

## How To Find A Consort Fit For A Queen

Contributed by Dr. Janice Seto  
Thursday, 12 April 2007

As the royals continue their Easter break, this week we've witnessed happy images of Prince Harry enjoying some fun in the Caribbean with his girlfriend Chelsy Davy.

As Dr. Janice Seto examines, finding a perfect partner is so much more difficult for the royal ladies, especially those destined to combine the dual role of wife and monarch.....

Ladies, what is on your list for a great date? And what are you looking for in a potential spouse?

I am writing this while in stitches over an episode of Blind Date, the California half-hour show about...blind dates.

Each show begins with the lady talking to the camera of what she is looking for. Usually she ends up on a blind date with a fellow who turns out not to be 'Mr Good for the Long Run' but a decent guy, a 'Mr Fun for a Date'.

Life is too short not to have some fun. At least that's what my Committee tells me.

What "Committee", do you ask? These are the friends who have my best interests in mind – and provide commentary. "He's a player", "nice guy to hang out with", "I'm a guy – trust me on this boy", "don't forget your dissertation research..."

I ask you: How many of us women have ever dated by committee'? Most of us, at one time or another.

Unlike royal princesses, my Committee is composed of those I choose. For the future sovereign lady of her country, this Committee by rights (not hers!) includes family, the court, and the media. Like I mentioned in my previous article, this is the equivalent of a very public extended family of busy-bodies.

{jumi [includes/jumies/rectanglew.php]}In a previous article, From Girlfriend to Royal Princess, my opinion stands that a successful royal marriage comes from each individual bringing a full CV to the table.

Let me now turn to an intriguing demographic blip: in no less than five countries, the future sovereign will be female and her consort will likely travel from boyfriend to royal.

The countries involved are Norway (Princess Ingrid), Spain (Princess Leanor), Belgium (Princess Elisabeth), Sweden (Princess Victoria), and The Netherlands (Princess Catarina Amalia).

From research, it appears that future lady sovereigns first have to reconcile themselves to their fate as head of the

country before coming to terms with what that means for their choice of life partner. In this, she is not unlike her ordinary counterparts in politics.

I was attending a political meeting here in Canada with the keynote address on the tiny numbers of women seeking political office. According to Jamie Elmhirst, getting women interested is easy. After all, most women want to make a difference, and do so already in their work and in their homes. The difficulty arises in 'the close — as we say in my Effective Selling class — getting the woman to run for public office.

What keeps women from taking that step in the public gaze is lack of assurance as to family support. Many women are already burdened from their 'sandwich stress' — nurturing the generation of parents and caring for the younger generation of children and stepchildren. Adding a higher profile political role begs the questions of a married spouse: Will he step up to the plate? And how will this impact the children? And would the worse happen to the marriage?

While in Cabinet prior to becoming Canada's first female Prime Minister, Kim Campbell came home after another long day in parliament to find her second husband had left.

{jumi [includes/jumies/rectanglew.php]}For those princesses destined to reign over their countries — and choose to remain in succession — what kind of man will be wedded to her, forsake everything for the country, and give her peace of mind with regard to care of the family?

From researching the experiences of their predecessors, I believe that their potential consorts should examine their CVs now — and prepare to fill their passport pages early.

Moreover, the Committee will help vet for these three typical 'men's problems' that arise from the two-steps behind status of the consort to a female sovereign.

#### 1. The Male Ego (frustrated man stomping around in the palace):

Crown Princess Masako may have it bad, being restrained from using her talents in foreign policy and diplomacy, but her male counterpart feels worse. His is the role of a supporter, not an initiator, both in his public life and at home. The traditional male roles entail bringing home the bacon and his home is his castle — the male consort has no choice as to home because most likely it is her castle.

The cosmopolitan Frenchman Henri Marie Jean André de Laborde de Monpezat (he was raised in French Indochina, in Vietnam) gave up his religion, citizenship, career, and even his name "Henri" to marry the then Crown Princess Margrethe of Denmark.

