description of Prince Charles with a can of Foster's lager in his hand (see Appendix B). It is probably through the use of such devices that an impression of international harmony may be created.

Compared to our first randomly selected item, this Daily Mirror piece is a light-hearted affair. It is a happy tale of Charles and Diana on tour in Australia. The language of the article is bright and cheerful, containing many playful phrases and puns. For example:

PRINCESS Diana muscled in on a bunch of Aussie hunks yesterday. She eyed them up and down. And, with a grin as wide as Sydney harbour bridge, she told them they'd made her day.
Nevertheless, just as with the first item, we can see the text as patterned by a similar inter-play of cultural/ideological themes.

However, even when randomly selected, a sub-sample of only two items is, of course, insufficient to enable generalizations to be confidently made. But it is equally obvious that, due to the depth of analysis required, such a confidence could not reasonably be gained given the scope of the present study. Consequently, this line of research will give way in the following chapters to analyses which pose much more specific questions. However, in so doing, these chapters will continue to test the general hypothesis as examined above.
In the previous chapter I demonstrated how two Royal related newspaper items were structured by certain cultural/ideological themes. The importance of such themes is that they represent the seeds from which Royal related discourses grow. Indeed, following this metaphor, one could argue that there could be no such blooms without these seeds. I also suggested that within the garden of Royal related discourses certain blooms were more common than others. Specifically, I argued that the ordinary/extraordinary dialectic functions as one of the more common cultural/ideological tensions underlying and giving form to Royal—related newspaper items. Indeed, Williamson (1986) goes so far as to say that the sense of Royalty’s being simultaneously like us and not like us holds ‘the key to the great significance and popularity of the institution’. Perhaps the most fascinating aspect of this contradiction is its resilience. No matter how many times the public see or read of the Royals’ engaging in ordinary, everyday pursuits, the creative tension existing between these two contrary themes remains as potent as ever.

For example, The Sun (15/4/88) printed an article the title of which declared ‘I Buy My Boys’ Tea At Sainsbury’s, Says Di’. The article told of how Princess Diana ‘pops into the shop like any other busy young mum’. However, the notion of Diana shopping as if she was just an ordinary mother, clearly orientates to the sense of her not being ordinary. As Nairn (1988) concludes:

"The inner meaning of the belief that ‘They’re just like us’ (‘ordinary beings’, ‘got their own problems’, etc.) is the certainty that they are not, and cannot conceivably be just like us."

Because of this tension the Royal Family remain a constant source of mystery and interest. Furthermore, it is an interest to which the popular press, if not the entire news media, continually cater and, in so doing, reproduce. In other words, the ordinary/extraordinary dialectic functions as
a generator of discourse, for it prompts thought and argument about the Royal Family.

Perhaps at the very centre of the mystery is a set of debates about what the Royals are 'really' like as people. Of these Nairn comments:

Servicing this obsessive interest is the main task of the Royal book business and Fleet Street's pack of Court Correspondents. Since Crawfie* led the way, there has been no stopping the cumulative process: one 'revelation' after another, each biography or news item claiming to snuggle closer to the real truth than its unduly respectful predecessors (1988, pg. 43).

[* Marion Crawford - Governess to the young Princesses Elizabeth and Margaret who, in 1950, shocked and angered the Palace by publishing The Little Princesses: a biography of the two girls' childhood years. 'Crawfie' was, by most accounts, completely ostracized by the Royal Family from the time of publication right up until her death in February 1988].

The quantitative analysis of Chapter 4 reveals that, while Nairn's view might be slightly overstated, such 'revelations' are a regular feature of popular press representations of monarchy/Royal Family. As a category, Character Portraits accounted for almost exactly 5% of all Royal items found within the three month sample period. Put another way, on average, a new item claiming to reveal what one or another of the Royal Family was really like appeared every two days.

In this chapter I will be taking a closer look at the category Character Portraits. However, we are faced with an unmanageably large corpus of data about which an inordinate number of interesting questions can be asked and issues raised. For example, Nairn (1988) argues that this obsession with the personalities of the Royals functions to distract public attention away from more serious issues surrounding the institution of the monarchy. He says:

This [obsession] is a fundament of the modern Royal ideology: the institution is almost eclipsed from popular view by the (imagined) personal nature of the monarch, her dependents, and her ancestors (pg. 43).
This represents what Williamson (1986) would call the 'consuming of a passion'; the channelling and reworking of potentially radical energies into the servicing of the very social structures which they might otherwise overturn.

However, instead of taking this more general level of ideological operation as my focus, Chapter 6 will report upon a fine-grain analysis of some of the Portraits themselves, looking, as it were, at what is present rather than absent. Just as with the analyses of Chapter 5 I will be paying attention to how different cultural/ideological themes and discourses give form to the texts. However, this time my emphasis will be not on how such seeds determine people's talk or writing. Instead, I shall illustrate the other side of the coin; the image of people as gardeners, as the sowers of seeds.

Because this work involves a highly detailed analysis, I have limited the following study to popular press representations of just one of the Royal Family. It is worth repeating the point that I am not concerned with attempting to discover the 'truth' about their character. Rather, I am interested in looking at the range and applications of what might be called discursive constructions of self.

While psychologists may have shown a distinct lack of interest in discovering the nature of Royal selves (except for where they have been recruited by the mass media to do so), the discipline has an established history of work on the nature of the self in general. Indeed, over the course of several decades a number of different theories have emerged and gained popular currency (as an aside issue it is interesting to look at how psychological theory and common sense have exchanged notions of the self in a manner similar to that discussed briefly in Chapter 3 - see section on Gramsci and also Potter, Stringer and Wetherell, 1984). In the following section I will provide a brief outline of the three most influential theories to date.
Three Theories of the Self

1. Trait theory — the self consists of a personality, made up of various traits which are a product of one's upbringing and/or biological endowment. As Potter and Wetherell (1987) point out, people, according to this view, are their dispositions, the sum of their 'traits. People are 'caring', 'shrewd', 'jolly' etc. Furthermore, any behaviour must, it is thought, derive from some aspect of this constitution. Hence, via the use of certain scales or questionnaires a personality may be quantified, represented schematically and, in theory, used to predict a given person's behaviour (see, for example, Allport, 1937; Eysenck, 1953; Cattell, 1979). One of the main problems with this model is that when tested empirically, the idea of human behaviour as being singularly trait driven begins to look doubtful. That is, in different situations or contexts the same person (with, of course, the same personality) may not behave consistently. One explanation for this inconsistency is that human behaviour is also driven or determined by the social context in which it is situated (see Mischel, 1968). This is an idea taken up by the next theory.

2. Role theory — as the name suggests, bases itself upon a theatrical image or metaphor (Goffman, 1959). Instead of viewing people as single, consistent personalities, role theorists argue that they are made up of a collection of discrete social roles. So, rather than simply being themselves, people are viewed as performers who can present themselves in a variety of different ways. These roles can be of many varieties, including familial (eg. sons, mothers, brothers), occupational (eg. managers, labourers, unemployed) and religious (eg. Jewish, Catholic, atheist). Each social role carries with it a set of normative behaviours which the individual learns (socialization) and then plays out. For example, upon arriving home from school, a girl can change, both literally and metaphorically, out of her school uniform and into the clothes and ways appropriate to being a daughter and sister. It is a theory which allows for both Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde to happily coexist as parts of the same individual.

3. Humanistic theory — while trait theory seemed to ignore social factors, role theory seemed to make them all-important. Instead of
being a product of one's personality traits an individual becomes a product of their social circumstances. A person is no more than the sum total of the parts they play. Simply place into the classroom, on to the rugby field or pew, and the appropriate behaviour is dutifully produced. Theorists of the humanistic or 'romantic' school, such as Rogers, Maslow and Perls, argued for an image of the person which restored some of the dignity and autonomy stripped away by role theory (hence the label 'romantic' — see Rogers, 1961; Maslow, 1968; Perls, 1971). Although, they claimed, a person has a set of social selves these are superficial to an essential and integrated self which stands back from and monitors the social selves at play. To return to the theatrical metaphor, the humanists maintain that there is more to the actor/actress than the parts they perform. For beneath these masks or public selves there resides an enduring private and authentic self.

Although, as we can see, these three theories exhibit several basic points of distinction, they nevertheless share a certain, fundamental presupposition.

The key assumptions behind all the traditional models is that the self is an entity and like any other entity or natural physical object, it can be described definitively, once and for all (Potter and Wetherell, 1987 pp. 95).

In other words, all of the above traditional perspectives claim to model themselves on something which exists 'out there' in the real world, independent of all theory. As such, these theories are in competition, seeking to exclude each other. However, in the following analysis, it is not my intention to champion any one of the above perspectives. Instead, I intend to adopt what has been called a 'social constructionist' position on the issue, understanding these competing theories as discursive resources rather than windows on to some extra-discursive reality. This relatively new way of conceiving of the self has, according to Potter and Wetherell (1987), been most clearly articulated by Kenneth Gergen (see Gergen, 1985 and also Harré, 1983; Henriques et al, 1984; Shotter, 1984; Shotter and Gergen, 1989 for other more recent challenges to traditional understandings of the self or subject).
The main object of the critical movement has been to displace attention from the self—as-entity and focus it on the methods of constructing the self. That is, the question becomes not what is the true nature of the self, but how is the self talked about, how is it theorized in discourse?.. It is suggested that methods of making sense are the key to any kind of explanation of the self, as people’s sense of themselves is in fact a conglomerate of these methods, produced through talk and theorizing. There is not 'one' self waiting to be discovered or uncovered but a multitude of selves found in the different kinds of linguistic practices now, in the past, historically and cross-culturally. 'Considered from this point of view', claims Harre, 'to be a self is not to be a certain kind of being but to be in possession of a certain kind of theory' (Potter and Wetherell, 1987, pg. 102).

Hence, in just the same way as there are available a multiplicity of ways of talking about Nature or History (see Chapter 5) so it is with the Self. Considered as resources, these discourses of self present the speaker with a range of different inflexions, each of which might be more or less useful in a given discursive/ rhetorical context. That is, speakers may construct versions of selfhood 'tailored' to suit their rhetorical purposes. This, Potter and Wetherell (1987) argue, is an important area for discourse analysts to investigate.

Not only do we need to be able to describe the content of representations of people in different contexts or the sheer range of self-images available in ordinary talk, but we also need to ask how these images are used and to what end, and thus what they achieve for the speaker immediately, interpersonally, and then in terms of wider social implications (pg. 110).

It is just this sort of analysis which will be undertaken below. It will look at various popular press representations of Prince Charles, while paying special attention to how the different constructions serve particular rhetorical, political and ideological functions.

The Data

The database for this analysis consists of 23 newspaper items all of which either already were or would have been classified as belonging to the category Character Portraits. In fact, 8 of these items came from the three month sample period analysed in Chapter 4. The remaining 15 items date
from newspapers published much later in 1988. For on 14th. November that year Prince Charles celebrated his fortieth birthday. This event was both anticipated and eventually greeted by a great deal of press interest – of which the above 15 items were the most substantial. The nature and number of these items provided a good opportunity to study and compare multiple representations of a single individual. Those items which form the main focus of the following analysis can be found complete in Appendix B.

Charles At Forty: – accounting for variations in identity constructions

It is commonly believed that when a person turns forty they have reached a symbolic milestone, namely, the mid-point of their life. It is often, therefore, a time when people are prompted into taking a fresh 'look' at themselves, to see what they have achieved and possibly to reassess their goals. In the case of Prince Charles, however, this usually private process was performed on his behalf, so to speak, in front of the reading eyes of millions.

In producing these miniature biographies the newspapers frequently employed the discourses of traits and roles as outlined above. Indeed, most, if not all of the sample items described Charles in terms of various personality traits. Across the sample he was, amongst other things, described as caring, intelligent, charming, bullish, serious, witty as well as 'a tortured, self doubting almost monkish introvert'. Oblivious perhaps of the theoretical contradictions, many of the items also described Charles in terms of social roles. Of these, only one described him in terms of familial roles – a 'hopeless husband' and a 'doting dad' (News of the World Magazine, 17/7/88). The Daily Mail (14/11/88) likened the position of being Prince of Wales to an occupational role, calling it 'a skull–crushingly boring job' (my emphasis). Others saw the occupational role of the Prince of Wales as virtually empty. For example, Anthony Holden remarked in the Sunday Times (13/11/88) serialization of his biography 'Charles':

The only explicit purpose of his life, put at its bleakest, is to wait for his parent to die.
Consequently, many items spoke in general terms about the Prince 'searching' for a role in life. Moreover, they saw Charles as formed, in part at least, by his struggle to find something suitable to do while he waits to become King. However, while the items seem to agree that Charles' character has been fundamentally shaped by his being born into the 'guilded cage' of the Royal Family, they vary considerably in their representations of the resulting identity.

It is important to note that these discrepancies or contradictions are not merely a product of the combination of different self discourses. For example, if we were to restrict our attention to an analysis of where constructions were produced using personality traits, we would still find divergence and contradiction. For while, according to trait theory, a person consists of a collection of traits, it is not expected that a person should embody contradictory elements. This is evident from the construction of many personality inventories where, for example, extraversion and introversion, happy and sad, modest and vain etc. all exist as bipolar dimensions. According to the theory, therefore, a person cannot be both an extravert and an introvert at the same time. However, if we gather together all of the traits used to describe Charles we find that such contradictory images do in fact appear.

Just as when considering attitude expressions in Chapter 5 we can see self constructions as things sensitively produced within a given social and rhetorical context. Given that they too are 'tailor-made' to function in these contexts, and also that these contexts change, we must expect to find variations between different constructions of the same individual. For example, we can imagine how people present themselves differently in the context of a business meeting compared to when they are at home with their children (see Goffman, 1959). Later in this chapter I will take up this theme and look specifically at how variations in self constructions can be explained in terms of certain contextual features.

However, this suspension of realist assumptions (ie. the self as entity) is an uncommon move. In drawing upon Pollner's ideas about 'mundane reasoning' (Pollner, 1974, 1975) in order to differentiate between
humourous and 'serious' discourse, Mulkay (1988) makes the following point:

In our reasoning about the world, we take for granted that we are dealing with objective phenomena which exist independently of our actions and discourse and which are experienced in much the same way by other human beings. Each actor supposes that he inhabits a real social world, where people act in predictable ways for reasons which are commonly understood. As mundane reasoners and speakers, we work on the assumption that there is but one reality, which is, under normal circumstances, as accessible to other people as it is to ourselves. Divergent accounts of particular parts of the everyday world are, of course, regularly produced. But such discrepancies are treated as unwelcome and, usually, as indicating that some error has been made. Participants are very seldom willing to give equal credence to contradictory accounts. Rather, they choose those accounts which they take to be the most reliable and to represent most accurately the real state of affairs. Although different speakers regularly advance incompatible claims, and although particular individuals' claims vary considerably from one occasion to another, each speaker talks on behalf of a world which is taken to exist outside his speech and to be available to others if they approach it in the proper manner (pgs. 22 - 23).

In other words, Mulkay is arguing that ordinary, everyday talk is based upon an understanding of the world as inter-subjective. However, as was demonstrated in the last chapter, people do not always conceive of the world in this way. At other times it can be imagined as a multi-subjective world of opinions.

As we shall soon see, the newspapers have been littered with competing versions about what Prince Charles is really like. These can, of course, be said to be views or opinions upon the Prince. Nevertheless, in terms of common sense understandings, the question of what Charles is really like cannot be said to be a genuine 'divergent' problem. This is because a person's character or personality is more usually thought of as an analogue of their physical being (ie. again as if it was an entity or physical object). Therefore, the debate about what a person is really like is akin to one about the unseen contents of a sealed box. There may be different opinions as to what the box contains, but everybody knows that the debate would cease, once and for all, if the box was opened so that they could look inside. The debate thrives in this case because, according to the same logic, Prince Charles remains like a closed box (although, as we shall see,
Consequently, the presence of a multiplicity of different constructions of Charles' identity does not constitute a fundamental challenge to our common sense understanding of the world. The reader does not assume that all the competing versions could be equally 'true' or valid. Instead, in the words of Mulkay himself, we each sustain a sense of referring to a 'unitary realm that lies behind the interpretative flux and multiplicity of the social world in which we live'. We do this, he continues, by selecting from the 'changing welter of observation and interpretation which surrounds us' and by explaining away competing accounts as being others' errors. In the following section I will examine two ways in which this accounting work is done.

Device No. 1 – Reality and Appearances

So a debate about what someone is really like is a competition between different candidate versions where the object of the competition is to discover the single, definitive solution to an interpretative problem. One of the most straightforward ways in which a participant in such a debate might go about this is to simply assert the correctness of her/his version. However, such a rhetorical ploy risks being ineffective because the proposed solution merely sits on the same shelf, so to speak, as the other candidates. A more effective ploy would be an argument which advances a candidate solution at the same time as downgrading the status of competing versions.

Just such a move can be accomplished through the use of what Potter (1987) calls a 'reality–appearance device' (R/A device). As the name suggests, this device consists of a distinction between how things (people, objects etc.) are and how they appear to be. Furthermore, because we are ultimately interested in the 'truth' (eg. who Prince Charles really is), that which is deemed to describe only what appears to be the case gets undermined or downgraded. A crucial feature of the device, Potter argues,
is the way it accepts rather than refutes the obviousness of a competing version, yet at the same time distinguishes it from that which is in fact true. In so doing, the R/A device can be used to attack even the most established and taken for granted understandings.

One of the most interesting features of the various self discourses outlined above, is how that which was called the 'humanistic' model seems 'ready made', as it were, to function as a reality – appearance device. As we might recall, this school sees the person as having a real, essential self surrounded by multiple layers or veneers of superficial public selves. Hence, instead of challenging a competing construction of Charles by merely offering an alternative portrait, it can be undermined by claiming that it describes only a superficial, social self rather than the genuine, underlying, personal self. In the following analysis we will be able to see how this reality—appearance device, inherent within the humanistic model of the self, functions to produce the kind of revelations referred to by Nairn.

The first item to be considered appeared in the Daily Mail on 22/10/88 (see Appendix B). Entitled 'The real Prince behind the mask' this item draws most heavily upon the humanistic discourse of self. The title itself and the accompanying illustration as well as the item's text all share the theatrical and spatial themes of that discourse. All three components work together to produce two versions of the Prince but where one is clearly privileged or prioritized as being the real or true Charles. In other words, the discourse functions by manipulating the relative statuses of two competing identity constructions.

As is characteristic of the humanistic school of thought, the real Charles is represented as lying behind or underneath the superficial, inauthentic, public selves. The illustration reinforces this construction by showing Charles holding a face mask away from his real face. Significantly, the two faces or selves, whilst obviously depicting the same individual, nevertheless portray him quite differently. The face mask has Charles with a furrowed brow and an anxious expression (see Appendix B) while the face behind the mask shows him looking younger and happier. These images intermesh with the text of the item. Paragraphs 5 and 6 read:
For Prince Charles the crucial crossing from youthful to middle age arrives at a time when the public, his future subjects, are still uncertain of just who it is who lives within that royal skin. Oh, they like him enormously. He is perceived as caring, earnest, a lover of nature, anxious about the disadvantaged and a good father.

