# Royal experts dissect accuracy of Harry and Meghan portrayals in new Daily Mail series



The British Royal Family stands as one of the most scrutinised and represented entities globally, with their narratives often adapted and reinterpreted through various media. From serious documentaries to satirical portrayals in shows like *South Park*, the royals frequently capture public attention. This ongoing fascination is evident in *Acting Royal*, a new series on the Daily Mail’s Royal YouTube channel, which delves into fictional recreations of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle's lives. The series features insights from esteemed royal experts who assess the accuracy of these portrayals, particularly with regards to the so-called 'Megxit'.

In the inaugural episode, Rebecca English, Royal Editor for the Daily Mail, Richard Eden, Diary Editor, and Charlotte Griffiths, the Mail on Sunday's Editor at Large, critique a selection of films and series that depict the Duke and Duchess of Sussex. One significant work discussed is *Harry & Meghan: Escaping the Palace* (2021), which dramatizes the couple's decision to step back from royal duties following their much-publicised wedding. The film, however, received a dismal 10 per cent rating on Rotten Tomatoes. According to English, the film captures the Royal Family's characteristic delay when dealing with challenging situations: "That was definitely the Palace's reaction to what Harry and Meghan were asking." This observation highlights a broader pattern within royal dealings, where addressing personal and public crises can often lead to prolonged waiting and indecision, further complicating relationships within the family.

The series also examines *Spencer* (2021), a critically acclaimed film starring Kristen Stewart as Princess Diana, which portrays her struggles within the royal institution. The nuanced portrayal of a young Prince Harry resting in his mother’s lap struck a chord with Eden, who describes it as an evocative representation of innocence; a stark contrast to the often formal and stiff interactions associated with royal life. This film and others like it not only attempt to illuminate the emotional landscapes of royal figures but also resonate with Harry's own reflections in his memoir, *Spare*, which offers insights into his childhood experiences and family dynamics.

Another contemporary portrayal comes from *Red, White and Royal Blue* (2023), a romantic comedy based on the novel of the same name that imagines an openly gay British prince. The royal experts reacted with both amusement and scepticism, with Eden noting the implications of a senior royal coming out in real life, something nearly unimaginable given contemporary British attitudes. The mention of Lord Ivar Mountbatten, an openly gay relative of the royal family, serves to highlight the extent to which the royals remain tethered to traditional gender roles and expectations.

The world of royal representation extends to the risqué animated series, *The Prince*, which satirises royal life through caricature. The royal experts noted how the show poked fun at Harry and Meghan’s spending habits, particularly through an episode in which they renovate a house, alluding to their substantial expenditure on Frogmore Cottage. English remarked that the show's depiction effectively encapsulates the public's perception of the couple's media ventures since stepping down from their royal duties.

Further examination reveals that films like *Harry & Meghan: A Royal Romance* (2018) dramatise significant events in the couple’s life, but at times veer into absurdity. The portrayal of Meghan as struggling against the media frenzy drew criticism from the experts, with Richard Eden recalling that she appeared quite receptive to media attention at times. This paradox reflects the tension between public persona and private experience, a theme prevalent in the couple's own productions.

In recent years, Harry and Meghan have transitioned into content creation, signing a lucrative deal with Netflix to produce various shows aimed at promoting inspirational programming. Their projects, including upcoming lifestyle shows focusing on culinary and social themes, have sparked discussions about authenticity and the challenges of branding oneself outside the royal context. Critics have labelled some of these ventures as overly polished and lacking a personal touch, creating a perception that they are curated rather than genuinely expressive reflections of their lives.

Despite mixed reviews of their various representations, the underlying narrative remains clear: Harry and Meghan’s journey reflects broader societal conversations about identity, legacy, and the evolving nature of the monarchy in a modern context. The experts' commentary in *Acting Royal* serves not only to critique these portrayals but also to illuminate the complexities of defining royal narratives in an age where traditional boundaries are increasingly blurred.

## Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/royals/article-14732099/Prince-Harry-Meghan-Markle-representations-TV-film-Acting-Royal.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[4]](https://www.reuters.com/lifestyle/meghan-markle-prince-harry-producing-two-new-netflix-shows-2024-04-11/)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/royals/article-14732099/Prince-Harry-Meghan-Markle-representations-TV-film-Acting-Royal.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[2]](https://time.com/5274582/lifetime-harry-meghan-movie-best-moments/), [[5]](https://time.com/7264417/with-love-meghan-netflix-review/)
* Paragraph 3 – [[3]](https://time.com/6239745/harry-and-meghan-netflix-docuseries-explained/), [[6]](https://www.axios.com/2020/09/02/prince-harry-meghan-markle-netflix-deal)
* Paragraph 4 – [[5]](https://time.com/7264417/with-love-meghan-netflix-review/), [[6]](https://www.axios.com/2020/09/02/prince-harry-meghan-markle-netflix-deal)
* Paragraph 5 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/royals/article-14732099/Prince-Harry-Meghan-Markle-representations-TV-film-Acting-Royal.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[7]](https://time.com/6241587/prince-harry-prince-william-fued-netflix-docuseries/)
* Paragraph 6 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/royals/article-14732099/Prince-Harry-Meghan-Markle-representations-TV-film-Acting-Royal.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[2]](https://time.com/5274582/lifetime-harry-meghan-movie-best-moments/), [[6]](https://www.axios.com/2020/09/02/prince-harry-meghan-markle-netflix-deal)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/royals/article-14732099/Prince-Harry-Meghan-Markle-representations-TV-film-Acting-Royal.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://time.com/5274582/lifetime-harry-meghan-movie-best-moments/> - This article discusses Lifetime's movie 'Harry & Meghan: A Royal Romance,' which dramatizes Prince Harry and Meghan Markle's courtship ahead of their royal wedding. It highlights over-the-top moments, including Prince Harry's confrontation with a lion in Botswana, their memorable first date, and Meghan stopping Harry's plane from taking off after a fight. The film also features a humorous scene where Queen Elizabeth makes a tongue-in-cheek comment about 'The Crown.' Despite its dramatizations, the movie incorporates significant real-life events, such as the couple's engagement interview and Meghan's essay on race.
3. <https://time.com/6239745/harry-and-meghan-netflix-docuseries-explained/> - This article provides an overview of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle's Netflix docuseries 'Harry & Meghan,' released in two parts in December 2022. The series delves into their secret courtship, issues within the royal institution, and their decision to step back as working royals in March 2020. It also addresses the implications of race and empire in Britain, as well as the impact of Brexit. The docuseries features personal footage, including video diaries, and includes interviews with the couple's relatives, friends, and colleagues.
4. <https://www.reuters.com/lifestyle/meghan-markle-prince-harry-producing-two-new-netflix-shows-2024-04-11/> - This article reports that Meghan Markle and Prince Harry are producing two new Netflix shows as part of a multi-year deal with Netflix through their company, Archewell Productions. The first series, curated and executive produced by Markle, will focus on cooking, gardening, entertaining, and friendship. The second series will follow the U.S. Open Polo Championship in Wellington, Florida, providing insights into the competition and the polo industry's social scene, with both Markle and Prince Harry serving as executive producers. Both series are currently in early production, with titles and release dates to be announced in the coming months.
5. <https://time.com/7264417/with-love-meghan-netflix-review/> - This article reviews Netflix's 'With Love, Meghan,' a lifestyle show featuring Meghan Markle, Duchess of Sussex. The show follows the template of many celebrity kitchen series but lacks authenticity, offering a polished yet impersonal portrayal of Meghan. She shares the set with friends and chefs, displaying domestic skills and preparing for manufactured events. Despite her likable persona, Meghan's portrayal seems performative and distant. The show's attempts at self-portraiture feel less authentic with each new endeavor, leading to a perception of an impersonal and controlled brand rather than genuine self-revelation.
6. <https://www.axios.com/2020/09/02/prince-harry-meghan-markle-netflix-deal> - This article reports that Prince Harry and Meghan Markle have signed a production deal with Netflix, marking a significant step in their move towards financial independence after leaving their official roles with the British royal family six months prior. Their unnamed production company will develop a variety of content for the streaming platform, including documentaries, films, series, and children’s programming. The couple emphasized the importance of creating inspirational family programming as new parents. Since joining the British royal family in 2018, Meghan has faced numerous challenges with the press, contributing to their decision to step back and pursue independent ventures.
7. <https://time.com/6241587/prince-harry-prince-william-fued-netflix-docuseries/> - This article discusses the Netflix docuseries 'Harry & Meghan' and its exploration of the growing rift between Prince Harry and his brother, Prince William. The fifth episode reveals that their strained relationship stemmed from Harry and Meghan's decision in January 2020 to step back from royal duties. A particularly tense family meeting at Sandringham further exacerbated the issue, with Harry recounting feeling terrified by his brother's anger. The series also explores Harry's frustration with how the royal family’s staffers allegedly protected William while neglecting to defend Harry and Meghan from media attacks. Harry suggests differing views on the monarchy contributed to the rift, with William adhering to tradition and Harry advocating for modernization. Historical parallels are drawn between the current royal sibling conflict and past feuds within the family, notably between Edward VIII and George VI. Despite hopes that the brothers might reconcile, the documentary hints that their feud remains unresolved, and Harry's upcoming memoir 'Spare' may reignite tensions.