In 2002, H.R.H. Prince Henrik boycotted royal functions after feeling pushed aside by the court behind his son, Crown Prince Frederik. From his home in the French countryside at the Chateau de Caix, where he is a gentleman vintner, Henrik gave an interview questioning whether the sacrifice of his identity and his work in the French diplomatic corps was appreciated. Following a visit from Margrethe, he returned home.

In a 2007 interview in Point de Vue magazine, Henrik wondered why men who marry royal sovereigns do not become king consorts, a position of equality with his wife, like his female counterparts, who automatically become queen. If women get elevated to queen, why not men? The inequity is real.

Sadly it seems that the old stereotypes hold still when it comes to consorts. His role to many remain primarily those of a drone, the male bee, servicing the queen to ensure the succession. As the Duke of Edinburgh put it, he is a "bloody amoeba".

## 2. A Lone Wolf Who Is Leading A Life of His Own:

### a) Pursuing his own 'interests'

Other consorts take it in their stride. Rather than gnashing at their status, some instead make use of it. He sees the advantage of being married to a woman preoccupied with her country and a life in which he need not worry about paying the rent and buying groceries.

Probably the best examples of this come from The Netherlands, a country which gave us three successive female sovereigns.

Prince Henrik, born Duke of Mecklenburg-Schwerin and consort of Queen Wilhelmina, found little joy in being 'a decoration' and turned to a life with women, sidelined from meaningful work in the Netherlands.

Another example is Prince Bernhard (pictured right), the consort of Queen Juliana and a great friend of Elizabeth II's consort, Prince Philip.

After exemplary service during WWII on behalf of the Dutch resistance, the daredevil former German count/prince of Lippe-Biesterfeld led quite a merry life as business ambassador extraordinaire for his adopted country, helping found Rotary International and the World Wildlife Fund.

{jumi [includes/jumies/rectanglew.php]}He became estranged from Juliana when she fell under the spell of Mme Greet Hofmans, a faith healer. Although the Bernhard party ended in 1976 with the Lockheed influence peddling scandal of him demanding and receiving \$1 million (US), it was an open secret he had women on the side, siring two more daughters from his liaisons.

In contrast, Bernard's son-in-law, the late Prince Claus (consort of Queen Beatrix) had no known affairs and focused on the environment, endearing himself to the people with his acquiring a good command of Dutch.

A highly intelligent man, he suffered from depression, perhaps exacerbated by the strictures of court life and the brevity of normal married life before his wife succeeded to the throne. It seems he woke up and realized that what he was allowed to do just wasn't enough employment of his talents.

A modern day consort is the late Sir Denis Thatcher (pictured with Diana, Princess of Wales).

A wealthy and successful man in his own right, Denis did his own thing in life with a self-assuredness, but supported his wife by not throwing up obstacles and never causing any embarrassment to her, or her government.

Margaret Thatcher did not have to worry about Denis's self-esteem. He has sure of himself and, unlike Charles with Diana, simply just proud (rather than jealous) of his wife.

He never minded being called Mr Thatcher because that is exactly what he was!

#### b) His Wife Becomes His Project – Luxurious consorts or He's Her Manager

Marrying her manager did not begin with Celine Dion or Doris Day — and in the United Kingdom, you witnessed it in the form of William and Mary.

In the succession, Mary II should have reigned alone, as her immediate heir was her sister, Anne. But since her husband, William of Orange, was her cousin stood third in line, he presented to Parliament the advantages of a dual monarchy — a two for one, almost akin to Bill and Hillary Clinton.

As the astute politico of the two, William of Orange then became William III alongside his wife.

The BBC drama, *Victoria and Albert*, drew from historical sources to depict the Prince Consort as Victoria's de facto private secretary, bodyguard and supporter, as well as true love.

A century later, and seeing how much Elizabeth loved Philip, courtiers anxious not to see a repeat took pains to tether the Duke's influence.