Apart from the interesting way in which the text seems to make royalness itself something extraneous to the real Charles, we can see how the idea of him as concerned about the environment and the underprivileged is made an aspect of public perception. Perception links into the same conceptual framework as appearances in the sense that, just as with a mirage, something need not be how it seems. Indeed, the item claims, the British public, having access only to the superficial displays performed by the Prince, do not know the real man. As paragraph 8 explains:

Very few outside of the Prince's circle of intimates realize that inside the philosophical figure who likes communing with nature... is a decision maker as highly motivated by an inner drive to succeed as a leader as any company chairman anxious to generate profits.

Here we have our first example of a writer claiming to have special access to the sealed box of Charles' personality. Presenting himself as, presumably, one of the 'very few' who are party to this hidden knowledge about the Prince (there is no evidence to suggest that Levy is passing himself off as one of the Prince's 'circle of intimates') Levy simultaneously 'credentializes' his own version whilst accounting for the erroneousness of competing representations.

The construction of the real Charles as a keen and ambitious businessman links up neatly with the item's illustration. For there we see the man behind the mask, showing none of the anxieties evident upon his public face, smiling confidently and holding a portable telephone; symbol of the successful businessperson.

The equation of the real with what is innermost and private reappears later in the item. Speculating as to why the successes of the Princes' Youth Business Trust are so little known about, paragraph 25 asks:
could it be the personality of the Prince himself? Being bullish and businesslike in private gets results, but his public persona remains that of a man who talks to plants and has an interest (officially denied) in ouija boards.

We can see in the above analysis how the reality–appearance device operative within the humanistic model of the self is used to undermine one version of the Prince and to replace it with another. In other words, it is a very useful rhetorical device for breaking the stalemate that can exist between different competing and contradictory accounts. It is broken and the contradiction 'resolved' by throwing the competing versions out of equilibrium. One is made a mere husk to another; subordinate, superficial and discardable. However, as we shall soon see, the flexibility of the R/A device means that any given version may be cast as either the husk or the seed.

Take, for example, an item which appeared in the Daily Mirror (16/11/88) two days after the Prince's fortieth birthday (see Appendix B). Entitled 'Action Man' (and subtitled 'A King in Waiting'), the text takes the form of a biographical narrative which focuses specifically on the development of Charles' identity. The item begins as follows:

To see Prince Charles during the Seventies, as he galloped around polo fields or charmed adoring females on his walk-about, you could be forgiven for thinking: This man has been blessed with so much.

Immediately we can see that this paragraph is constructing an appearance; a product of public perception. Indeed the visual theme is very prominent within the text. Charles, it says, looked as if he was a man who had everything. However, the format 'To see... X you would be forgiven for thinking... Y' orientates the reader to the idea of the notion Y being mistaken or false. Notice, as mentioned earlier, how the R/A device attends to the obviousness of the impression Y. For it seems to be supported or confirmed by certain empirical evidence (ie. X). Indeed, it is this obviousness which makes the entertaining of the mistaken notion Y 'forgivable'.

In re-presenting this highly positive image of Charles as mere appearance,
the item makes space for the construction of a different reality. Furthermore, and in line with the humanistic model, it is an identity which is known only to the Prince himself, his close friends and, once again, the author of the item. The construction of this other, genuine identity begins in the fifth paragraph:

There had always been a strong vein of self-doubt in the Prince's make up. Part of the problem stemmed from being unfairly compared to his dashing, no-nonsense, macho father. Charles, questioning and intellectual by nature, now began to reshape himself into an action man in order to convince himself and the watching world that the son of Philip was no wimp.

Notice how the qualities of self-doubt, inquisitiveness and intelligence are represented as traits. The terms 'make up' and 'nature' give a sense of Charles being constituted out of these elements. He is them. Consequently, we can read the alleged reshaping exercise as a mission impossible. For within this perspective, it is simply not in Charles to be such a dynamic figure. Nevertheless, we are told, Charles threw himself into a host of macho activities 'with an almost neurotic fervour'. He parachuted, dived under icebergs, and rode fast horses 'until gradually he began to believe he was Action Man himself'.

However, here Charles is clearly being represented as someone who has ceased to know his own real self. To begin with, the use of the psychological term 'neurotic' signifies the unsoundness of the Prince's mental condition. Secondly, the text refers to his macho behaviour as his 'new role', a term which within the humanist framework signifies a mere facade to the real person. Thirdly, we are told that despite some early success in his efforts to convince himself and the watching world of his machismo

- the side that loved opera and paintings, the side that was moved by poverty and injustice

would not remain repressed. The spots on the Royal leopard began to show through the grease-paint. Once again it is the 'close friends' - those with access to the private, authentic Charles - who saw the manifestations of his basic, unchangeable nature.
Close friends began to remark on his loneliness, and the fact that he spent many nights alone in front of the TV with a tray on his knee... Action Man was tired of playing games.

Furthermore, the rhetorical strength of the account derives from the impression that the author of the article has direct access to these close friends. That is, it comes from a kind of second order proximity to the Prince; a friend once removed.

[As an interesting aside, one can see that this alleged process of giving up these games and rediscovering his true self corresponds closely to the humanistic notion of psychological growth and/or healing.

An individual's life is seen as a process of searching to establish this true self, as a quest for self fulfilment and self actualization. The role player mentality and the sense of alienation which characterize modern life indicate that this quest has been interrupted and is incomplete (Potter and Wetherell, 1987, pg. 100)]

Whereas in the Daily Mail item we saw an ambitious, confident Charles claimed as the reality behind the mask of sensitivity and concern, in many respects the Daily Mirror item claims the reverse. This is not to imply, however, that there is necessarily any consistency within newspaper titles. Indeed, three weeks after the publishing of 'The real Prince behind the mask' there appeared another portrait of Charles in the pages of the Daily Mail. Ann Leslie's piece 'The Prince who cares too much' (14/11/88) contains a very similar narrative to that found in the above Mirror item. Leslie claims:

For too long, it seems, his 'identity', his sense of self, was created for him by the demands of others - his family, the media, advisers, courtiers and royal hangers-on. Much of his life has been spent dutifully trying to do what was expected of him, even if it sometimes contradicted his own romantic, contemplative instincts. His prickly, autocratic father expected his gentle, introspective son to be tough, fearless, sporty and spartan - so he was. His public expected him to marry a beautiful, well-brought up virginal girl - so he did. People expected him to 'earn his keep' as a Royal by doing more than enjoy himself on the polo pitch and open a float-glass factory or two. So he did.
Once again we have the construction of a dual level character — real and unreal, private and public. This time, however, The Daily Mail has the real Charles as a 'romantic, contemplative', 'gentle' and 'introspective' person who is forced to perform the prescriptions of roles which sometimes conflict with his basic nature.

Device No. 2 — Empiricist and Contingent Repertoires

According to the realist, the world exists independently of language and theory. We have direct access to the world via our senses. We perceive objects and events and can represent them in the form of words and ideas. A true statement is one which captures or reflects the essential features of this unitary, objective realm. To have two contradictory statements about the world, therefore, is to have (at least) one mis-representation. The R/A device, as we have seen, provides one kind of account of how such contradictions can arise. Our senses can deceive us, such that things might not be as they seem. However, there exists another frequently employed device by which representational 'errors' can be explained away.

In their study of scientists' discourse, Gilbert and Mulkay (1984) identified two opposing 'repertoires' (related discourses) employed by a group of biochemists in talking about their work. Gilbert and Mulkay called these related discourses the 'empiricist' and the 'contingent' repertoires. In drawing from the empiricist repertoire the scientists represented theories and research findings —

as following unproblematically and inescapably from the empirical characteristics of an impersonal natural world (Gilbert and Mulkay, 1984, pg. 56).

In other words, the world is 'out there' with all its laws and patterns waiting to be discovered. The role of the scientist is therefore to simply recognize and document these features. The scientist
is presented as being forced to undertake experiments, to reach theoretical conclusions, and so on, by the unequivocal demands of the natural phenomena which he is studying (pg. 56).

In effect, the scientist is 'written out' of the scientific process. In contrast, the contingent repertoire

enables speakers to depict professional actions and beliefs as being significantly influenced by variable factors outside of the realm of empirical phenomena (pg. 57).

In other words, theories and research findings are seen as, in part at least, influenced by a variety of contingent factors such as personal bias, loyalties, incompetence and ambition on the part of the individual scientist. Gilbert and Mulkay noted a tendency amongst the scientists to draw upon the empirical repertoire to explain their own findings and theories (as well as to account for other work which was complementary to their own) and draw upon the contingent repertoire to explain any work with which they were at odds.

In the present study we are, of course, dealing with press representations of Prince Charles rather than complex biochemical processes. Nevertheless, in much the same way we will see that identity constructions can draw selectively from either the 'empiricist' or the 'contingent' repertoire. Furthermore, in line with the findings of Gilbert and Mulkay we will see that the empiricist repertoire is used to construct the 'favoured' version of Charles while the contingent repertoire is used to construct and downgrade competing versions.

Take, for example, an item written by Jeannette Kupfermann for the Daily Mail (18/9/88) entitled 'Why Charles Speaks for Every Parent' (see Appendix B). The article begins:

Prince Charles is often depicted as living in a rarefied never-never land of alternative medicine, talking to flowers when not spouting mystical mumbo jumbo on some remote safari or painting holiday — leaving wife and children to more robust activities. Not a flesh and blood figure but an esoteric Prince who is totally out of touch with the day to day matters that affect most of us.
Compare this to the opening paragraph of a piece which appeared in the Guardian (7/11/88) called 'Royalty as Everyman'.

APPLE SCAB, apricot die-back, basal rot, boot-lace fungus, canker, potato tuber gangrene, pansy sickness; if the Prince of Wales was a plant, his enemies would detect all of these diseases and more. Before he reached over the heads of the yellow press with his television demolition of the architectural establishment, they had successfully depicted him as a big-eared drip two vouchers short of the pop-up toaster, nattering to his shrubbery, mumbling piffle about the "harmony of the universe", keeping in contact through a ouija board with His Honorary Grandfather Lord Mountbatten, wringing his hands about the plight of, variously, work-shy yobboes, blacks and Amazonian rain forests.

The similarity between these two passages of text is immediately obvious. Both describe Charles in the most vivid and colourful of terms. He is portrayed as an eccentric and mystic with even a question mark against his sanity. However, what is most interesting and significant is that these portrayals are represented as portrayals. Both the Guardian and the Mail articles use the verb 'depicted' (other articles in the sample use terms such as 'portray' or 'portrait') which draws attention to the idea of these representations as something produced. Furthermore, the notion of production entails the idea of a manufacturer or author. Indeed the Guardian item identifies an author of this identity construction. It points the finger at the 'yellow press' (the tabloids) as being responsible (for its part, the Daily Mail's use of the passive form of the verb, 'is depicted' allows for the exclusion of a named author).

Both of these features mark the above identity constructions as belonging to the contingent repertoire. For instead of representing the author/ scientist as simply reporting 'the facts of the matter' in some neutral fashion, the above passages identify her/him as central to, and active within, the construction of the identity. This formulation, however, falls short of being a kind of 'lay-constructionism' because at no point is the idea of there being true and false representations challenged. Indeed, as with the findings of Gilbert and Mulkay, the contingent repertoire is drawn upon both to construct and account for a mis-representation. For example, the Guardian item claims that the cause of the misrepresentation of Charles is the inability of the tabloid newspapers to resist the huge
financial gains to be made from the publication of Royal-related material.

Not that the Rat Pack will stop hounding [the Prince]. The money is astounding: an intimate photograph or [sic] Charles' immediate family can fetch £50,000 on the world market. It's an easy business for the moral pigmies who do it. Tittle-tattle from the historically badly paid royal staff is richly rewarded by the Rat Pack. A cross word, a flash of temper, a misunderstood remark between the Royals can be out, retailing on the Rat Pack market, within hours.

Notice that while the alleged greed and lack of moral fibre of the tabloids helps to account for the misrepresentation of Charles (for they are not interested in journalistic accuracy) the Guardian, in contrast, constructs itself as a sobre and morally responsible newspaper.

While both of the above newspaper items draw upon the contingent repertoire to construct and undermine a similar representation of Charles, they each draw from the empiricist repertoire to advance quite different images of what the Prince is really like. In the case of the Daily Mail article, this construction begins in paragraph 3. It claims that contrary to the common misrepresentation of Charles, the Princes' speech at the opening of the Museum of the Moving Image:

reveals him to be as in touch and concerned about a subject many of us are deeply concerned about as the next man.

Notice how, characteristic of discourse drawn from the empiricist repertoire, Charles' 'real' identity is simply 'revealed' rather than manufactured. Similarly, in paragraph 7 we hear that his attack upon the amount of violence shown on television 'shows that he shares the feelings of the majority of parents' (my emphasis). In the case of the Guardian article (which, as we have already seen, formulates the misrepresentation of Charles as the handiwork of the tabloid press) we find a comparable construction in paragraph 17:

Perhaps the most long term consequence of his television attack on modern architecture may be the public's appreciation that the tabloids have lied to them again. Far from being "a loon" Prince Charles appeared rational, intellectually stimulating, affable, with a nice line in self-deprecatory wit and astonishingly good at delivering a piece to camera from memory.
Although restricting itself to an account of what Charles 'appeared' to be like (which, as we have seen, can itself be undermined) the fact of its being grounded in the 'out thereness' of the world gives it the edge over the tabloids' fabrications (or 'lies').

So far in this chapter I have looked at two devices used by the press in manipulating the relative statuses of different identity constructions of the Prince. In other words, I have demonstrated how newspaper items can represent a given portrait as being true or accurate whilst downgrading or undermining competing and contradictory versions. We have seen how these devices facilitate the production of a string of 'revelations' where each new 'inside story' casts that which has gone before as superficial, distorted or uninformed. As such, they represent useful tools of the trade for the journalists involved. However, these newspaper items simultaneously operate at other levels. In particular they can be seen to function both at a political and an ideological level. It is to these operations that the final section of Chapter 6 is oriented.

I shall begin this part of the analysis with Jeannette Kupfermann's article in the Daily Mail. The title of the item implies that the Prince was speaking on behalf of 'every parent' when he condemned the amount of violence shown on television. Paragraph 5 reiterates this idea when it claims that Charles 'echoed exactly what most ordinary people feel'. These extracts can be read as meaning that Charles was acting merely as a mouthpiece for ordinary people/parents. Indeed, in Ann Leslie's Daily Mail article she argues that:

Articulating the fears and hopes of ordinary citizens is not, I submit, a bad role for a 'man without a role'.

To construct Charles' speech in terms of the performance of a role is to dissociate the speaker from the views expressed. In standard social psychological terms, we could say that it is to make a situational rather than a personal attribution (see Heider, 1958; Jones and Davis, 1965; and also Kelley, 1967). Of course, this is precisely the wrong kind of attribution for an article claiming to reveal what the Prince is really like. Instead what is required are explanations of behaviour or events etc. which can be located within the particularity of the person in question. Indeed, at several
points throughout Kupfermann's article we find her attempting to bind Charles more tightly to his words. For example, paragraph 6 begins:

What was most significant was that he made a point of saying that he was speaking as a parent (my emphasis)

and again in the following paragraph she argues:

His spirited attack shows that he shares the feelings of the majority of parents...

Kupfermann argues that Charles' appreciation of the dangers of violence portrayed on television derives from his own experiences of parenthood.

Prince Charles' comments show that he understands [the dangers]: perhaps it's because he has children who have reached an age where they clamour for certain programmes and can tune into their own choice.

This point is reiterated later in the text when she says:

Perhaps it takes a family and a glimpse of the future to bring us down to earth with a bump: to make us re-assess not only our own values but those we wish to perpetuate for our children.

The notion of the realities of parenthood curing people of their idealism is part of a more general anti-intellectual argument evident within the text. Using extracts from the Prince's speech Kupfermann attacks the 'T.V. pundits' and 'self-appointed experts' who, she goes on to say, 'try to confuse people and don't know what they are talking about'. In paragraph 8 we find Kupfermann drawing again from the contingent repertoire providing tales of personal bias and incompetence to explain how these so-called experts fail to see what is a patently obvious causal relationship. They are, she claims, 'supremely cynical' or 'no longer appreciate the meaning of the word violence'. 'Common sense' she argues,

\textit{dictates that eventually television violence seeps through and has an effect on people's behaviour} (emphasis in original).
Having connected the Prince with the people in this way, paragraphs 14 and 15 go on to broaden the alliance.

His refreshing common sense view, will, I think, entirely alter our perception of him and his role. His obvious interest in maintaining certain family values and standards of behaviour places him closer to Mrs Thatcher than many people have been led to believe. It shows the absurdity of the idea put around by some newspapers that there is immense hostility between them — and how accurate the Daily Mail was earlier this week in revealing exclusively the concerns they share, and that at a meeting at Balmoral Mrs Thatcher had invited Charles to take a key role in her plan to revitalize the inner cities.

We can see, therefore, that this item functions to do much more than construct a version of what Charles is really like. To begin with, it simultaneously serves as an attack upon the Mail's Fleet Street rivals. In addition, it constructs a far from neutral representation of the Prince, Mrs Thatcher and ordinary people as sharing a common ideological position based around an anti-intellectualism and traditional family values (the latter of which being a hallmark of present right wing rhetoric — see David, 1986). Not insignificant either is the accompanying editorial article 'Doing a great job'. Mirroring the main article, the editorial congratulates Charles upon his speech. However, most interesting are the final two sentences of the editorial item. They read:

He is already doing a great job. One which he is making for himself.

Often described as 'a man without a role' (as we have seen) Charles can be likened to someone unemployed. Indeed, in April 1988 on 'Panorama', the BBC's current affairs programme, the then chairperson of the Conservative party, Norman Tebbit M.P. drew exactly this parallel. Having warned Charles not to endanger the monarchy by advocating 'socialist solutions' to the problems of the inner cities, Tebbit added:

I suppose the Prince of Wales feels extra sympathy towards those who've got no job because, in a way, he's got no job (Sunday Times, 13/11/88).

Tebbit had also been one of the most vociferous defenders of the
Conservative government's employment policy. On one much reported occasion he publicly argued that, rather than waiting for a job to be handed to them, the unemployed should 'get on their bikes' and find themselves work. In this context, Charles' 'making a job for himself' takes on a new significance. The Daily Mail's representation of the Prince has him as a Tory role model for the unemployed — whose plight he had previously bemoaned. In other words, Prince Charles is seen to be once again absorbed into the Tory fold.

Geoffrey Levy's Daily Mail piece 'The real Prince behind the mask' constructs a different 'real' identity for Charles. Instead of a down to earth father of two ordinary boys Charles is portrayed as an ambitious and successful businessman. However, just as with Kupfermann's article, the Prince is positioned in the same political and ideological camp as the Conservative government. To begin with, the identity construction itself represents the real Charles as something akin to a 'yuppy' (Young, Upwardly mobile Professional Person), who might be thought of as the champions of Thatcherism. Furthermore, through his Youth Business Trust the Prince is said to have helped many unemployed people set up their own small businesses. Paragraphs 18 to 21 are taken up with a collection of success stories of people who have been helped on to their bicycles, so to speak, by the Prince.

There are thousands of young retail shopkeepers, market gardeners and plumbers, television repairmen, car and motorbike mechanics, textile designers, silversmiths, computer services... all of which began with grants up to £3,000 or low interest loans of up to £5,000.

Absent from the text is any reference to the Prince being critical of the government and its policy on employment. Indeed, we are instead told of how the Prince's Youth Business Trust is to work alongside the government in an expanded scheme to help the unemployed (para. 26).

The Daily Mail is not alone, of course, in making identity constructions which operate at the deeper levels of politics and ideology. In John Sweeney's Guardian article 'Royalty as Everyman' we again see a very different representation of Charles around which are constructed a number of attacks aimed at the tabloid press, Mrs Thatcher and The Establishment
We have already seen something of the attack upon the tabloids, or 'Rat Pack' as Sweeney calls them. However, more than merely misrepresenting Charles, the tabloids are said to be 'probably the biggest source of misery in Prince Charles' life' (para. 16). In addition, just as with Kupfermann and Levy's articles analysed above, Sweeney can be seen to be involved in the construction of alliances or subject positions. Once again we find the newspaper claiming the Prince as one of its own. However, the construction of an alliance between the Guardian and Charles can be seen to be a much more subtle and complex accomplishment. To begin with, the Guardian, through Sweeney, demonstrates an unwillingness to be seen supporting the monarchy when it says:

An infinitely more sophisticated attack from the Left is directed with some justification at the family firm he will one day inherit. British Monarchy plc is, of course, one of the late twentieth century's most monumental absurdities, anchored in a granite seam of stuffy tradition, an institution John Osborne skewered as the "gold filling in the mouth of decay" (my emphasis).

Then, in paragraphs 5 and 6 of the item, we find a fascinating distinction being drawn which enables the Guardian to maintain its reservations about the institution of monarchy while applauding one of its central characters.

Prince Charles, who celebrates his fortieth birthday a week today, so often seems like a Royal Pop-Eye, being slowly crushed to death, deprived of the spinach which could empower him to biff the nasties into the ozone layer he so worries about. Spinachless, he struggles on, tormented with doubt, frustrated at the lack of a "proper job", to do what he can to make Britain a nicer place to live in. In doing so, against all the odds, he shows a nobility more impressive than all his hand-me-down baubles. In the late twentieth century the case against Prince Charles, monarchist, seems unanswerable; the case for Prince Charles, the man, cries out to be heard.

The distinction having been made, the item immediately launches into an attack upon Thatcher.
It is one of the ironies of the Thatcher years that the wielder of democratic power has so little time for the dispossessed; for empathy, they have the man who will inherit the biggest anachronism on earth. Hard to imagine that Mrs Thatcher would have put the argument against prejudice quite so passionately as Charles did in this speech to Harvard University.

The item goes on to represent Charles as someone who is prepared to take on the Establishment in order to purge Britain of racial and religious bigotry. One has only to hear the officers of the 'Persil-white' Household Division grinding their teeth at the mere mention of the Prince

To know that he is a man of immense privilege genuinely on the side of the underdog.

The middle part of the item consists of a lengthy piece of research into Charles' background in order to trace the origins of his 'surprisingly' 'well developed social conscience'. It identifies two influential figures as having helped make 'Charles The Red' what he is. The first is the Queen herself, who it claims:

must have drunk in some of the heady brew of war-time socialism when she was a lorry mechanic "doing her bit".

Secondly, it identifies the late Lord Mountbatten who is referred to as 'the in-house leftie of the Royal Family'. Hostility between Charles and Mrs Thatcher – an idea written off by Jeannette Kupfermann as 'an absurdity' – is here claimed as obvious.

He has reportedly become more conservative with age; but one does not have to have psychic powers to work out that a man who sees eye to eye with Bob Geldof might have his differences with Margaret Thatcher's overseas aid policy.

This is only one of several spectacular points of contradiction which exists between the sample items. Another sees Charles' mask, as constructed by Levy in the Daily Mail (a 'philosophical figure who likes communing with nature'), almost perfectly represented by Sweeney as the real Charles.
By the standards of The Sun, the pleasure he takes in the wild open spaces of the moors near Balmoral is cranky, "a—Loon—again" as the Sun put it; his gentle philosophising about the meaning of life, strongly influenced by Sir Laurens Van Der Post, "loony—tunes". One would have thought that the presence of a Royal who recognized that say, Wittgenstein, was not an unspoilt Swiss ski resort should be the topic of national celebration, rather than scorn.

Notice how a knowledge of Wittgenstein is left as something assumed of Charles, the Guardian and, by implication, Guardian readers. That is, it constructs them all as birds of a feather.

Conclusion

In this chapter we have seen something of the plethora of newspaper items which claim to reveal what the Royals are really like. We have looked at two linguistic devices which are central to this process of re—presentation. The reality/ appearance device and the selective drawing from the 'empiricist' and 'contingent' repertoires both offer ways of manipulating the relative statuses of competing identity constructions. The writers of these articles are not behaving like the 'naive scientists' of attribution theory (Kelley, 1967) scanning the available information and selecting out personal attributions. To begin with that which counts as the 'information' from which attributions can be drawn cannot be treated as unproblematic (see Potter and Edwards, 1990). Indeed, the manipulation performed by the above devices works precisely to construct certain versions as factual (ie. 'genuine' information) while discrediting the facticity of others.

Further, as Antaki (1988) argues, by studying everyday explanations in a non—reductive manner, the analyst regains sight of the fact that they do work within the rhetorical contexts in which they are embedded. In other words, in ordinary, everyday situations people make attributions and produce explanations, not as disinterested parties, but in order to accomplish acts of blaming, mitigation and justification etc. Indeed, as Potter and Edwards (forthcoming) argue, if we take the study of attribution out of its traditional 'perceptual/ cognitive framework' and understand it instead in conversational/ rhetorical terms, then the standard attributional model can be 'stood on its head'.

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[For] rather than passively responding to versions by making attributions participants are actively producing versions which afford attributions (emphasis in original).

(see also Antaki, 1985; Potter and Edwards, 1990; Edwards and Potter, forthcoming, for further critical discussions of attribution theory).

In the second part of this chapter we have seen how the press' representations of Prince Charles are bound up with a great deal of rhetorical, political and ideological work. Most obviously, they are constructed in order to attract a readership and so boost the sales of the papers in which they appear. Less obviously, perhaps, the constructions themselves can act as vehicles for various political ideologies. And finally, one of the most interesting patterns to have emerged from this analysis is the tendency of the newspapers to claim the Prince as one of their own. The significance of this pattern becomes clear when, like Nairn (1988), one understands that the British people see in the Royal Family an enchanted image of themselves.
In the last two chapters I have shown something of the paradoxical nature of culture/ideology. Firstly, I have demonstrated how it can give structure or form to people's discourse. In particular, I have illustrated how a culture/ideology's dialogic elements prompt thought and argument. Alternatively, in Chapter 6 I showed how culture/ideology can be seen as a resource; that is, something that people use in the course of their everyday lives. However, in this chapter I would like to demonstrate how the ongoing press representation of the monarchy/Royal Family serves to fulfil particular ideological functions.

We might recall from the previous chapter how Nairn (1988) considered the media focus upon the personalities of the Royals to be ideological. He argued that such an obsessive interest distracted people from seeing the wider political significance of the institution. Now this phenomenon might be seen as just one aspect of a more general style of representation which treats the Royals as if they were show business or soap opera stars.

In her book, Female Desire, Rosalind Coward includes a chapter on the media representation of the Royal Family (Coward, 1984). The opening sentence reads: "The Royals" is the longest running soap opera in Britain'. She argues that the representation of the Royals fits into the narrative genre of the 'family melodrama' – where the main preoccupations include sexual relationships, births, deaths, marriages and family unity. Here Coward seems to be talking about items which, in the present study, formed the largest of the subject matter categories, namely Family Fortunes (see Chapter 4). Using the television soap opera 'Dallas' as a reference point, Coward conducts a structural analysis in which she reveals how the various royals are fitted into or allocated stereotypical character slots through which a whole range of family dramas can be enacted. The full cast, she argues, needs to include amongst others, an eligible bachelor, a couple in love, a failing marriage, an ugly sister and the reliable elder. She traces out how, as the narrative develops due to changes in the real
lives of the Family members (eg. new characters emerge either by birth or marriage), the media reconstruct the images of the Royals such that the full complement of character slots, as far as possible, remain occupied. For example, when Prince Charles married Lady Diana Spencer, so vacating the slot of 'eligible bachelor', the media soon began to reconstruct Prince Andrew (thereafter called 'Randy Andy') around this role. Similarly, when Diana appeared on the royal stage taking over the role of beautiful Princess, Princess Anne was recast as the jealous and ugly sister-in-law.

So the monarchy is represented as a Royal Family. What, we might ask, is the significance of there being, as Bagehot (1963/1867) put it, a 'family on the throne'? We might recall from the discussion in Chapter 2 how Bagehot believed that, in fulfilling the 'dignified' aspects of state, the monarchy performed a vital constitutional role. Part of that role, according to Bagehot, was the provision of a functional myth. That is, it allowed the uneducated masses to believe themselves ruled over and protected by their monarch in much the same way as a child is by its parents. In addition, the monarchy represented a stable symbol of authority around which English/British people of all social classes and political persuasions could unite.

Significantly, Bagehot saw the family as the central component of this symbol. A family on the throne, he said, is an 'interesting idea', bringing down the 'pride of sovereignty to the level of petty life'. For example, he continued:

A princely marriage is the brilliant edition of a universal fact, and, as such, it rivets mankind (pg. 34)

Now while it seems most unlikely that the above functional myth is still in operation today (if indeed it ever was – see Nairn 1989) the idea of the Royal Family as a symbol of national unity appears relatively compelling.

In many ways Nairn's (1988) historical overview of the same early nineteenth century transformation of monarchy into Royal Family corresponds with Bagehot's representation. However, in Nairn's analysis we see another ideological theme emerging which appears to be missing in Bagehot's work. Within a section called 'The Modernization of George III' Nairn writes:
The royal family and not just the monarch had acquired increased currency and popularity in this period. The 'middling classes' above all saw something admirable in just that lifestyle which later aroused the derision of aristocrats and intellectual cynics; while middling women, with their responsibility for hearth and children, saw a special tribute to themselves in the model household of 'Farmer George'... That the elite and intellectuals distained poor, boring old George was another sound reason for the new passion. By its cult of King— and— family, a solid bourgeois family could affirm its own values and challenge those of society's elite (pg. 169).

Here the transformation is represented as being situated within the context of class struggle. So while it is true that people of all social classes have families, Nairn sees the Royal Family as a brilliant edition, not of a universal fact, but of a class specific, namely bourgeois fact. Coward seems also to recognize this class dimension when, at the beginning of her chapter, she describes a more contemporary, but otherwise similar transformation in the media representation of monarchy. She says of the 1950's:

in that period the press began to treat 'The Royals' differently. Playing down 'statesmanship' and aristocracy, the public were treated to more intimate revelations and points of speculation about the young family of Queen Elizabeth.

So despite being titled, living on huge country estates and enjoying typically aristocratic pastimes such as riding and hunting the Royal Family are more typically represented as if they were a bourgeois family unit. Take, for example, a two page article that appeared in the Today newspaper (22/12/87) which painted a picture of the Royal Family at Christmas time. Christmas for the Royals is, it claimed, divided into formal Royal duties and private, family celebrations (a perfect reflection of their extraordinary/ ordinary status). Away from the public's eye, we are told, 'royal protocol goes out of the window'. The 'Royal knees—up' begins with the Family opening their 'frugal' presents before sitting down to a traditional dinner of roast turkey followed by plum pudding. At 3 o'clock the Family are purported to gather around the television to watch (of all things) the Queen's speech, with the remainder of the afternoon taken up with playing charades and other party games. In a sense it does not matter whether the item accurately describes a Royal Christmas. More significant
is the fact that the account is one in which millions of British people would see their own reflection. For it describes a (stereo)typically bourgeois, rather than aristocratic scene.

Historically therefore, the monarchy, like some great chameleon, changes its appearance to suit the social and political climate in which it finds itself. With the advent of the Industrial Revolution and the accompanying rise of the middle classes the monarchy responded by representing itself as the paragon of bourgeois values (Pearson, 1986). And just as with the chameleon, these transformations are made for reasons of self protection and survival.

Coward's argument is that a central part of this adaptive exercise has been the re-presentation of the Royal Family using the textual form of a soap opera. Given that this is the case, we can see two distinct but related ideological effects of this mode of representation. Firstly, as has already been mentioned, these soap operas re-present essentially bourgeois values and concerns as being those shared by all. As Coward herself states:

the Ewings and the Royals may have an elevated status but their problems and conflicts are meant to be those which all families share.

The ideological force of these representations is not in how they conceal bourgeois values but, paradoxically, in making them seem omnipresent. They are our values, always have been, always will be (see Barthes, 1972 pg. 121 ff.).

The second level of ideological operation is that referred to at the beginning of the chapter. That is, as a direct result of the monarchy being represented in the form of a family melodrama, the Royal Family is less easily thought of as a significant factor in Britain's social and political culture. To have serious misgivings about the Royal Family, that is, to be an anti-monarchist, becomes equivalent to getting upset about Coronation Street. Soap operas are merely light entertainment; a bit of harmless fun. However, once we take the vital step of treating the Royal Family seriously, Nairn (1988) argues, we can begin to appreciate the way in
which the institution underpins, and so helps to sustain, a society riven by social, material and political inequalities. Coward is making much the same point when she asks:

Is it just a coincidence that in this postwar period, when anachronistic institutions might have been cleared away, the press produced a new-styled monarchy — familial, more accessible and almost ordinary? Or was it that an infallible format had been discovered? Was it that 'The Royals', like a soap opera, offered a rich vein of intimate revelations, based 'roughly on reality', which never has to end, which never has to be the subject of political debate? Who, after all, is going to call for the abdication of Miss Ellie? (my emphasis)

In the following pages I shall be taking a critical look at the claim that the Royals are indistinguishable from showbusiness personalities both in terms of press representations and public perception. At the same time I shall pay close attention to the ideological implications of the monarchy's re-presentation as a Royal Family.

If we examine the eight items which were randomly selected from our archive in order to test the hypothesis of Chapter 5, we would see that half of them concern 'family issues'. The first, analysed in the previous chapter, concerned Fergie's dilemma of whether she should give priority to her husband or child. The second item documented the first public appearance of the same Duchess wearing maternity clothes ('Fergie Shows Her Bump' — The People, 28/2/88). The third item celebrated the Queen Mother's eighty-eighth birthday (88! Ain't She Great — The Sun, 15/8/88). And the fourth item, coming from the editorial column of the Daily Mail (30/1/88), noted an apparent up-turn in the marriage of the Prince and Princess of Wales ('Happy Royals'). Clearly, while the Royal Family may play the leading roles in these family dramas, elsewhere similar productions are being enacted by ordinary people, albeit on less celebrated stages.

This certainly seems to support Coward's analysis. In just the same way as television represents the lives of the Ewings and Carringtons in terms of a range of family issues, so it is with a significant proportion of the press's
representation of the Royal Family. In both, the audience is, in the words of Hobson (1982), invited to 'drop in' and see the characters and share their lives. In both the viewer gets a sense of lives unfolding from one 'episode' to the next. However, are there really no textual differences between the representations of the Royal Family and soap families?

The significance of the soap opera is that it deals with issues and situations with which the audience can often identify (for research upon soap operas see Bronsdon, 1987, 1981; Hobson, 1982; Lovell, 1986). However, in concentrating upon these things the representations of ordinary life become highly 'edited' versions. For example, in a soap opera one never sees a telephone call taken which turns out to be a wrong number. Never purely incidental or irrelevant, the call is always integral to the plot of the melodrama. Similarly, the characters never take leave of the scene to go to the toilet. However, in 'The Royals' such mundane, everyday events do not always find themselves written out of the show. Indeed, they can form the very centre—piece of an episode.

For example, in a recent edition of The People (19/11/89) there appeared a front page item consisting of two large colour photographs of Prince William and 4.5 c.i. of text. Taking up half of the page, the article entitled 'The Royal Wee!' depicted the prince firstly (i.e. in the left-hand photograph) undoing his fly, and secondly (i.e. in the right hand photograph) urinating into a nearby hedge. The caption which accompanies these two snapshots (for which the editor of The People received his cards) read:

WHEN you've gotta go you've gotta go... even if you ARE the future King Wills

The Extraordinary/ Ordinary Dialectic

The significance of the above item is, of course, that it captures a Royal Highness doing something more characteristic of the lowliest urchin. In other words, the article comes out of an tension between the ordinary and the extraordinary as discussed briefly in the last two chapters. Indeed, we noted that the extraordinary/ ordinary dialectic is an almost ubiquitous
feature of Royal related news items. The above *People* item is exploiting this clash of opposites; an opposition expressed in the phrase 'Royal Family' itself. For on the one hand, they are just like us. They are a family consisting of mothers, fathers, sons and daughters. We see them going to school or on holiday, read of their shopping trips and of their Birthday celebrations. On the other hand, they are quite different from us. They are Royal, and, as appropriate to Royalty, live in palaces, wear crowns and reign over us.

Further, this specialness is often constructed as something physical, residing within them, running through their veins like (blue) blood. Like latter-day Midases, they transform everything they touch or do, even the most common place of things, into something remarkable. So, whereas soap operas might represent the everyday events and problems of the characters' personal and family lives, 'The Royals' concerns the lives of an extraordinary family.

On a theoretical level, the contradictory status of the Royal Family might be better understood in terms of Merton's (1976) concept of 'sociological ambivalence'. In contrast to the psychological orientation to the study of ambivalence which sees it as a product of intra-psychic forces or processes, Merton argues that the sociological approach:

> focuses upon the ways in which ambivalence comes to be built into the structure of social statuses and roles (pg. 5).

Merton identifies several types of sociological ambivalence ranging from contradictory cultural values (similar to the contrary pairs of maxims present within common sense — referred to in Chapter 3) to contradictions which exist within particular social roles associated with particular social statuses. This latter variety Merton calls the 'core-type' of sociological ambivalence.

He illustrates this type using the example of the role of physician which, he claims, consists of a dual and contradictory set of normative expectations concerning the doctor/patient relationship. On the one hand, the physician is supposed to remain emotionally detached from the patient; examining, diagnosing and treating. However, on the other hand, part of the role of physician is to be as a friend to the patient; to empathize,
comfort and console. Although these sub-roles may be 'skewed' in terms of there being a dominant norm and a subordinate 'counter-norm', they are fully dependent upon one another on a functional level. As Merton explains, either norm on its own would not be flexible enough to provide for the endlessly varying contingencies of social relations (pg. 18).

One interesting and important implication of this core-type structure is that in any given social context, the physician is unable to play both parts simultaneously. Instead one finds that this kind of sociological ambivalence is typically expressed in an 'oscillation' of different, indeed contradictory, behaviours.

In just the same way the role of being Royal can be seen to embody a core-type of sociological ambivalence. For it demands that they should be both ordinary and extraordinary at the same time. Too ordinary, not ordinary enough; too Royal, not Royal enough – the demands of the role can never be met. Consequently, in terms of the media, a multitude of stories can derive from how the Royals are seen to manage or mismanage this impossible balancing act. For example, in the above People article, Prince William displays the ordinariness of a young boy who is desperate for a 'pee'. But, as the text reveals, this is no ordinary event. It is the 'AMAZING' spectacle of a 'Royal Wee'. Furthermore, whilst implying that it is less acceptable for a future King to be seen urinating in public, the article complains that, unlike other non-royal boys, William received no punishment for his indiscretion.