### 3. Suspicions That He Might Have His Own Agenda

Felipe II, consort of Mary Tudor, never disguised his agenda. Known more familiarly as Philip II of Spain, he and Mary hoped to sire at least one heir to bring England back into the embrace of Catholicism, and bring about a strong maritime alliance.

Was there ever the fear of mixed loyalties? Not for Philip! His agenda was always the greater glory of his larger and richer heritage.

Alas for Philip and Mary, it was not meant to be, and her heir, Elizabeth I, instead blew that dream out of her brother-in-law's sails with the Protestant Wind.

Prince Consorts similarly laid the foundations for a legacy (something American presidents are obsessed with before leaving office!) through their descendants.

By focusing on the children, Prince Albert ensured that four of his nine offspring were either sovereigns or consorts themselves — of the UK (Edward VII), Germany (the Princess Royal, 'Vicky'), Hesse Darmstadt (Alice), and Coburg (Alfred) — and married back into continental royalty.

Ultimately, this led to serious problems during World War One....

Most consorts and their first-born sons have a troubled relationship. Perhaps it is because of the father's fear that his days are numbered, that he will soon be displaced and replaced in the scheme of things, in favour of his wife's heir?

This verges on Oedipal, and the examples include Philip and Charles, Henrik and Frederik, and in times past the Prince Consort, Albert, and 'Bertie', the future King Edward VII (who refused to accede to the wishes of his mother, Queen Victoria, and succeed to the throne as King Albert I).

Even Juan Carlos of Spain experienced strain with his father, Juan Count of Barcelona, when the Caudillo, Francisco

Franco, skipped a generation and the Count's place in succession.

Problem: What attracts won't sustain.

{jumi [includes/jumies/rectanglew.php]}What history has shown is that sovereign ladies-to-be tend to be attracted to men who do not fit the model for ideal consort. What she will prefer in a date is an Alpha Male.....guaranteed to experience one of the three men's problems above.

Why does this phenomenon happen?

Usually she has little experience with men in the family. Up until now, the sovereign lady-to-be was an only child (Queen Juliana) or the eldest of a family of daughters (Elizabeth II, Margrethe II, Beatrix). The only men she comes into regular contact with on her level are the courtiers, not the most macho of men, or degenerate men (a la the Bronte ne'er do well brother, Branwell).

In this context, it is almost psychologically inevitable that the Crown Princess is attracted to a man who is not ubiquitous to her — a real man's man, like Peter Townsend to Princess Margaret.

She has been brought up around toadying men and used to being in charge. It is a thrill to have a fellow who does not buy into that, like a royal Isabella Linton to Heathcliff (Wuthering Heights). The Alpha Male who can get any woman, like Antony Armstrong-Jones, is a rarity in her world and most appealing. He may not be rough trade but he can brood, this 'Bad Boy'.

Based on history, over the long term, this 'Man's Man' finds court tiresome. The Alpha Male derides it as phonies acting phony. This isn't what the Farm Boy dreamt it would be like. The Action Man won't put up with the status quo of tradition and restraint — he calls a spade a spade, this Mr Edward Fairfax Rochester.

In the end, the Home Boy will not support the system, the Establishment, the Grey Men, the fact his life is at the command of his wife. And soon The Country Cowboy will be 'checking out, if not physically, then mentally and emotionally.

Lonelier than a widowed Queen Victoria is the sovereign lady with an absentee husband. She must carry on or revert to type ('ma deah, Alpha Men can be wearing on the nerves!'), with the double burden of her own duty to the country and the pain of finding solace and strength with the children.

My Date Committee wants to share this with the sovereign lady in this situation: "If he wants to go, then tell him to leave now."

This reminds me of another marriage, where the spouse could not support the other's career.

Earlier this month, I viewed again the 1990 BBC drama *Portrait of a Marriage*, based on the book by Nigel Nicholson.

His father, Harold Nicolson, with a promising career in the Foreign Service, had married in 1912 the Honorable Vita Sackville-West, the only child of Lord & Lady Sackville of that splendid country house in Kent, Knole.