The Prince's performance was witnessed by two bodyguards. And unlike other pupils, who would be severely scolded for relieving themselves in public, the future King of England was let off scot free.

In so doing, the article simultaneously constructs an inequality and an equality between the Prince and his non-royal schoolmates.

We know that media representations of the Royal Family are characterized by this extraordinary/ordinary dialectic. However, is this textual feature something which clearly distinguishes representations of Royalty from those of other, non-royal celebrities? For while Barthes (1973/1988) was right
when he said that people are fascinated by seeing something of themselves in those whom they feel to be entirely different, might this fascination not also stretch to at least the most super of superstars? Indeed, upon closer examination, it appears that this particular form of ambivalence is not unique to the Royal Family. For example, when Thatcher broke Asquith's record of being the longest serving twentieth century Prime Minister, the *Daily Express* (2/1/88) marked her achievement with a piece entitled 'The extraordinary ordinary woman inside of No. 10'. Showing a remarkable resemblance to the description of the Royals at Christmas time, we are told that:

> Over vitamin "C", tea and toast in the morning, she and Denis complain like any other couple throughout the land about the Government's performance.  
> If there is a particularly startling news item she will wonder out loud just what the Government is going to do about it.  
> She then clears away the dishes, picks up her handbag and takes charge of that same Government.  
> And in the evening she still cooks Denis his supper.

Furthermore, even though many of the non-Royal soaps feature ordinary families (as opposed to the fabulously wealthy ones portrayed in soaps like *Dallas* and *Dynasty*), there is a sense in which an extraordinary/ordinary dialectic similarly operates. However, compared to 'The Royals', it does so in a different manner. For the Royals have to be simultaneously ordinary and extraordinary as part of the same ambivalent role. However, in the soap operas, the ambivalence is not of the 'core' variety, existing instead between the celebrities 'on' and 'off' screen roles (as famous people playing ordinary people) rather than within a single role (although the media can, in turn, talk about the ordinary family lives of these stars).

There also remains a question mark over the relative qualities of the extraordinariness of Royal and non-royal celebrities. Nairn, writing upon this issue, argued that:

> the British Royals are never just celebrities. Or rather, while they have of course had to become celebrities in recent times, what really matters (and is really puzzling) about them is that they remain something more as well (Nairn, 1988, pp 35).

By a 'celebrity' Nairn means someone who is 'well known for their 'well known-ness'.

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Celebrity is measured not by any moral or personal qualities but by the weight of accumulated press—clippings and amounts of 'exposure' (op cit. pg. 35).

In other words, celebrities are merely media creations. However, the concept of celebrity seems to be more complex than Nairn maintains. There are those who are famous because, it would seem, they have some extraordinary talent. We think of these people as becoming well known for a reason. Yet this is just the point. The Royal Family, unlike other celebrities, inherit their celebrity status as part of their birthright. Moreover, their lack of extraordinary talents is an essential part of their social significance. For it is in precisely this respect that they are like us, ordinary folk.

Broadly speaking, therefore, while the extraordinary/ordinary dialectic cannot offer us a straightforward instance of a textual difference between representations of Royalty and soap operas there do seem to be subtle differences in the way it applies in each case. All the same, is it really the case that the viewing public see the Royal Family as just another soap opera? Ironically perhaps, it is Coward herself who gives us a clue to where another basic difference lies.

In the opening paragraph of her chapter, Coward claims that 'like any good soap opera, 'The Royals' has its ardent fans and bitter opponents.' But just who are these 'bitter opponents', and what is the basis of their objection? Surely, Coward is not referring to an opposition based upon the recognition of the aforementioned ideological functions. She is not invoking a collectivity of people who realize that, in order for Britain to become a true democracy, it requires that the British people take the monarchy seriously enough to see it as worthy of abolition. So, does Coward mean simply that some people do not like the show?

It seems unlikely that opposition to the Royal soap opera is of the same genre as that which we would find targeted against 'Dallas' or 'EastEnders'. For while there may be some viewers who do not like the Royal soap opera, there seems to be an additional concern that the Royal Family should appear as a soap opera in the first place. For example, in Chapter 2 I quoted Malcolm Muggeridge who, as far back as 1955, warned
that the media representation of the Royal Family as showbusiness personalities would have 'disastrous consequences'. The film star, he said, soon 'passes into oblivion' (Muggeridge, 1955). Similarly, when the 1969 feature film 'Royal Family' was made and broadcast, there were fears that it would destroy the mystique upon which the institution relied for its popularity. [The film, which showed the Family in a much less formal manner than had previously been the case, was a landmark in the 'opening up' process of the Royal Family].

So instead, perhaps, the distinction could be that while for both types of star (Royal and non-Royal) a public wink or curse can be seen as a miraculous event, it is only with the Royals that such actions could equally be viewed as dangerous and improper. Indeed, one of the largest of our nine subject matter categories of Chapter 4 was called 'Evaluations of Royal Conduct'. This, we might remember, consisted of articles which, rather than providing information about the day to day movements and activities of the Royals, made some statement about the propriety of these actions. As one might expect, there were items that served mainly to criticize the Royals, such as the Daily Mirror (17/12/87) article 'Belt up! Car safety rap for Fergie' which, as the title suggests, criticizes the Duchess for her failure to observe the road safety laws. Conversely, there were many articles which patted the Royals on the back, such as the Daily Express (27/1/88) piece, 'Duchess of Work', which praised the same person for her industry. Implicit within both these sorts of evaluations are ideas about how the Royals should properly behave. Indeed, some articles found within this category serve more to define the roles of being royal than make claims about their performance with respect to these definitions. For example, a piece entitled 'New Breed' appeared in the Today newspaper's editorial column (26/1/88). Anticipating the birth of a child to the Duke and Duchess of York, it called for the baby to be:

the first of a new breed of royalty... One that stands on its own two feet and needs no royal crutches to lean on

(of course, this contains an implicit criticism of existing Royal behaviour). The article entitled 'Stay at Home Fergie!' analysed in Chapter 5 would be a further example of this type of item. It is difficult to imagine that an editor of a national newspaper would be sacked for printing a picture of a non-Royal personality urinating in a nearby hedge. For unlike Nairn and
Barthes, who assure us that the portrayal of Royalty as ordinary paradoxically serves only to reaffirm their extraordinariness, other royal watchers express concern that the repeated borrowing of the forms of democratic life will result in those forms becoming seen as appropriate rather than paradoxical. Take, for example, the following sequence from another of the interviews [No. 023] as introduced in Chapter 5 (see Billig, forthcoming). Here a mother and daughter (Beryl and Lucy) have just been talking about the physical health of Princess Margaret:

Extract No. 2.

Beryl: People didn't know that you weren't told these things I think you I think you're told too much nowadays you lose respect for them Interviewer: What sort of things are you being told you'd rather not hear Beryl: (sighs) Um Lucy: About all these wild parties and arguments on doorsteps and Beryl: [ Arguments in the home whether it's true or not I don't know but I don't like it Lucy: Um Beryl: Every family normal family has arguments (.) and things like that and er [ in their home it's their own business Lucy: [ I think they just ought to have the official photograph every year at Christmas Beryl: [ Yes um Lucy: And then we don't want to know anything from them for the rest of the year Beryl: Um well it's nice for me to know because I'm nosey but I mean I don't really want to know but {laughing}

Beryl's opening comment clearly implies that there are some things about the Royal Family of which the public would best be ignorant. 'You're told too much' she says, implying that there should be a partial or selective media representation of the Royal Family. The Royals should be respected, and any news or information which threatens to undermine that respect should, she argues, be withheld. Intriguingly, Beryl formulates the public rather than the Royals as the beneficiaries of this censorship. For it is we, the British public, who need to respect them. A similar theme emerged later in the same interview when Beryl argued that the Royals should not be allowed to get divorced:

Extract No. 3.

Beryl: I think that it would be better for us not not knowing that they're not getting on
When the interviewer asks for specific examples of things that ought to be withheld, it is Lucy who steps in to take up her mother's argument. She provides two instances of Royal behaviour of which, she claims, she would rather remain unaware. Her choice of examples is quite revealing if looked at closely. Perhaps the more interesting of the two is Lucy's claim not to want to know about the Royals' 'arguments on doorsteps'. There seems to be two inter-related themes evident within this discourse; namely, a moral and a class theme.

Lucy and her mother are not objecting to the discovery that the Royals have family rows. As Beryl remarks: 'every family normal family has arguments' and, as we have seen, it is one half of their ambivalent role that they should be like an ordinary family. As such, it might be expected that they would get on each others' nerves from time to time. Rather their objection is that the Family are seen to argue. As Beryl makes clear, arguments are a family's own business, something to be conducted in the privacy of the home, not on the doorstep in view of everybody.

Furthermore, if we take Lucy's claim about arguing on doorsteps literally rather than figuratively, we might detect the presence of a class theme as well as the moral aspect. For were the Royals to stand arguing on their palatial doorsteps, would they really be in full view of the public's gaze? Instead, the image conjured up by Lucy is of the Royals standing in a street of terraced houses, screaming at the top of their plummy voices. In other words, it is where the 'ordinariness' of the Royal Family is a (stereotypically) working class ordinariness that is seen as objectionable. Similarly, Lucy's claim that she does not want to hear about the Royals attending 'wild parties' seems to draw upon both a moral and a class theme. However, in this instance the unwelcome image is of an aristocratic rather than working class Royal Family.

For during the period of data collection for this thesis there appeared a number of items in the popular press which told of such 'wild parties'. Titles such as 'Orgies at Wild Child Ball' (The Sun, 17/2/88) and 'To the Manor Porn' (The Sun, 18/7/88) headed stories which described 'sex mad teenage toffs' and the 'boozing and brawling' of the 'Hooray Henries and Henriettas'. Just as with the working class image these aristocratic antics
are offensive to the bourgeois moral order. Indeed, the aristocracy itself is offensive to the bourgeois moral order. Take, for example, an item which appeared very recently in the *Sunday Express's* (2/9/90) 'Current Events' column. It referred to a report that while together in a sweet shop Prince William had told his younger brother not to eat any more sweets 'because mum says that you're not allowed'. Columnist Tom Utley remarked:

*Mum says?*
I had never quite believed the popular line that Princess Diana found the time among all her official duties to be a proper mother to her children and the dominant influence on their lives.
I believe it now.
Wouldn't any prince of an earlier generation have said "Nanny says you are not allowed"?

Here again is evidence of one of the ideological operations identified earlier. For without even mentioning aristocracy or the upper classes the item represents a traditionally aristocratic domestic arrangement as merely an improper feature of previous Royal generations. A 'proper mother' is seen as one who instead takes her place within the bourgeois ideal of a nuclear family.

**Royalty as 'Super–Ordinary' Beings**

This moral dimension relates to the third element of the ordinary/extraordinary complex as described briefly at the end of Chapter 5. For as well as being represented as both ordinary and extraordinary, the Royals are sometimes constructed as 'super–ordinary' beings. We might best understand this term by thinking of it with reference to Rosch's work on concepts and prototypes (Rosch, 1973, 1976). Basically, Rosch argued that at the centre of any concept is a prototypical or paradigmatic case. The characteristics of this prototype become the defining characteristics for the entire concept. For example, if we think of the concept 'dog', the prototype might be represented by something akin to a mongrel. Other types of animal will be defined with respect to these characteristics in order to ascertain whether or not they can be called 'dogs'. A collie shares many more of these characteristics than does a sparrow, and so is more likely to be assigned to the same category. A giant poodle or chihuahua is a much more marginal case. In a similar way, there can be an ideal or
paradigmatic case of a family. However, there is an important difference. As we have seen in the above analysis, the family is a moral ideal not just a perceptual paradigm. In other words, there exists an idea about what a family should be like.

The expectation that the Royal Family should be the concretization of this ideal represents a third aspect of their ambivalent 'role'. At several points throughout the interview this duty of the Royal Family (to act as super-ordinary beings) is constructed as being of vital importance. For example:

Extract No. 4.

Beryl: But I bet if you knew about a lot of the old kings and queens they probably um didn't privately live as a married couple but publically they did and that's what people need you need these role models in life.

Clearly, Beryl is implying that without the leading examples of the Royal Family ordinary people would not know how best to act. We can see, therefore, how the censorship of stories about Royal indiscretions would protect this, apparently, shining example of family life. The full implication of this view is articulated, again by Beryl, only moments later:

Extract No. 5.

Beryl: No I think if the Royal Family crumbled I think England would go {laughs}.

Notice, however, that Beryl laughs at the end of constructing this dramatic hypothesis. In some way she seems to have sensed that her own words have overstated the case. It is a sense which is given voice by Nairn (1988), when, in reference to incident in 1974 when Princess Anne and Captain Mark Phillips were stopped in their car by a man with a gun, he asks:

Suppose that by misfortune the Royal couple had been shot, or even shot dead. Would this really have signalled the imminent triumph of a new barbarism? They are... 'a symbol' of British national decency, not this quality in person. Can our 'inner spiritual essence' now be so vulnerable that the removal of an emblem is liable to crush it? (pg. 57).
Clearly, if the Royal Family can be criticized for failing to provide a good example then there must exist a sense of what is ideal behaviour independent of the actions of the Royals themselves. England would not crumble if the Royal Family failed to provide ordinary people with their role models. News of Royal indiscretions need not be withheld for fear of corrupting the nation. Indeed, in the above extract, when Lucy suggests that the media coverage of the Royals should be limited to an official photograph at Christmas time, we find Beryl tentatively disagreeing with her daughter. She claims that, because she is 'nosey', she enjoys reading about the details of the wild parties and family rows. Those things, while damaging to the precious but fragile image of the Royal Family, are simultaneously delicious and fascinating. The dilemma of wanting to know all the Royal gossip and yet not wanting to know about it is manifest within a single turn —

From Extract No. 2.

Beryl: Um well its nice for me to know because I'm nosey but I mean I don't really want to know but {laughing}

Interestingly, by her laughter, Beryl seems to acknowledge the irony of her words.

It is both fascinating and strange that the Royal Family are called upon to set an example which, in a sense, is not required. What makes things doubly interesting is, as Billig (forthcoming) reveals, that the Royal example is also often thought or spoken about as one which we, ordinary people, need not follow. However, it could be argued that the demand for Royalty to perform what appears to be an empty role (ie. one that we neither need nor follow) serves as a justification of both Royal privilege and of the British subjects' subordination.

The image is of a kind of business contract existing between the British people and their Royal Family. For example, The Daily Mirror (14/12/87) printed a two page article entitled 'The Old Firm' which looked at the question of whether the Royals were 'value for money'. The contractual image was here most explicit:
The Queen knows that her business, like any other, has to be accountable. And we, the shareholders, demand good value for money (my emphasis).

The 'job' which the Royals are employed to do has several aspects to it. These include making formal visits and performing ceremonial openings as well as 'flying the flag' abroad. Another aspect of the job is to provide what Billig (forthcoming) has called (borrowing from Freud) an 'ego ideal of the family'. That is, the Royals have a responsibility to appear (at least) on a moral pedestal. In return they receive rich rewards and privileges. The notion of a contract is crucially important in particularizing Royal privileges from those enjoyed by the aristocracy, or 'idle rich' as they are commonly called. The Royals do something for their money.

Indeed, far from 'getting something for nothing' it is frequently maintained that the job of being a Royal is completely unenviable. That is, the riches and the privileges do not make up for the terrible weight of responsibilities, lack of freedom and loss of privacy endured by the Royal Family (see Billig, forthcoming).

In summary, we can see that the representation of the Royals involves a complex interweave of three cultural/ideological themes — namely, the Royals as ordinary, extraordinary and 'superordinary'. In other words, there are not just two but three 'active ingredients', making up a triangle of forces, which together generate discourse about the Family. Now while soap operas might in some sense share the extraordinary/ordinary dialectic as characterizes most if not all media representations of monarchy, it seems unlikely that a similar sort of contract exists between soap opera stars and/or characters and the viewing public. That is, we would not expect to find anything which parallels Royalty's superordinary dimension.

However, consider another sequence from the same interview. It occurred just after Beryl had expressed ambivalence about hearing Royal gossip. The interviewer posed the following question:

Interviewer: What about arguments with somebody who's also in the public eye film stars or something do you want to hear about arguments they have
to which came the response:

Extract No. 6.

Lucy: [No
Beryl: [No I think film stars should be like they used to be years ago I mean apparently they’re all having orgies and taking drugs and this that and the other but you don’t want to know about it [you want to know the nice things about them
Lucy: should people be interested
Beryl: You should have dreams [you know what I mean
Lucy: [Why why
Beryl: They should have dreams or something like you could be like that one day if you worked hard [enough or tried hard enough

Once again we hear Beryl calling for the truth to be removed from her sight. While her daughter seems to be arguing that such sordid details about the lives of film stars are of little interest to anyone, Beryl’s objection is, once again, that a dream is being destroyed. She says she needs to believe, even if it means being deceived, that the lives of the showbusiness personalities are uninterrupted bliss. For with this wholly enviable image in her mind she can have the sweet dream that, maybe, with enough hard work, she might join their ranks.

Beryl returns to this theme a little later in the interview. Lucy has just complained that some Royal stories that she has seen in the papers are ‘just too far fetched to be real’. Beryl responds:

Extract No. 7.

Beryl: I don’t think you do need that I mean I don’t know if ordinary people do need that fairy story thing I mean in us 30’s the thing that people do they always used you always like when we were well off supposedly well off in the 60’s it was all kitchen sink dramas wasn’t it oh and nostalgia for the way things used to be how awful yet when people were poor like after the war you saw the Spring in Park Lane business and beautiful dresses and and all the er mannequins in Paris and people like that they showed they showed a lot of that in the newspapers so it it and I think you need just I don’t mind probably people’s different personalities you need to know something other than our everyday drudge

The last sentence holds the key to understanding much of the above turn.
Despite the fact that she might not find it easy, or indeed possible, to
aspire to becoming Royal, as opposed to rich and famous, both of these
realms are seen as other worlds contrasting sharply to her own dull
existence. Reading about the colourful lives of both Royalty and
showbusiness personalities allows her to derive pleasure from them
vicariously. To spoil such images by revealing the profane and ordinary
within the lives of these, apparently, magical people is to take away those
precious moments when she can dream. Except that Beryl, paradoxically,
places herself 'outside' of the dream in the act of constructing it. She
speaks as a late twentieth century Bagehot or Martin, constructing a
demystified account of the role of monarchy in the shaping of popular
consciousness. Indeed, it is as if she were reading from the pages of
Martin's (1963) *The Crown and the Establishment*. For there he wrote (as
already quoted in Chapter 2):

*There seems to be thousands of men and women who think of the
Royal Family as an ideal extension of their own families... To such
people the Royal Family provides a colour and splendour which
their own family lives too often lack, but which they none the less
feel to be part of their own romance.*

Once again we have found a broad correspondence between the way the
Royal Family and other non-royal celebrities are talked about. We have
seen a construction which describes the representations of Royalty and
other, non-royal celebrities as sharing a common ideological function.
Moreover, it is not an ideological function that works surreptitiously upon
unsuspecting victims. Indeed, Beryl is quite able to articulate upon the
perceived role of these stars (Royal or otherwise) in providing a colourful
distraction from the drudge of ordinary existence. Both are seen as an
escapism. (Of course, Coward and Nairn would argue that what she does
not seem to suspect, is that the Royal Family/monarchy, to whom Beryl
looks for escape, play no small part in the creation and maintenance of
that drudgery). Secondly, these sequences seem to show that there is also
an active supérior ordinary dimension involved in the representation of
showbusiness personalities. That is, just like the members of the Royal
Family, showbusiness stars should also appear to lead exemplary lives.
However, unlike with the Royal Family, the public do not seem to have a
sense of there being a contract between themselves and these other
celebrities. They do not feel themselves to be the employers of these
people. Conversely, because every tax payer contributes something towards
the Royals’ pay packets (in the form of the Civil List payments) then s/he can feel entitled to the return of an exemplary performance.

Yet, even excluding this, it seems improbable that media representations of the Royal Family could ever be consumed merely as soap opera. At the most fundamental level, people are aware that the Royal Family are real people. Similarly, they understand that Dallas and Dynasty are works of fiction, where the dramas are merely (un)enjoyable contrivances. Interestingly, Coward holds back from making this distinction when she claims, merely, that the fictional status of the Royal Family is ‘more ambiguous’ compared to the soaps. However, there is nobody who can be said to ‘play’ Prince Charles in the way Larry Hagman plays J.R. Ewing (in Dallas). Consequently, soap operas on television can be consumed without there being any kind of ‘trade off’ against the mystique or magic of the actors/actresses.

In the final pages of this chapter I will turn my attention to the newspapers themselves. In other words, the question of whether the Royals and other non-royal celebrities are similarly represented in the press will be studied empirically.

The popular press frequently engage in the fusion of the representations of monarchy and showbusiness stars. In our archive there are several examples of where the discourse of showbusiness is used in items about the Royals. For instance, the Daily Mirror, reporting on the visits of the Prince and Princess of Wales to Australia and the Duke and Duchess of York to Los Angeles, used the headlines: ‘It’s the Chas and Di Show!’ and ‘It’s the Fergie and Cosby Show’ (Daily Mirror, 27/2/88 and 29/1/88 respectively). Similarly, there were cases where the representation of celebrities ‘borrowed from’ that of Royalty. For example, the Today newspaper (24/2/88) printed a piece about Michael Jackson’s U.K. tour entitled ‘The other royal tour’ (the Duke and Duchess of York were in L.A. at the time). The two realms – the Royal and the celebrity – seem to enjoy a symbiotic union, where mystique is traded for an air of modernity.

Roland Barthes would, no doubt, argue that this union, just like that between ordinariness and extraordinariness as seen above, is based upon a contradiction. That is, the whole point of making a comparison between
Jackson’s tour and that of Royalty, is that we know that Jackson isn’t, and almost certainly never will be Royal. Hence, all the above newspaper titles have to be read as paradoxical. At the very least, therefore, there seems to be the pre-existing knowledge that the two realms are separate. However, as we shall see, there are other differences.

I have claimed on several separate occasions that the extraordinariness of the Royal Family derives from the very fact of their being Royal. They are born celebrities whereas other non-Royal personalities have to do something to warrant their celebrity status. However, while the Royals are often talked about as being an otherwise ordinary family on the throne — that is people without any special talents or qualities — at other times this is not the case. Sometimes to be Royal is to be seen as endowed with special or even magical powers.

Centuries ago it was commonly believed that the monarch had wonderful healing powers. In particular, it was thought that the touch of the King or Queen could cure a person suffering from scofula; a disease which causes swelling of the glands. Nairn (1988) notes that immediately following the Restoration of Charles II to the throne in 1660 (ending the eleven year period of the interregnum) the King touched six hundred sufferers 'in a single gargantuan session' (pg. 73). In fact, the laying on of hands was last practiced by Queen Anne, who reigned from 1702 to 1714. Nairn goes on to assert that nobody in late twentieth century Britain still believes that the monarch can cure people of their ailments simply by the touch of their Royal hand. Today the ill queue for hospital beds rather than outside of Buckingham Palace. Yet it could be claimed that Nairn is overstating the case. For despite our living in the age of reason, there appear to be occasions still where the Royal Family is talked about as having magical healing powers.

For example, following the IRA bombing at the Irish town of Enniskillen in November 1987, several newspapers attributed just such powers to the Prince and Princess of Wales, who later visited some of the injured in hospital. The Daily Mail (18/11/87) wrote of the 'lift' that the couple's visit gave to the Ulster townsfolk. "I wouldn't have believed the difference it made" one man is quoted as saying. Similarly, The Sun (18/11/87) reporting upon the same incident, printed a large photograph of Diana
perched on the edge of an injured man's hospital bed with the accompanying title which read 'That Healing Smile'.

However, perhaps the most vivid example of this kind of representation appeared in the Today (28/11/87) newspaper. Entitled 'The Secret Mission of Nurse Evans, Royal Angel' (see Appendix B), the item was concerned to reveal what it called 'Diana's caring crusade' behind her 'disco queen image'. Once again we see the use of the humanistic discourse of the self to provide yet another revelation about what one of the Royal Family is really like. Indeed, the application of this theoretical frame has certain consequences for thinking about the celebrity. For the self which is well known (ie. the public self) becomes downgraded to the status of representing nothing more than a facade. The familiarity borne out of repeated media exposure, is thrown into doubt. As a result we get a potential, a carte blanche, in which the newly reconstructed self can emerge. In a sense, therefore, we have a process of mystification followed by a process of demystification which together constitute a psychologically attractive game.

The article begins in the style of a dramatic narrative. A child was in distress, and 'Nurse Evans', sensing that there was someone who 'needed her care', sprang into action. 'Nothing was going to stop' her 'mission of mercy'. The reader has to wait until the second paragraph before discovering the true identity of this superwoman (although enough hints have already been given by the title and accompanying photograph).

Nurse Evans is really Princess Diana, the caring mother behind the public image of the glamorous future Queen of England (para. 2).

The recharacterization of Diana as a 'caring mother' is fascinating (drawing as it does from sociological discourse to construct a version of Diana in terms of a role). For the 'real' Diana is portrayed as someone stripped of their extraordinariness, wearing instead a quite ordinary set of clothes. Notice here that instead of Royalness being seen as something essential to the people themselves like a special gene or blood type, it is constructed as a role to be performed or a costume to be worn (Diana's royalness is perhaps more ambiguous anyway due to her being married rather than born into the Family). The clothes metaphor is particularly illustrative here.
For in both a literal and metaphorical sense, Diana is represented as taking off her Royal clothes. All of those things which normally characterize Diana as extraordinary; the crowds, the 'red tape', the security blanket, are discarded (see para. 3). Instead, she dresses 'smartly casual' and drives herself to meet a woman with whom she has a 'heart to heart' conversation. Symbolically, therefore, the Princess descends from the untouchable and magical world of Royalty to the level of the ordinary person with whom she can then relate from a position of equality (ie. heart to heart, woman to woman). Paradoxically, however, the demystification of the Princess is counter-acted later in the article when she is accredited 'extraordinary healing powers'.

Consultant Peter Gautier-Smith praised the Princess after she had visited the National Hospital's rehabilitation homes in north London a few weeks ago. "She seems to have extraordinary healing powers. You could almost compare it with the laying on of hands," he said. "The uplift which the Princess gives the patient she visits can sometimes do more good than any doctor" (para 15).

Interestingly, the consultant does not attribute these powers to Diana's Royalness. They could 'almost' be compared to the ancient Royal practice, but not quite. Rather than being a specifically Royal trait it is something possessed by a lucky few.

Some people have it, others don't. She definitely has it and it is an enormous gift' (para. 17).

It would certainly be untrue to say that these kind of magical powers are only ever attributed to Royal personages. For example, The Sun (21/7/88) newspaper printed a piece which told of a visit made by pop star Michael Jackson to the children's ward of Great Ormond Street Hospital. Entitled 'Dr. Jacko', the item claimed that Jackson enabled the 'sickest of children' to climb out of their beds unaided (see Appendix B paras. 7-8). Once again, however, a subtle difference exists between the two representations. For while Diana's extraordinary powers are seen to derive from the 'caring mother' behind the 'disco queen image', in Jackson's case they spring from his public image. The photograph portrays him in his stage dress - the pop star equivalent of royal crown, orb and sceptre. Paragraph 9 details his offering of presents, all of which have significance only in terms of his
celebrity status.

Michael... beamed with joy as he handed out dozens of presents including albums, signed photos, and T-shirts.

In summary we can say that Coward is quite correct in arguing that the Royal Family is represented as a soap opera, in as much as part of their media representation portrays them as people who have similar problems and preoccupations compared to the rest of the nation. Further, while there appears to be subtle differences in the way they operate, the themes of ordinariness, extraordinariness and 'super-ordinariness' are present in both Royal and non-Royal related press items. However, as the quantitative analysis of Chapter 4 revealed, these soap-styled items form only part of the Royals' total press representation. Indeed, as we shall soon see, another part of this representation is the objection to the Royals appearing as a soap opera — for which there appears to be no showbusiness counterpart. That is, complaints that the Royal Family are turning into a soap opera exist alongside the 'soap-styled' items in both newspaper texts concerning the Royal Family and in the interviews conducted with families from the Midlands. Could we, for instance, ever imagine that people would bitterly oppose the showing of a scene in which, either in or outside of the confines of the Southfork ranch, Bobby and Pamela were seen to have a blazing row? To be sure there would be millions of people sat on the edges of their seats captivated by the unfolding of this domestic drama. But it seems unlikely that anyone would experience the sort of ambivalence apparent in the above interview extracts.

Coward's analysis is also problematic because in saying that the Royal soap opera has its 'ardent fans and bitter opponents' she gives us the impression that people can be divided neatly into these two opposing camps. As has been demonstrated, however, people have to hand arguments which see the show as alternatively good and worthy of praise, and as bad — even as something which threatens the very existence of the institution. These arguments can be seen to exist in a dilemmatic tension.

Let us finish by looking at one such complaint, written by Anthony Holden, royal biographer, in the Daily Mail (2/3/88). Entitled, 'Time for
Fergie to stop going over the 'top' (see Appendix B), the piece criticizes the Duke and Duchess of York for turning the monarchy into 'yet another — rather tacky — branch of showbusiness' (para. 7). This remarkable item pulls together many of the themes dealt with in this chapter. For example, the caption below the solitary photograph, together with the first four paragraphs of the text, illustrates the fusion of representations. The caption begins: 'Hollywood antics: Royal 'soap' star Fergie meets with another show business favourite' and paragraph 4 talks of a 'star-studded banquet for Hollywood's own "royals"'. However, although Holden offers us this image of Royals and celebrities fused together, he clearly constructs this juxtaposition as both unnatural and tragic. Quite contrary to the claims of Coward, here is a part of the media representation of the Royal Family which criticizes and condemns their transformation into soap opera stars. For while he claims that 'the Duke and Duchess of York seem delighted to cast themselves as Bobby and Pamela Windsor in Palace' (para. 8), Holden is not so pleased. In other words, here is an article whose rhetorical end is not to conceal any distinguishing marks that exist between Royalty and the realm of showbusiness celebrities, thus rendering the monarchy an apparently harmless object for passive, prime-time viewing. Rather, its purpose is to drive a wedge between the two representations, to emphasize their points of distinction and to encourage an actively critical audience.

Holden argues that the younger Royals are 'compromising' the Family's 'hard-won dignity' and 'are in danger of bringing the Monarchy into disrepute' with their 'cringe-making immature antics' (paras. 16 and 10, emphasis in original). In paragraph 4 Holden suggests that 'even movie stars think twice about such behaviour'; a statement which has two important implications. Firstly, it serves to particularize Royalty from showbusiness stars and secondly, implies that while a milder version of the same behaviour might be acceptable for non-royal celebrities, this is certainly not the case for Royals. Much more is expected of them.

Later in the article Holden draws upon a similar representation of a contract to that found in the Daily Mirror item described above. Once again we see the Royals represented as being employed by the nation, with the tax-payer as a sort of shareholder in a nationalised industry. In these terms, the younger Royals' 'antics' take on the appearance of a breach of
the contract. As paragraph 24 explains:

*No one wants to deny the young Royals some fun. But the taxpayer footing their £50,000-a-year Civil List allowance is also entitled to see them devote as much time to some rather more substantial royal duties.* (emphasis in original)

Holden's rhetorical wedge consists of two related aspects of this breach. The first appears in paragraph 5. Although, he says, the British public are delighted to see that 'the Yorks' marriage is as fresh and exciting as ever', 'are we really to believe that they are in California as ambassadors for British trade?' In other words, whilst the shareholders might enjoy the Royal soap opera, they demand much more than just a show as a return for their investment. They also demand that the Royals are seen to play a part on the real world stage of international commerce.

The second aspect of the breach of contract is outlined in paragraphs 10 to 14. Of the Duke and Duchess of York, Holden remarks:

They are bringing the Monarchy into disrepute. Their cringe-making immature antics may seem innocent enough, but they contain hidden dangers of which wiser crowned heads than theirs are all too aware.

*Just as it must be seen to be above politics, so the British constitutional monarchy must remain above class. If our Royals were to become pigeon-holed as just another bunch of effete toffs, then the fabric of the institution would begin to crumble.*

The Queen, though clearly a member of the landed gentry, manages by some personal magic to remain distinct from the privileged, plummy-voiced ranks of the British aristocracy.

Her shrewdly maintained personal mystique ensures that the Monarch, as is her symbolic role, embodies the aspirations of all her subjects, rich and poor, high and low.

The Duke and Duchess of York, however, are in grave danger of identifying the new royal generation with the spoilt little rich kids who constitute Britain's gilded youth, alias the idle rich at play.

The Queen's job or 'symbolic role' is said to be the embodiment of the aspirations of all her subjects. This is as clear an articulation of the superordinary role of the Royals as one is likely to find. The monarch, and Royal Family more generally, are a symbol of British nationhood and the keystone of what Nairn (1988) calls England/Britain's peculiarly 'backward' national identity:

*a viable popular patriotism from which the dangerous acids of populism and egalitarianism were bleached out* (pg. 136).
For Nairn argues that instead of equality born out of true popular sovereignty, the British accepted a 'phoney yet concrete and imaginable sense of equality' before the Crown (ie. whether one is a Duke or a peasant, 'we' are all subjects of the monarch). Perhaps more than anything else it is this national dimension which serves to distinguish the significance of the monarchy/Royal Family from other non-royal celebrities and soap operas.

Holden reconstructs the Royals' transformation into showbusiness stars as something which is likely to lead, not to the insulation and preservation of the institution (as Coward argues), but to its eventual destruction. He calls the aristocracy 'the idle rich at play'. He also points out that the Royals exhibit most of the trappings of aristocracy – the large estates, the mansion houses and the country lifestyles. Yet the Family's preservation depends upon their being seen as distinct from this negatively valued social group. The Queen manages this, Holden claims, by some 'personal magic' (although he later represents this in a de-mystified form as a 'shrewdly maintained personal mystique'). But the key to their particularization is the contract they hold with the British people. It requires of them that they have to pay for their privileges both by acting as our ambassadors abroad and by being the embodiment of 'our' (bourgeois) values. Should they begin to neglect these duties and responsibilities then they cease to be distinguishable from the plummy-voiced toffs. This, Holden warns, would result in the termination of the contract and the withdrawal of national support, which would signal the end of the institution. For if Royalty are to continue to reign over us, they must be our servants. And one aspect of this service is that they should be like us. They have to earn what they get, working hard to maintain their dignity and mystique.
CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSIONS AND DEVELOPMENTS

There are several ways in which this thesis could be said to make an academic contribution. Most straightforwardly, in setting out to examine popular press representations of the monarchy/Royal Family the present study contributes to what is a much under researched aspect of British social and cultural life. Secondly, in using a combination of quantitative and qualitative techniques of analysis (albeit unequally) this thesis may contribute something to a debate about methods of social research (see Bryman, 1988). The quantitative analysis provides the first detailed evidence about the volume and salience of Royal related material in the most popular of popular national newspapers.

Very briefly, I discovered that 93% of all of my three month sample of newspapers contained at least one Royal related item and that, on average, each newspaper contained about 19 column inches of related text. Furthermore, I found that this material took up a very prominent position within the newspapers. Indeed, virtually two fifths of my sample papers had something about the Royals on the front page while one newspaper in ten actually led with a Royal related story.

As well as these and other such 'counting tasks' I also sorted the data into a number of major subject matter categories. In so doing, I was able to develop a more general picture of the material both in terms of the range of different topics and the relative frequencies with which each type appeared. Most importantly, however, this quantitative map of the data provided a context into which the subsequent and necessarily more focused qualitative analyses could be situated.

Apart from Chapter 4, the analytical work contained within this thesis is qualitative in nature. This reflects the nature of the questions taken to the data. For example, this thesis is primarily concerned with examining the ways in which these Royal related newspaper items are constructed. As such, an analytical method was required which paid attention to the subtle
patterning of the texts; a technique of analysis which is sensitive to, rather than glosses over, the existence of variation and contradiction. Accordingly I chose to adopt the methods of discourse analysis as set out within Potter and Wetherell's (1987) volume Discourse and Social Psychology.

This discourse analytical approach to the topic provided me with much more than just a methodological guide. It also suggested one level of explanation for the texts' constructions. For it pays attention to how accounts are constructed in order to accomplish a variety of 'actions'. In other words, a discourse analytical approach provides a functional level of explanation for the patterning of any given stretch of discourse. Within the preceding chapters there are many examples of this type of explanation. However, the most sustained treatment of this kind came in Chapter 6 with its analyses of press representations of Prince Charles. For there we saw how, in order to promote particular political ideologies (as well as themselves), the newspapers constructed representations of the Prince in their own image.

I would like to draw a parallel here between this aspect of discourse analytical theory and the work of the culturalists as described in Chapter 3. For just as the culturalists stressed human agency and the active use of culture, (e.g. Williams, 1963; Hoggart, 1984/1957) so do discourse analysts portray people as having the power to use language creatively. That is, people have a mastery of and over discourse. However, the parallel can be expanded further. For just as the culturalists were involved in a creative tension with the structuralists over the primacy of culture vis-à-vis experience, so too is the discourse analysts' image of the language user counter-balanced by an opposing view which sees language as 'speaking through people'. And just as Cultural Studies, rather than choosing between the culturalists and the structuralists thrived upon the tension, so this thesis embraces competing notions of the relationship between language and its speakers.

The counter-balancing weight to the emphasis of discourse analysts upon the functional level of language use comes from Billig et al's (1988) work on 'ideological dilemmas'. Central to this collection of studies is the conception of the cultural formation as embodying a fragmented and contradictory corpus of ideas and practices. To this extent, therefore, they
share the view of the Marxist theorists mentioned in Chapter 3. However, unlike the Marxists, Billig et al do not align these contradictions with the interests of particular social classes. Instead they talk more generally of there being basic tensions both within and between any given society's 'lived' and 'intellectual' ideologies (ie. its everyday culture and its more formal political, philosophical and religious theorizations respectively).

Another important difference between their work and that of the Marxists (something to which I have already made reference in Chapter 3) is the pivotal role which Billig et al ascribe to these cultural/ideological dilemmas. Indeed, to paraphrase the relevant passage quoted earlier in Chapter 3, they argue that the very existence of these tensions and contradictions permits the possibility of social thinking itself. In other words, when people become socialized into a culture, they inherit the seeds of, or the potential for a whole range of debates and dilemmas. In a sense, therefore, the discourses and arguments precede the actors.

Conceptually, therefore, we can imagine there to be two different generators of discourse. On the one hand we have the view of the discourse analysts, which sees the social actors themselves producing thoughts, texts and talk in the process of getting on with their everyday lives. On the other hand, we have the authors of Ideological Dilemmas who see ideology (or culture) itself as the generator of discourse. For them, ideas and practices exist as reagents which combine with each other to produce thoughts, texts and talk.

To be fair, however, the opposition I describe here is really only one of emphasis. Both 'sides' seem to acknowledge the existence and validity of the other. Take, for example, the first two reasons given by Potter and Wetherell (1987) for why the notion of construction is central to a discourse analytical approach to language:

First it reminds us that accounts of events are built out of a variety of pre-existing linguistic resources, almost as a house is constructed from bricks, beams and so on. Second, construction implies the active selection: some resources are included, some omitted (pg. 33 - 34).

Notice that while people are seen as free to include or exclude (ie to design their talk as they wish) they are nevertheless viewed as dealing with a prescribed set of linguistic resources. Similarly, the authors of Ideological
Dilemmas acknowledge the enabling as well as the constraining properties of language (or, more broadly, culture). For just as the cultural formation can historically 'select' or foreground particular practices, knowledges and discourses as the universe from which its 'users' can draw, within these parameters, an individual speaker is free to select particular themes or discourses in the construction of accounts. Put this way, we can see that the image of people as free agents and its contrary representation of them as more fully determined by their culture (as characterized the perspectives of culturalism and structuralism respectively — see Chapter 3) is itself an ideological dilemma running through these (and my own) writings on culture and ideology. In other words, the concept of ideology/culture is itself essentially dilemmatic; expressing both elements of enablement and constraint. So, as well as having 'dilemmas of ideology' (the title of chapter 3 in Billig et al, 1988) we also have ideology/culture as dilemma.

To a certain degree it would be correct to see the present study as an Ideological Dilemmas style treatment of the press representations of monarchy. Indeed, Chapter 5 was dedicated to the task of demonstrating how this material, as typical of most discourse, is patterned, in part at least, by the interplay of various contradictory themes. However, in other respects this thesis departs from and is critical of the work done by Billig et al in that volume. Indeed, I would like to take issue with their formulation of the central concept of the book; namely ideology itself.

As I have already mentioned, Billig et al (1988) distinguish between two notions of ideology — 'lived' and 'intellectual'. For a definition of lived ideology the authors turn to Mannheim (1960):

Here we refer to the ideology of an age or of a concrete historico-social group, eg. of a class, when we are concerned with the characteristics and composition of the total structure of the mind of this epoch or of this group (pgs. 49–50).

This definition, the authors agree, makes ideology almost coterminous with culture. By an 'intellectual' ideology Billig et al mean a formalized philosophy such as might be produced by professional thinkers. Hence, their overall picture of a social formation's ideology shares something of Gramsci's geological metaphor (see Chapter 3) where a 'bed-rock' of common sense notions and practices is shot through with the sediments of more formal theorizations.
This formulation of the concept is a challenge to what Thompson (1987) called the 'critical' definitions of ideology. For Billig and company try to reveal within their analyses how 'ideology', rather than inhibiting thought and action, provides the very raw materials for their conduct. They hoped to show that 'ideology' enables people to say and do things rather than representing distorted or false images of the world in which they live. However, while I feel that their analyses are of great theoretical value and insight, I would argue that they could have better, or more usefully, titled their book (and, of course, the phenomena it concerns) Cultural Dilemmas (indeed, in this thesis I have indicated this concern by adopting the somewhat clumsy couplet — cultural/ideological). For, in so doing, the concept of ideology could be saved, in both senses of the term, for the very important business of talking about where particular discursive formulations serve to sustain relations of domination.

It might seem that a call for the renaming of their work is scant criticism. However, I would also argue that, as it stands, the force of Ideological Dilemmas counsels against such an important business as looking for the operations of ideology (in the critical sense for which I would have it reserved). To illustrate this point I will draw upon an example from the pages of Ideological Dilemmas itself. In the introduction to their book Billig et al state that they are concerned:

not merely with the dilemmatic aspects of common sense in general, but particularly with those dilemmatic aspects which have ideological roots... Of particular interest for a study of contemporary ideology is the ideology of liberalism. Not only have concepts of liberalism been transmitted into everyday thinking, but they are reproduced dilemmatically. Thus liberalism contains opposing themes, whose opposition enables endless debate and argument (pg. 30).

An example of the dilemmatic nature of liberalism is provided later in the book by way of a critique of other political and social theorists.

As regards modern capitalist society, a number of theorists have claimed that the dominating principle is that of 'individualism'. This assumption will be outlined, and then criticized because of its underestimation of the dilemmatic aspects of ideology (pg. 34).

They then go on to argue that while
there is no denying that the values of individual rights are strongly held in modern capitalist, democratic societies... this does not mean that a value for individual freedom has itself an unopposed freedom in the modern world (pg. 35).

Here, they draw a parallel between individualism and the common sense maxim 'Too many cooks spoil the broth', pointing out that just as the latter is checked or countered by the antithesis 'Many hands make light work', so too is the philosophy of individualism counter-balanced by the values of unselfishness and social responsibility.

Now if we conceive of the struggles between different cultural orders as arguments, how, we might wonder, can an argument, even temporarily, be won, given that the antithesis to any given thesis is so readily at hand? In other words, how does a ruling class establish its dominant position other than by direct force (via its Repressive State Apparatuses)? How does it, in the words of Hall (1977), manage to win the consent of the subordinated classes to its continuing sway? According to Clarke et al (1981) (as quoted in Chapter 3) a ruling class establishes a state of hegemonic control by successfully representing its particular cultural order as the Culture for all. In other words, a dominant ideology exists when the subordinated classes experience themselves and the world, not in terms of their own sets of understandings, but in terms of the dominant class' cultural order. The key feature, therefore, of an ideology is the ability to dominate and suppress alternative ways of understanding the world.

On a more concrete level, we can see something of the same argument advanced by Hall (1988) in his analysis of Thatcherism (see Chapter 3). Hall claims that part of the success of Thatcherism was the 'mastery of an unequal equilibrium' between the contrary themes of private and public. Once again we could imagine this as a battle between David and Goliath where, in the case of Thatcherism, the two combatants symbolize the public and the private respectively. So too could we cast the value of individual freedom as Goliath, overshadowing the puny David of social responsibility. And it is in this sense of there being an imbalance between contrary themes that make Billig et al (1988) wrong to criticize those who characterize modern capitalist, democracies as 'individualist'.

We can say, therefore, that one way in which ideology operates to sustain relations of domination is by upsetting the balance between competing
themes or values. Then, just as certain groups or classes dominate others, an idea or value can come to dominate its antidote. They become, in Marx's terminology, the 'ruling ideas of the epoch'. Further, the strength of the rule (of ideology) is directly related to the extent of the imbalance between themes/values etc. At the extreme (a hegemonic state) the imbalance is such that the dominated terms or practices slip into absence. For in embracing the dominant cultural order the subordinated classes 'lose sight' of their own, alternative ways of understanding the world. The difficulty, therefore, of resisting or countering a hegemonic state is that it involves the recovery or restoration of what has been lost.

This is a difficulty shared by the analysts of ideological discourses. For in attempting to reveal the contrary nature of 'ideology' (in Billig et al's two senses of the term) the analyst is involved in the redressing of balances. As such, this work represents an act of cultural and political intervention.

Despite the fact that Billig et al (1988) fail to link their analyses to questions of power (it commands a single page reference in the subject index), they nevertheless make an important analytical distinction which has a direct relevance to such work. The distinction they make is between 'explicit' and 'implicit' dilemmatic aspects within discourse. In the first instance one finds both conflicting themes present within the text or talk.

An individual, even in an argumentative situation, may wish to express [both sides of an argument] by simultaneously asserting the reasonableness, or truth, of two rhetorically conflicting elements of social belief. For example, both maxims of an antithetical pair can simultaneously be upheld. Politicians, wishing to appeal to all the values of their audiences, often fill their speeches with this kind of thing: 'On the one hand one cannot gain without venturing, but on the other hand one must look before leaping' (1988, pg. 22).

In terms of my analyses of Royal related newspaper items, there were several instances of where such contradictions appeared in the surface structure of the text. For example, in The Sun (15/7/88) piece 'Stay At Home Fergie!' the dilemma of whether a married woman should 'put her role as a wife of mother first' was explicitly stated at the beginning of the item. Similarly, the ordinary/extraordinary status of the Royal Family was quite often clearly articulated. For example, in the Daily Mail (4/4/88) it was said of Princess Diana that:
she may be a fairytale princess to the public, but she is also the perfect housewife

(NB. The presence of the superordinary aspect in the description of Diana as the 'perfect' housewife). However, the clearest example of the ordinary/extraordinary dialectic appeared in an item, not about Royalty, but about Mrs. Thatcher: 'The extraordinary ordinary woman inside No. 10' (Daily Express, 2/1/88). Sliding slightly back down the scale to a less explicit example, The Sun (15/7/88) item concerning 'Fergie's dilemma' featured a fairly overt tension between tradition and modernity. However, this instance of a dilemmatic tension differs somewhat from those so far considered. For in this case, while both the 'modern' and the 'traditional' ways of mothering find reference within the text, they are not accorded equal status. It is not a matter of 'on the one hand the modern ways are good, but on the other hand so are the traditional ways'. As I noted in Chapter 5 when discussing this article at length, all of the women represented advocated a modern way of mothering (even though in one instance the proposed 'modern way' sounded distinctly traditional). Instead, the ways of mothering identified as being traditional were held up as rhetorical targets to be attacked and knocked down.

However, as I demonstrated in my analysis of the item (see Chapter 5) the establishment of this particular unequal equilibrium is predicated upon a particular version of history. It is based upon a view of history as progressive, where society is becoming ever more enlightened, on a road towards the Truth. Crucially, however, the antithetical counter-part to this progressive world view; namely the 'Golden Years' version of history, is absent from the text. In other words it remains an implicit dilemmatic element.

In examining the explicitly expressed dilemmatic aspects, the analyst can broadly follow the meanings which the communicator intended to express. However, the implicit meanings can go beyond the overt intentions of the communicator, for they can be contained within the semantic structure of the discourse itself. To bring these implicit meanings to the surface the analyst faces a greater interpretative or hermeneutic task, for a counter-theme needs to be interpreted within discourse which seems prima facie to be arguing straightforwardly for a particular point (Billig et al, 1988, pgs. 22–23, emphasis in original).

The analyses contained within the last three chapters have revealed a
number of these implicit dilemmatic aspects. For example, in the item 'Stay At Home Fergiel' analysed in Chapter 5, we saw how the various protagonists drew upon a particular version of Nature in the construction of their arguments. That is, they reproduced a view of nature which sees it as a positive, mysterious and delicately balanced system. Absent from the text, however, was any of the alternative constructions of Nature, of which the Hobbesian view is an example (i.e. Nature as basic, savage and evil; opposed to civilization).

The concealment is not a deliberate or even subconscious concealment, but may operate within layers of meaning of language. Discourse which seems to be arguing for one point may contain implicit meanings which could be made explicit to argue for the counter point. Thus discourse can contain its own negations, and these are part of its implicit, rather than explicit, meaning. The analyst should not be afraid to engage in hermeneutics in order to read these implicit meanings (Billig et al, 1988, pg. 23).

There are strong connections here with the work of Derrida, as described in Chapter 3. For just as he argued that the meaning of a spoken or written term has to be seen in relation to the system of other 'absent' terms from which it was selected, one version of history or nature has to be seen in relation to its absent counterpart(s). And, in Derridean terminology, one version always already inhabits the other. According to discourse analysts, a speaker will select one term or version over the alternatives according to specific role it has to perform within the account or argument under construction. For example, if I wanted to argue against the recent relaxation of the laws upon amateurism in rugby union, my argument would be best served by the 'Golden Years' version of history. For so situated, I could call upon the idea that allowing players to benefit financially from the game destroys or perverts something of the traditional character or spirit of the game; as something played by gentlemen purely for its own sake.

Billig et al are certainly right to argue that the discourse analyst faces a considerably harder task in revealing implicit, as opposed to explicit, meanings. Describing what is there in the text is always going to be easier than working out what might otherwise have been said. However, in this respect the discourse analyst has a significant advantage over her non-specialist counterparts (i.e. the public). For they can study a whole range of representations of an event or object paying particular attention to the
variations between them. Because the construction of an account will vary according to the particular discursive/rhetorical functions for which it is designed, given a broad enough selection of representations, the analyst may well be in a position to see, for any given example, not only what has been included, but how it might otherwise have been constructed (i.e. what has been omitted).

However, this need not necessarily be the case. Thinking back to Chapter 3 and the sections on ideology and hegemony, we could imagine a cultural formation where the sum of available representations of the world systematically omit certain alternative constructions. In other words, at any given point in time a society may have banished particular versions of the world into semi-permanent absence. For the analyst to recover these versions, for her to recognize these absences, represents an even higher order of difficulty. For it is to reveal the limits or boundaries of our own consciousness. Indeed, the only way to gain these insights is to remove oneself from the here and/or now of one's cultural situation. In other words, the analyst can hope to recover the lost terms or versions by comparing their own cultural formation either with others (i.e. cross-cultural studies) or with what it used to be in the past (i.e. historical studies).

Let me make this discussion more concrete by considering the case of Thatcherism as studied by Stuart Hall (1988). After more than a decade of Thatcherism certain aspects of this dominating cultural order may have settled down into the bed-rock of British common sense. Perhaps the prioritization of the private over the public, as noted by Hall, ceases to appear contentious, taking on instead an air of inevitability or naturalness. People might commonly talk in terms of getting 'value for money' without fully realizing the historico-cultural specificity of this discourse. The point is that when both the dominant and the dominated groups know of no alternative ways of talking about their world, then the ideology which serves to sustain relations of domination is at its most potent. Nevertheless, Hall was able to escape this common sense, and in so doing sketch the outlines of Thatcherism, by comparing British culture of the 1980s with the post-War situation. By this method Hall was able to identify a dramatic shift in the values 'held' by the British public.
Just because a given account of an event or object draws exclusively from one version amongst others does not make it ideological. A stretch of discourse which expresses certain theses whilst omitting to mention or acknowledge their counter-balancing antitheses need not be an ideological discourse. According to the critical definition of the concept (the one I have argued for here) something has to help sustain, or indeed create, relations of domination in order for it to be so classified. Therefore, a particular construction of an event could be ideological when used in one context, but not in another. However, I would like to illustrate two ways in which representations of the monarchy/Royal Family can have an ideological impact in the fully critical sense of the term.

Monarchy and Social Class

Talking of the 'moral problem' of monarchy, Wilson (1989) comments:

The view has often been expressed that class differences are a thing of the past in Britain. Leonard Harris, for example, said in 1966 that class barriers raised by birth had almost completely gone (pg. 16).

However, drawing upon a wide range of survey and other research data, Wilson demonstrates that:

Britain is still a grossly inequitable society, with widespread injustice linked to unjustifiable but deeply entrenched caste and class systems.

For example, Wilson cites Rentoul (1987) who found that the richest 1% of the British population owns, at least, 21% of the marketable wealth, while the richest 10% owns 53%. At the other end of the scale, the poorest 50% of the population owns just 6% of wealth. Forty two percent of all land is still owned by the old landed aristocracy. Black (1980) found that there were:

marked differences in mortality rates between the occupational classes, for both sexes and at all ages.

Black concluded that a 'class gradient' could be observed for most causes
of death. Halsey et al. (1980) also discovered that the effects of measured intelligence on the likelihood of educational success were 'surprisingly unimportant'. Much more influential factors were found especially social class stratification. Statistics of this kind lead Wilson to conclude that:

the differences in social conditions in Britain are largely related to wealth and social position. These in turn are 'closed'. The rich and privileged remain rich and privileged from one generation to another. Notwithstanding the odd rags to riches story that proves the rule, the poor and deprived remain poor and deprived from one generation to another (pg. 23).

Yet despite the fact that these class distinctions remain largely undisturbed, claims that Britain is either becoming or already is a classless (or single class) society can still be regularly heard. For example, The Sun (29/9/88), sounding the death knell of the Labour movement, published an article which declared 'No Working Class Left To Vote Labour'. Referring to the numbers of council house owners who, under the Tories, had purchased their own homes, the article told a tale of embourgeoisement, claiming:

The working class have been transformed into a new middle class.

Similarly, the Sunday Express (17/1/88), in talking about the father of Georgia May (a girl who at that time was alleged to be Prince Edward's new love) said of his appearance upon the Royal scene:

it is a fascinating indication of how the Royal Family has expanded its circle of friends to what I would call the "new Victorians". Quite simply, David May, property developer, boat builder and city whizz-kid does not come from the aristocratic background people associate with the Royal Family. Rather he is a shining example of today's classless achiever - very ambitious, hard working and innovative (my emphasis).

Then again in this morning’s Daily Mail (28/11/90) an article welcoming in Britain's new Prime Minister John Major, following his success in the second Tory leadership ballot, declared:

The second great advantage in this excellent result is that the winner is a product of the classless meritocracy (my emphasis).
Now, I would argue that these are ideological constructions. This is not because they claim something as true which is, in fact, not true (although I would argue that they do) but because their effect is to invalidate or make illegitimate an important resource for accounting for people's social conditions.

In order to explain this point I would like to draw a parallel between capitalist society and a running race. In both, the participants exist in a state of competition where each tries, in theory at least, to beat the others. Now, a classless society would represent a 'straight race' in which all competitors begin from the same starting line and follow the same course. The winners of the race (such as David May in the above Sunday Express article) are those either with natural ability for racing, or who try the hardest. This type of social and economic organization is what is meant by a meritocracy. However, a society containing social classes can be compared to a handicapped race, except that in this case the system of handicapping unbalances rather than balances the chances of different runners' success. For instance, some participants may begin the race with a considerable head start whereas others would have to face additional hurdles or obstacles. The resulting race for success would be heavily influenced by such factors with the handicapped competitors more likely to trail in well behind the more privileged runners.

Now imagine that we were to slip down to the track side and ask a number of the competitors to account for their performances and finishing positions. We could imagine there to be two (at least) 'repertoires' used within these accounts (see Potter and Wetherell, 1987 for a discussion of interpretative repertoires). On the one hand, we would hear talk of individual ability and effort. A winner might congratulate himself (sic) on his determination to stay ahead of the field. A loser might choose to bemoan their lack of fitness or enthusiasm for the race. Either way, they would be talking about the race (ie. society) as a just world (Lerner, 1970) where people get precisely what they deserve. However, there is an alternative repertoire from which accounts can be constructed; one which invokes the system of handicapping (ie. the class system). A winner could attribute his success to the fifty metre lead with which he began the race, while a back marker could blame his poor performance on the prohibitive influence of the high hurdles placed exclusively in his lane.
The point is that a discourse of social class often represents a discourse of injustice operating in opposition to themes from the just world repertoire. Hence, to deny the existence of social classes in Britain is to make illegitimate this entire repertoire of accounting. It is to establish another unequal equilibrium between opposing discourses, resulting, in this case, in a much less critical, more accepting public.

I am not trying to suggest that discourses of social class no longer find expression on the lips of British people. However, ten years ago The Times (10/9/80) reported that 71% of British people believed that the nation's problems were completely or at least partly due to social class/caste distinctions. In other words, it was a highly utilized discourse. Since then we have experienced more than a decade of Thatcherism during which British people have been told, on an almost daily basis, that the class boundaries are steadily dissolving (despite evidence to suggest that under the three successive Tory administrations Britain has become increasingly divided and inequitable — see Wilson, 1989 and Osmond, 1988). Indeed, I would argue that the extent to which discourses of social class have been made subordinate and/or rendered absent can be seen when looking at the press representation of the Royal Family.

Now one might have thought that the fact of their living on huge country estates and pursuing typically aristocratic activities such as polo and fox hunting would have made Royal related newspaper items a prime site for themes of social class. For as Anthony Holden commented in his Daily Mail (2/3/88) article 'Time for Fergie to stop going over the top' (analysed in the previous chapter) the Royal Family are clearly members of the landed gentry. However, far from being an ubiquitous feature of their press representation, the discourses of social class made only occasional appearances in these Royal related texts.

To be sure, when they did appear it was usually in the context of an item which, in representing the Royals as aristocrats, was highly critical. For example, in The Sun (5/2/88) there appeared an item entitled 'Fearless Fergie is acting like a daft duchess' in which the Duchess of York was said to be 'hooraying louder than the loudest henrietta'. Similarly, in a
News of the World (20/12/87) item ('Scrooge Charles Cancels Xmas') the Prince of Wales was criticized for cancelling his staff's Christmas party and then throwing 'two toffee-nosed Christmas thrashes for the chosen few', his 'posh neighbours'. Significantly, within the entire archive, there was not a single example of an item in which a Royal was positively represented as an aristocrat.

However, more usually the themes of social class were implicit within or absent from the texts. That is to say that the existence of social classes is most usually denied, albeit implicitly rather than explicitly (as with The Sun, 29/9/88 and Sunday Express, 17/1/88 items mentioned above). The way this is accomplished fits perfectly with Clark et al's (1981) definition of ideology vis-à-vis culture as given in Chapter 3. A dominant culture becomes a dominant ideology, they argued, when it succeeds in representing itself as the Culture, such that the subordinated classes or groups 'experience themselves in terms provided by the dominant culture'. Paradoxically, therefore, the dominant cultural order is rendered invisible by its very omnipresence. And, following this, in order for such a dominant order to be brought back into view, an alternative system of representation needs to be (re)identified. In just this way the theme of social class is made absent. As I shall demonstrate, the dominant, omnipresent order is that of the middle classes, obliterating all other classes and, in so doing, disappearing itself.

I touched upon this theme in the previous chapter. There I talked about how, historically, the preservation of the institution of the monarchy has been bound up with its representation as a typically bourgeois family unit. As Williamson (1986) notes:

It was Queen Victoria who first projected such an image - her and Albert's family were the epitome of middle class (Victorian) domestic culture, and during her reign photography began to play a formative role in the representation of that culture. Today, shots of the Royal Family in their living room round the fireplace, or having a picnic with their dogs, are some of the most-used images in "royal albums" and magazines. And everything about such photos seems to invoke, not so much aristocratic values, as the values of the traditional upper working class/ lower middle class family (pg. 84).
In the last chapter I emphasized the way in which the institution of the monarchy reacted to the changes in British society; 'identifying' itself with the dominant social class of the day. However, it would be misleading to assume that the Royal Family is exclusively responsible for its own representation. As I have demonstrated in the preceding chapters, people, both professional and otherwise, are commonly engaged in the active construction of Royal representations. Indeed, as Nairn (1988) seems to imply, the representation of the monarchy as an essentially middle class family unit represents the 'harnessing' of the symbolic power of the institution, by the middle classes, for the purposes of their own furtherance.

By its cult of King-and-family, a solid bourgeois family could affirm its own values and challenge those of society's elite (pg. 169).

Nairn wrote this of British society in the reign of King George III (1760 - 1820). Now, my point is that while contemporary representations of monarchy are still functioning to reaffirm middle class values, today those values are no longer the challengers, but the champions. In other words, the roles of David and Goliath have been reversed. Indeed, not only has the cultural order of the middle classes taken over the role of Goliath from that of the aristocracy, but such is its dominance that virtually all signs of David (and struggle) have disappeared. For while the Royal Family remains the paragon of middle class values it is no longer represented as such. Instead, as I have shown many times within this thesis, the Royals are represented as an extraordinary/ ordinary family (see, for example, the description of the Royal Christmas in Today, 22/12/87 - discussed in Chapter 7, and also Billig, 1986).

Furthermore, what are in fact different or alternative cultural orders to that of the middle classes (including ways of speaking, dressing, domestic arrangements and lifestyles, aspirations and loyalties) are represented as abnormal and/or morally improper. For example, in the previous chapter I showed how Tom Utley, writing in the Sunday Express (2/9/90), assigned opposing moral evaluations to two different, class related domestic arrangements. Attacking the aristocratic tradition of employing nannies to act as their children's primary caretakers, Utley congratulated Princess Diana for having rejected this practice and, in so doing, acted as 'a proper
mother to her children' (see Chapter 7).

The topics of motherhood and the domestic environment bring me to the second important area (besides social class) upon which representations of the monarchy/Royal Family can be seen to have an ideological impact.

Monarchy and Gender

Drawing upon Merton's (1976) concept of sociological ambivalence I have argued (in Chapter 7) that it is part of the role of being Royal that one should be simultaneously ordinary and extraordinary. Furthermore, I have demonstrated how this particular tension or dilemma provides the 'driving force' for much of the discourse about the monarchy. As I have stressed a number of times, the extraordinariness of the characters derives from the very fact of their being Royal. However, I would like to focus briefly upon the construction of ordinariness as it relates to representations of gender roles. For just as the class specificity of Royal representations can be occluded by their being represented as (in part) an ordinary family, so too can this device be used to advance a 'naturalized' version of gender roles at the expense of other alternatives. So the question that I wish to address is: what are the images of 'ordinary' men and women that form part of the total representation of Royalty?

One of the more common ways in which the ordinariness of the Royal Family was signified was by representing them as flesh and blood people. Especially significant, it seems, are items which report upon the ailments and failings of Royal physiques (as if the extraordinariness of the Family should stretch to providing them with eternal youth and fitness). For example, in a section entitled 'Mystic Significance of a Small Bald Patch' Nairn (1988) quotes The Sun (9/6/77) headline 'Oops, Charles! There's a Patch on Your Thatch!'. Ten years later, the fascination with the Royals' health and fitness is as strong as ever. Whether it is The Sun (3/12/87) on Princess Margaret's sore throat, the Daily Mail (25/1/88) on Prince Philip's arthritic wrists or the same newspaper (31/12/87) commenting on the Duchess of York's expanding waistline the intrigue is the same.
However, perhaps the single most common way in which the ordinariness of the Royals is signified is through their being represented as a family. Indeed, in Chapter 4 we saw that the subject matter category 'Family Fortunes' was the largest of the nine, accounting for 146 of the 965 (approx. 15%) items in the archive. This category, we might remember, consisted of items which cast the Royals within their familial roles as mothers, sons, brothers etc. For example, *The Sun* (15/4/88) article which describes Princess Diana popping into Sainsbury's 'just like any other busy young mum' would belong to this category. It clearly trades upon the contradiction of someone so extraordinary doing something so ordinary.

Now I would argue that this item is ideological because the image of the ordinary mum which it constructs conforms to the gender stereotype of a woman. Like Coward (1984) I would argue that the representations of, in particular, Royal women are extremely traditional images. Similarly, in the *Daily Express* (2/1/88) article 'The extraordinary ordinary woman inside No. 10' (discussed in Chapter 7) Mrs. Thatcher's ordinariness was constructed around the image of her arriving home (having been out running the country) handbag in hand, in time to cook husband Denis his supper.

Furthermore, what makes these representations of Royal Family life even more ideologically powerful is that they, unlike Mrs. Thatcher, have the additional role of being superordinary. We can remind ourselves of the nature of this role by considering the following excerpt from the *Daily Mail* (11/3/88) in which it is most clearly articulated.

> It means all the more at a time when so many of our politicians seem purely hard faced and self seeking, to have some figureheads in public life who can uphold standards of decency. [The public] see in the Royal Family a pattern to follow. The values which the Queen and her family appear to enshrine are values based on the family, on unselfishness, on good humour, in the best sense, on good manners. [They are] behaving as we should expect an ideal young family should behave (my emphasis).

[see also Chapter 7 for a discussion of the Royal Family's superordinary role] As Coward points out, the notion that ideal behaviour for a girl is to
get married at the age of twenty and have children almost immediately (as did Princess Diana) is a very traditional, conservative notion. So too are the images of Diana as a 'perfect housewife' (Daily Mail, 4/4/88) and of the Duchess of York as a 'Supermum' (Daily Mirror, 26/1/88) equally powerful in so far as they carry with them a strong sense of what is normal and morally appropriate (this is not to say that, within any given Royal related item, these traditional discourses might not find themselves implicitly or explicitly opposed by more liberated constructions of womanhood – see for example my analysis of The Sun, 15/7/88 item 'Stay At Home Fergie!' in Chapter 5).

In summary, therefore, I would argue that the concept of ideology needs to be rescued from Billig et al's (1988) inclusive interpretation. Nevertheless, I hope to have demonstrated how the authors' distinction between explicit and implicit dilemmatic aspects of discourse can be utilized in the identification of ideological operations in the fully critical sense of the term.

I would like to continue this concluding chapter by aiming a few critical comments at the present study's other theoretical foundation stone. In Chapter 3 I talked of there being three levels at which discourse operates: the thematic, functional and cultural/ideological levels. As I have hopefully shown, the discourse analyst can examine texts and talk at each of these levels. They can, in the case of the present work, see what the newspapers are saying about the Royal Family, analyse the ways in which these constructions accomplish various rhetorical and discursive 'moves', as well as examining the ways in which the discourse helps to reaffirm or challenge dominant cultural meanings and practices.

However, I would argue that the discourse analytical approach is incapable of satisfactorily answering one of the most basic, but important questions concerning media representations of monarchy. That is, it cannot say why there is so much talk about the Royals. Perhaps the only explanation available to the discourse analyst is that there already exists a large repertoire of Royal related themes in the British cultural 'library'. So, just as the eskimo, quite literally, has much to say about snow, so the British person is destined to talk ad infinitum about their Royal Family. However,
at best this seems to be only a partial (and even then minor) explanation. Of course, within this thesis I have argued, following Billig et al (1988), that the existence of various cultural/ideological tensions within discourse ensures the continuation of debate and argument. However, accepting this, we are still some way from understanding why the particular topic of the Royal Family should be so widely discussed.

Take, for example, the extraordinary/ordinary dialectic which, as we have seen, lies at the heart of many representations of Royalty. It seems fair to say that the fact of the Royal Family's being simultaneously like and unlike us ordinary folk is a source of great interest to people. It follows, therefore, that because people are interested in the Royal Family they will want to read and talk about them. Now this might seem not worth saying. However, the discourse analyst is not happy with this level of explanation. To begin with they might argue that the analyst need not involve herself with the attribution of motives. Instead, they might say, why not study expressions of interest within ordinary people's discourse? The problem with this is that the discourse analyst, rather than taking such expressions at 'face value' — as an explanation of why somebody talks about the Royals, eschews questions of veracity (eg. whether this expression genuinely corresponds to some psychological state) and instead chooses to examine (in this case) either the discursive construction of 'interest' or the rhetorical 'effects' of its expression. As Potter and Wetherell (1987) themselves put it:

We argue that the researcher should bracket off the whole issue of the quality of accounts as accurate or inaccurate descriptions of mental states. The problem is being construed at entirely the wrong level. Our focus is exclusively on discourse itself: how it is constructed, its functions, and the consequences which arise from different discursive organization (pg. 178 emphasis in original).

In talking about the relationship of discourse analysis and traditional social psychology Potter and Wetherell (1987) argue that much of the time discourse analysis asks a different set of questions. For example, imagine that someone declares herself 'thirsty'. The discourse analyst is concerned, not with the experience of thirst (or even whether the person is thirsty), but with the issue of whether or not the expression functions as a request (ie. whether it results in the provision of a drink). However, it seems to
me that some of the questions or issues which discourse analysts are choosing to 'bracket off' might be interesting and important ones which require answers.

In certain respects the discourse analytical approach parallels the behaviourist movement of the mid-twentieth century in restricting itself to the study of that which can be observed (recorded, transcribed and read). And despite the disclaimer, I feel that they do follow closely in the footsteps of Harré (1977) and Harré and Secord (1972) in trusting that 'it will all come out in the wash'. In other words, they would expect the significance of monarchy to emerge in people's talk and so be available for the discourse analyst to study. However, this assumption seems to me to be problematic for two different reasons. Firstly, I think that this act of faith is unwarranted because people do not always say what they mean. They can talk around something, lie or stay silent. Indeed, Potter and Wetherell (1987) stress this very point themselves, acknowledging that the meaning of a piece of discourse cannot be simply and straightforwardly 'read off'.

Unfortunately, as we all know, when people are persuading, accusing, requesting etc. they do not always do so explicitly. When someone makes a request — perhaps they want to borrow your calculator — they do not always politely but explicitly ask: 'Could I borrow your calculator this evening, please?'. Often they are less direct than this, perhaps couching the request as an abstract question: 'Would you mind if I borrowed your calculator this evening?' or even more obliquely: 'it is going to drive me mad doing all these statistics by hand tonight' (Brown and Levinson, 1978). It may be to the speaker's advantage to make a request indirectly because it allows the recipient to reject it without making the rejection obvious (Drew, 1984). On the whole, people prefer to head off undesirable acts like rejections before they happen (Drew, 1986) (Potter and Wetherell, 1987 pgs. 32-33).

Notice that the themes of motive and desire enter into this passage quite explicitly. In other words, here we find discourse analysts explaining patterns of discourse in terms of concepts (eg. motive and desire) which they claim to have bracketed off. However, I would argue that this level of explanation is both valid and important for they influence at the most fundamental level what people will and will not say. Secondly, it is quite plausible that a person might be ignorant of their own motives and desires. For example, I may not be able to say why I like a particular person or
object or I might not be able to account for why I did something. If pressed, I may be able to come up with some kind of explanation or account, but there is no guarantee that these are not ad hoc causal hypotheses or conventionally derived beliefs about behaviour (Nisbett and Wilson, 1977). Hence, when we hear that one of the most common justifications for the continued existence of the British monarchy is that they bring in revenue as a tourist attraction (see Billig, forthcoming) the analyst can be justifiably skeptical. For surely this is just a rationalization which in no way accounts for what Nairn (1988) calls the British 'obsession'. In this respect, discourse analysts might benefit from linking their analyses to more traditional forms of social psychology (such as psychoanalysis).

Therefore, in the remaining few pages I would like to put aside questions of construction and function to consider, very briefly, the social psychological significance of the monarchy/Royal Family in contemporary Britain. In so doing, I will be drawing heavily from the work of both Tom Nairn (1988) and Michael Billig (forthcoming).

The central thesis within Nairn's analysis of monarchy, as denoted by its title, is that the British see in their Royal Family an enchanted image of themselves.

There is no power to see ourselves as others see us, and like anyone else the British look into a mirror to try and get a sense of themselves. In doing so they are luckier but ultimately less fortunate than other peoples: a gilded image is reflected back, made up of sonorous past achievement, enviable stability, and the painted folklore of their Parliament and Monarch. Though aware that this enchanted glass reflects only a decreasingly useful lie they have naturally found it difficult to give up. After all, the 'reflection' is really their structure of national identity - what they seem to be is itself an important dimension of what they are (pg. 9).

Therefore, in a profound sense, when people think and talk about the Royal Family they are simultaneously thinking and talking about themselves as British people. And, as Malcolm Muggeridge and William Hamilton M.P. quickly discovered, criticism of the Royal Family, however slight, can be experienced by many British people as a direct attack upon themselves (see Hamilton, 1975). Ziegler (1978), who devotes an entire chapter of his
book to the topic of the letters Hamilton received from various members of the British public, recognized in them something quite significant and serious. He said:

the extent to which people are preoccupied by thoughts of the Royal Family... these letters reveal that thousands of otherwise apparently sane and well-balanced people feel so passionately on the subject that they consider any point of view but their own as at best absurd, at the worst vicious or treasonable (quoted in Nairn, 1988, pg. 104).

At first this kind of voodoo-type relationship appears quite bizarre. How is it that so many British people feel the pain when a pin is stuck into the Royal Family? For an answer we only have to turn to my concept of superordinariness. Let me remind you of the Daily Mail (11/3/88) article, referred to earlier in this chapter, where the concept was most clearly articulated:

[The public] see in the Royal Family a pattern to follow. The values which the Queen and her family appear to enshrine are values based on the family, on unselfishness, on good humour, in the best sense, on good manners. [They are] behaving as we should expect an ideal young family should behave.

Now in Chapter 7 I argued that the British public really have no need of this Royal example. I claimed that in order for the Royals to be either praised or criticized for their behaviour, an independent ideal must already exist (against which their behaviour is compared). However, in certain respects, this is too rational a conclusion. Indeed, the quotation from Nairn (1988) that I used to support that argument (pg. 57 – concerning the public reaction to the attempted kidnapping of Princess Anne and Captain Mark Phillips) which asked:

Suppose that by misfortune the Royal couple had been shot, even shot dead. Would this really have signalled the imminent triumph of a new barbarism? They are... a 'symbol' of British national decency, not this quality in person, Can our 'inner spiritual essence' now be so vulnerable that the removal of an emblem is liable to crush it?

was answered by Nairn himself who said:
Such obvious considerations were beside the point. The spiritual point of the outburst [by The Times] was precisely that our inner essence is somehow over—invested in symbols like Princess Anne and her husband. They actually have become national decency... "in person". This is the only reason why the outrage could be presented in such an amazing fashion — amazing but (one must assume) quite plausible to most Times readers.

The 'amazing' way in which The Times reported the incident was the equation of the attack upon the Royals, not just with an attack on decency, but with an attack upon the Nation itself (this is a topic also discussed in Billig, forthcoming). As one of Billig's respondents put it: "You know, the Queen and that... it's what Britain is, the Queen, the Royal Family". Take away the Royal Family and, as Beryl said in the last chapter (extract No. 5), England would crumble.

In a section entitled 'Monarchy and Nationalism' Nairn (1988) writes:

The Ukanian Monarchy is in essence a heteronomous form of nationalism: that is a variety 'subject to different laws' from the standard forms of that ideology, and 'with different modes of growth' (O.E.D.). One important aspect of that difference is that the Monarchy doesn't appear to be nationalist. It defines itself, necessarily, as being precisely above or beyond 'that sort of thing' (pg. 127).

Nationalism, as Billig (forthcoming) points out, involves more than providing a picture of one's own nation. It also involves the depiction of one's nation within an international context. However, feelings of national pride; that is, a sense of the superiority of one's own nation, are difficult for a people whose national identity is constructed out of values including decency, fair play and good manners. Nationalism is considered a fanatical, irrational and vulgar phenomenon characterizing the behaviour and thinking of foreign people. Indeed, in his analysis of the interviews, Billig (forthcoming) noted a general reluctance amongst the families to expressing pride in their country.

However, revealing a deeper significance to the theme of tourism in Royal related discourse (mentioned earlier), Billig demonstrates how an apparently rational basis for feeling proud of Britain is constructed. And once again the institution of the monarchy takes centre stage. For the
common belief that the Royal Family attracts millions of foreign tourists to Britain each year is seen as evidence of foreign envy. Other nations may be bigger, richer and more powerful, but (so the logic goes) 'we' have got something that 'they' have not; something that 'they', as another of Billig's respondents put it, "would give their eye teeth for".

It is not surprising, therefore, that the monarchy/Royal Family occupies so prominent a position within the British consciousness. For not only does it underpin our sense of who we are, being the very embodiment of our national character, but it is also felt to make Britain what it is — the envy of the world.
Transcription Notation

The following notational conventions were developed by Gail Jefferson. The list that appears below are a sub-section of the examples given in Potter and Wetherell (1987, pgs. 188 – 189).

Square brackets mark overlap between utterances, e.g.
A: Right [ so you
B: [ I'm not sure

An equals sign at the end of a speaker's utterance and at the start of the next utterance indicates the absence of a discernible gap, e.g.
A: Anyway Brian=
B: =Okay okay

A full stop in brackets indicates a pause which is noticeable but too short to measure (there are no measured pauses in our extracts) e.g.
A: I went a lot further (.) than I intended

Square brackets indicate that some transcript has been deliberately omitted. Material inside square brackets is clarificatory information e.g.
A: Brian [the speaker's brother] said [] it's okay
APPENDIX B

Index of Newspaper Items

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WHAT BEAUTS!

You make my day, says HRH the bonzer sheila

PRINCESS Diana muscled in on a bunch of Aussie bunks yesterday. She ever them up and down. And, with a grin as wide as Sydney harbour bridge, she told them they'd made her day.

The blonde, bronzed lilliputian in sombrero and silk-slipper Speedos, were wisty dressed with their royal fan, too.

Diana got together with the beach boys after they had won and exulting triumphant at Wembley, launch of Sydney. First she presented their prizes. Then she paid them her compliments.

After joining the line of men for a picture, the princess told them that Australian beaches were far better than others. "I've looked at 50 of them," she said. "This one is the best."

But 15, 10, Diana couldn't make anything out. "I'm the lady of the lot of you," she said.

James, Aa Ng. didn't take either. He's a gastroenterologist, she said. "It's real beauty."

Cool

While Diana was sitting on the beach, her husband wasucked away in a nearby ground. She took his shirt for company.

It was 4.30pm in the sun and one chum of some other permanent figure was near it. He watched a group of girls running from the sea, followed by one in a seashell dress.

Even though model magazine was being paid by the print, the print family wasדק to have his haust as a。er. Look him in the eyes. And making him over the Indian born Khan. You're wearing a brooch.

MAGIC OF A HAPPY PRINCESS

EVEN by her own high standards, this has been a triumphant week for Diana. At 30 she could surely afford the room that has transformed this forum. She has been lucky to work with such wonderful people and such a wonderful man.

She was asked what she found most wonderful this past week. The way she praised themselves was Second Prize Winner. The way she

TEAMING UP: Diana joins the beach boys for a snapshot. "I've never had a day like this," she said.
DR JACKO

He kisses feet of tragic kids

Caring star Michael Jackson wiped away the tears of some of Britain's most tragic youngsters yesterday after he personally invited them to his home in Encino, LA. The runaway pop idol, currently in America for two weeks, revealed some of his own most precious memories and was hailed as a "hero in the making" by the kids.

GAY SPY BASE WORKER LOSES FIGHT OVER JOB

He admitted one-night stands

A SELF-CONFESSION gay suspended from the GCHQ spy centre yesterday lost his job to get his old job back.

DOCTOR JACKO

3 VOLS OF OLYMPIC CONTENDERS
£9.99 each
Great new videos from International Sport Showcase for armchair and other athletes.

DOCTOR JACKO

Mountbatten killer in gun freedom bid

Party star shuns guests

SELL-OFF MEANS DEARER WATER

NEW RELEASE
108British open Golf US

NEW REPORT
108 British open Golf US

BEACH POISON

NEW RELEASE
108British open Golf US

BEACH POISON

NEW RELEASE
108British open Golf US
THE SECRET MISSIONS OF NURSE EVANS, ROYAL ANGEL

by RICHARD CREEASY

That even a 15-year-old staff nurse earns just £19 a year is vital to life and tax penalties and attempts to go for the Government to cut right and weekend bonuses.

Although she doesn't appear involved in a sensitive political issue like this, she might feel then other than other, if sorry, by the nurse's

The discos queen image hides Diana's caring crusade for the sick and disabled.

Now Charles Joins Hospital Battle Too

ROYAL HEALTH

From Pages

The Prince is very aware of all the possibilities of his role, and I have produced for him a handbook of all local development.

The health and wellbeing of the nation has to be considered, so much more after the Blackpool trawler disaster. We have to take steps to ensure that the public is healthy. We will do all we can.

You will have to ask the Prince himself about his contract.

Secrets

Prince Charles, despite his position as President of the Queen's Nurses and his role in the Royal College of Nursing, is not involved in the organisation.

Now when he is able to cope with her engagements, their health and safety needs and are not prepared to comment on any other matters.

She said: "The Prince of Wales has been the first to have the courage to help the Queen in the course of his engagements."
**Daily Mail**

**COMMENT**

**Rover cleared for lift-off**

FROM the wire bars of the City to the wind-swept piston lines in Solihull, they were taken completely by surprise.

Suddenly, Rover, the Cinderella of State concern, is going to the Privatisation Ball. The whole works — sports cars, family saloons as well as Land Rover — is up for sale.

And the mystery seller? No, not American, not Japanese, but British.

Out of a clear blue sky comes British Aerospace with a bid. This is the country's largest manufacturer of consumer goods, and one that is not in the public eye. But it is a bid that could have significant implications for the whole of the British car industry. It is also a bid that could change the landscape of the automotive world.

The British car industry is in a state of crisis, and the pressure on Rover is mounting. The company is facing financial difficulties, and there is a real possibility of a collapse. The government is considering various options, including the sale of the company. But it is Rover that is the focus of attention.

The government has received a number of bids, but so far, none of them have been satisfactory. The government is looking for a buyer that can commit to investing in the company and ensuring its future.

The bid from BAe is seen as a positive development. The company has a strong track record in the aerospace industry, and it is seen as being able to invest in Rover and ensure its survival.

However, there are concerns about the extent of the government's control over the company. Some argue that Rover should be left to its own devices, while others argue that it needs more government support.

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There are many other factors at play, including the ongoing trade dispute with Japan, the threat of a strike at Rover, and the need for a new government to take over from the current one.

The future of Rover is uncertain, but one thing is clear: the government is determined to do whatever it takes to ensure the survival of this iconic British company.

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**Time for Fergie to stop going over the top**

ANDREW and Fergie go to Hollywood. Even the advance bidding made the monarchist heart sink with apprehension.

Last time he was there, supposedly raising funds for the British Empire, Prince Andrew thought it was a good idea to wear a Union Jack tie. This time, he's on the red carpet of a movie premier, and he's wearing a British flag tie as well.

The Duke of York's appearance in Hollywood is a nostalgic reminder of the days when he was a young man, and the monarchy was at its peak. But now, the times have changed, and the monarchy is facing a new set of challenges.

The Premier, on the other hand, is looking forward to a new chapter in his life. He has been through a lot, from the shining star of the royal family to the crossroads of his career. But now, he's ready to take on a new role, as a Hollywood movie star.

The Premier's relationship with Hollywood is complicated. On the one hand, it's a chance to make a new start, to leave the past behind and embrace the future. On the other hand, it's a reminder of the challenges that come with being a member of the royal family.

The Premier's appearance at the Hollywood premiere is a clear signal of his new path. He's ready to take on a new role, to embrace the challenges that come with it. And as he steps onto the red carpet, he knows that there will be many more adventures to come.
Learning about the world of work

Many teachers are worried about the large number of their pupils who spend their out-of-school hours working, neglecting their homework and often wrecking their chances of gaining entry to university.

The spur for all this moonlighting is not undemanding parents eager for them to contribute to the family kitty but the children's own urge to possess the luxuries of modern life. Some give one of their leisure hours per week in order to buy such things as cars, motorbikes, hi-fi, 1100 designer shirts and continental holidays.

Of course teachers are right to warn youngsters not to sacrifice the future for short-term gain. Yet is there not also something admirable about the sheer dedication of these young people entering the world of work?

Many of today's millionaires, after all, started out in life doing a paper round, as Alan Sugar and Richard Branson, began in business at a young age and missed out on higher education but now employ graduates. At least today's enterprising youngsters are not part of the dependency culture. They have learned the precious lesson that no-one owes them a living and that they will only get paid for doing a service that someone wants.

House prices halt

After some spectacular leaps in the past year, house prices have at last begun to dip. This is a relief. It means that Chancellor Lawson's medicine is working.

That the downturn came in August is not surprising because that was the month when multiple mortgage relief came to an end. The feverish buying in the months before reflected the run-up before the relief came down. But the sharp rise in interest rates has also played its part by reducing the price that a buyer on mortgage could afford.

House-owners would not be human if they did not feel a twinge of disappointment when house prices cannot seem to zoom up for ever. They are bad for first-time buyers, often including their own children. They are also bad for business, because they stop workers moving into prosperous areas.

This first actual fall in house prices for a very long time is also welcome because it has given speculators a jolt. It is healthier for all concerned if the housing boom has at last been reined in.

Royal remedy

Two centuries ago people seeking a cure for the King's Evil used to queue up to be touched by the monarch. Nowadays we've put that sort of nonsense behind us but we have.

None other than this year's Nobel prize winner, Sir James Black, has revived a so-called ElEinra Cure—what is commonly known as evening primrose oil. He has learned that the Thistle Trust is making it at prices which he feels are too high.

Northairner Sir Pever is the Chief Executive of the Thistle Trust Business Unit, the impatient active scheme which has helped disabled youngsters, mainly from deprived inner-city areas, set up more than 1,000 small businesses.

The Thistle Trust is working in the fact that the Trust is making it at prices which he feels are too high.

Very few outside the Thistle Trust are aware that the trust is making evening primrose oil and why such a plant could be so valuable. It is perhaps fitting that the latest attempt to make a serious contribution to medicine should be made by a new group of people who are young but have a wide range of skills.

Drive

The material is already being offered by young people unable to beat the price it is being offered at, there is a good chance that they will expect even to all in the future.

The real Prince behind the mask

The voice on the telephone was soft as ever, polite as ever, but edged in suspicion. 'Well, it said,' if the letters are not to be standarized, what are you going to do about it?'

A week, perhaps, from one of those high-powered TV commercials, or offered from a television sales desk in the business of Prince Charles, the end of all this might have been.

It was seen—on November 4 he had to the advertisement, designed to make millions of young girls swoon set on the shelves of every Boots, fancied that he was, indeed, opening the doors of a new world to them.

But the ad was not for Prince Charles, the princess's own. It was loaded with meaning for all the young girls, of course. The message was clear: 'Discover nature's treasures with Boots. Nothing to lose, nothing to gain.

The next day the Chums were up there—As I was, indeed, opening the doors of a new world to them.

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AS CHARLES NEARS HIS 40TH BIRTHDAY....

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Where silence is out of court

IT'S been apparent in English common law courts for centuries that, if any action is to remain silent during questioning. Otherwise it is known as silence principle oil. It is apparently customary in the USA for taking that silence becomes smack when the defendant is silent in the witness box. But without the new legislation, the witness box is no longer silent. It can be silenced. In England, the witness box is no longer silent. It can be silenced.

This, whose enthusiasm for alternative medicine is well-known, should investigate.

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by NOREEN TAYLOR

T see Prince Charles during the Seventies, most people associated him with his role as a Prince and his future as an heir to the throne. He was a symbol of royalty, a figure of tradition and elegance.

Yet there was one major flaw in his profile: he did not have a wife. In fact, he did not have a serious relationship for a number of years. This was in stark contrast to many of his contemporaries who were marrying and settling down.

Charles had been bajoached in the media for his dating life, and many speculated about his future. He was often seen with attractive young women, but none of them were seriously commitment.

Yet Charles did not believe in settling down until he found the right person. He was looking for someone who shared his values and beliefs, someone who could be a partner in every sense of the word.

As he galloped around the world, he was meeting new people and expanding his horizons. He was learning about different cultures and ways of life, and he was discovering new interests.

But the search for the right woman continued, and eventually, Charles met Princess Diana. She was intelligent,美丽, and had a sense of humor that charmed him.

The two began dating in 1980, and their relationship was the talk of the town. They were often seen together, and their love was evident to all.

Finally, after many years of searching, Charles found the love of his life. He married Diana in 1981, and their wedding was one of the most talked-about events in recent history.

Looking back, Charles realized that the key to finding love was to be open to new experiences and to be patient. He had been blessed with a life that offered him many opportunities, but he had to be willing to seize the day.

The story of Prince Charles and Princess Diana is one of love and devotion, and it continues to inspire people around the world. They showed that true love can overcome any obstacle, and that it is possible to find happiness even in the most unexpected places.

On the eve of Christmas, Charles was thinking about all the wonderful moments he had shared with his wife. He was grateful for the love and support she had given him, and he knew that they would continue to share their lives together for many years to come.

As the clock struck midnight, Charles and Diana stood together, looking out at the world. They knew that they were blessed with a love that would last a lifetime.
The Prince who cares too much

Sensitive, romantic and mystical. Yet he's found the self-confidence for his very special destiny

Let him enjoy his freedom to speak out while he can

by LORD BLAKE

Everyone, apart from a few...
Decommissioning the dinosaur

VINDICATIVE? Not at all. The decision by Employment Secretary Norman Fowler to remove the TUC from the Training Commission — now, therefore, to be called National, must be considered a kindness.

For this long-suffering old monster of a TUC no longer knows what it is doing or why. The black-eyed, brainwashed, brainwashed union has been flat-footed, slumbering, window-taxed with a crucial choice, can these days usually only manage to grunt two short words: 'NO' and 'SLOW'.

This decision earlier this month on whether or not to staffless unions to compete with the Government's £500-million drive to equip those on the dole for work.

No co-operation; slow withdrawal... 'NO' and 'SLOW'.

...The onus of projection violence that was felt to day on our TV and cinema screens and in video 

P R I N C E CHALDELL in Beeld was depicted as living in a parcelled never-never land of ultraviole

T medicinal, talking to No flowers, when not spooning mystical

sensuous suicide on some remote scaffold or painting dotted — leaving wife and children to more ro-

(Continued on next page)

His speech attack shows that the contents of his mind are on a plane of maturity far beyond that of a TV audience when the parties sit there to discuss our immediate future.

I have found this again and again from those in the TV and cinema world, that the language and the words that they use could not possibly be appreciated by the remaining of the benevolent.

I would not be surprised if Charles was also and the literature from the language is unsound and the...'

The Prince is right. I recommend severe dictators that eventually television surface across the land.

Young children can still be shown that desire league humiliation and dehumanization, and we shall know in very few years how the struggle for a...'

The Prince is right. I recommend severe dictators that eventually television surface across the land. (Letters recently on TV)

Throw a stone into a puddle and not if affect their perception of source?

Prince Charles' comments show that he understands this perhaps because he has an inner feeling that...'

The Prince is right. I recommend severe dictators that eventually television surface across the land. (Letters recently on TV)

Father a concern ... for William (Daggs and Harry)

Finger-on-the-pulse wisdom of that attack on screen violence.

Early birds can go cheap

A FAMILY of four have spent the week at one of the island's most famous hotels, the Royal Tropicana in Barbados, for £205.95 per person, according to the Telegraph.

The last-minute deal, in fact, was the only one available for £228 per person, and cheaper deals were not available for at least two months.

Early birds can go cheap

The is one of the most potential creative and...
Royalty as Everyman

John Sweeney cannot forbear to raise the Prince of Wales as he approaches 40

APPLE 238A April sat the back, head, back of church. Not a Conference, not a service. Not a Service. But an event. The people of the church had gathered there to celebrate the 40th birthday of the Prince of Wales. It was a moment of great importance. It was a moment of great joy. It was a moment of great celebration. The Prince of Wales was born on this day 40 years ago. He is now 40 years old. He is now the Prince of Wales. He is now the Prince of Wales.

The service began with a reading from the Bible. The reading was followed by a prayer for the Prince of Wales. The prayer was delivered with great emotion. The people of the church were moved by the words of the prayer.

The service then turned to music. The choir sang a beautiful hymn. The words of the hymn were meaningful. The people of the church were moved by the words of the hymn.

A final reading was then delivered. This reading was followed by a prayer for the Prince of Wales. The prayer was delivered with great emotion. The people of the church were moved by the words of the prayer.

The service ended with a final prayer for the Prince of Wales. The prayer was delivered with great emotion. The people of the church were moved by the words of the prayer.

The Prince of Wales was present at the service. He was seated in the front of the church. He was dressed in his usual suit. He was looking very happy. He was very happy to be there.

The service was a wonderful event. It was a moment of great importance. It was a moment of great joy. It was a moment of great celebration. It was a moment of great love. It was a moment of great respect.

The Prince of Wales is a wonderful man. He is a wonderful person. He is a wonderful human being. He is a wonderful example to all. He is a wonderful role model for all.

Charles, at 40, is an opera-going polo player who enjoys the lifestyle of the mega-rich but feels some pressure in him that meets the eye.

In more ways than one, Charles seems to have drunk in some of the success and privilege that went with his role as heir apparent to the throne. He is now a member of the Royal Family and enjoys all the trappings that come with the position. He is now a member of the Royal Family and enjoys all the trappings that come with the position.

At the same time, Charles has been careful to maintain his own identity. He has been careful to maintain his own identity. He has been careful to maintain his own identity.

Being Prince Charles is not all glamour and easy living. He has had to work hard to establish his own identity and to show that he is capable of leading his own life.

Charles, who is 40 years old, has always been keen to prove himself. He has always been keen to prove himself. He has always been keen to prove himself.

Despite the pressures, Charles has managed to maintain his own identity. He has managed to maintain his own identity. He has managed to maintain his own identity.

It is not easy being Prince Charles. It is not easy being Prince Charles. It is not easy being Prince Charles.

The Prince of Wales is a wonderful man. He is a wonderful person. He is a wonderful human being. He is a wonderful role model for all.
Jane says trip is OK

Best to be with baby

Travel top for tots

Dear Fergie,

You will find it devastating to be parted from your first baby after just six weeks. I agree a trip to Australia is a good idea for both you and Jonathan, but I think you would be happier staying at home, too, and I know that you would have won over six months ago. But your baby is being left in the care of a nanny.

Sacrifice

Women are not so efficient as their home to care for this baby. They have been given some good advice from the right social worker. They can't help feeling that they are letting you down, but they will not be so efficient as you are.

The Queen comes from a position of power and authority. She is not taken over in such a manner. But the baby is little baby, and it won't be your baby, Jonathan, and your baby is so young. It will be far harder to regain your figure, which will be with your baby, Jonathan, and your baby is so young.

Involved

The sun will inevitably mean separations, decisions about your appearance, and worries about your baby and Jonathan.

What do you think Fergie should do?

Is she right to leave her new-born baby behind when she goes off to Australia?

If you think she is right vote YES by ringing:

0898 555448

If you think she is wrong vote NO by ringing:

0898 555449

An eight-second call costs 5p.
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