Although Vita was only 20, she was firm on not giving up her social set nor on living abroad as a dutiful diplomat's wife. With her hefty allowance and her self-serving nature, she could do precisely that, setting up home for their two sons in Kent, first at Long Barn, and then the famous Sissinghurst Castle. (They certainly could not live in style a la Bloomsbury Group on his salary.)

Eventually, Harold Nicolson gave up his career for the sake of his marriage, and settled permanently in England, as a writer like his wife, and later served as a British Member of Parliament. Together, they discovered the art of the garden at Sissinghurst, which cemented their unconventional marriage.

For a Successful Run In The West End: *The Luckiest Man in the World*:

It is not a dismal picture. Switching from a man any of us would date, the princess in all of us know what man we want for a family life. We must share the same goals, same motivation and the same drive, be it as ecologists, city folk, or archeologists.

Now, then, what kind of man would be at ease in your court and in Court? Certainly I cannot picture the Alpha Male, but instead we see the Metrosexual.

{jumi [includes/jumies/rectanglew.php]}This well-travelled bon vivant comes across as amiable (think Mr Bingley from *Pride & Prejudice*) who counts his blessings, feels grateful for his new station in life and is happy to go along with it, rather than the futile obsession on the shortcomings as consort. He is probably intelligent enough to see how he can make a difference to important causes. And he sees himself as the Luckiest Man in the World.

Sometimes a change in perspective is all that it takes.

The Metrosexual has the unfortunate reputation of being not the sharpest knife in the drawer. As they say in North America, he's "a few fries short of a Happy Meal". This is true of many, but it can be an advantage for the Metrosexual (also known as a Royal Walker, in other words, arm candy) to be a bit of a Himbo like Prince George of Denmark to Queen Anne.

That is strong opinion in the establishment circles in Sweden, that Daniel Wrestling, the steady of Crown Princess Victoria, is in fact a real deal Himbo, not up to snuff as a consort, nor as representative of the country.

These criticisms suggest he is similar to a male version of France's Segolene Royale – not 'presidential' enough to command respect as a possible successor to the outgoing Jacques Chirac.

Currently there are no Metrosexual consorts, although the closest include Archduke Lorenz, now Prince of Belgium as husband to Princess Astrid.

Because of his affability, and the fact they had children, made them a favourite of those who wanted to skip the then-bachelor Prince Philippe and Prince Laurent, as successor to her father Albert II.

The banker responsibly gave up his job in Switzerland and moved his family back to Belgium when his father-in-law, King Albert II, unexpectedly ascended the throne.

What a support Archduke Lorenz has been, and he does quite well in his field in Brussels.

In Spain, there is Jaime de Maricalar (left), the spouse of Infanta Elena. Her fashion sense has surpassed everyone in the royal family since her marriage, thanks in part to her savvy husband.

Ah, the Metrosexual, these modern day creatures: urbane, confident, suave, cultured, and above all, realistic and pragmatic.

At ease on the dance floor (and by that I mean waltzes), witty speeches, opening museums, he admires a well-planned garden, is a soccer dad to the children, nice to the parents, and allows himself to enjoy creature comforts.

{jumi [includes/jumies/rectangle.php]}The Luckiest Man in the World will have a long run on West End – he is properly appreciative of his good fortune, and very, very good to his woman.

Are you thinking of the Casiraghi boys, too?

Dr Janice Seto has been commenting on royal issues in print since

Prince Edward quit the marines (The Edward Dilemma). Since that time, she earned a Bachelor of Science from the University of Toronto's Victoria College, a certificate in French studies from Universite Catholique in Angers, France, teaching qualifications at Bishop's University in Quebec, an MBA from the University of Victoria, and her PsyD from the Sacramento-based Professional School of Psychology in the US.

The daughter of immigrant parents, she has worked at the family restaurant in Bowmanville, proofread romances (and gotten paid for it), and a myriad of other salaried and volunteer work. Currently she teaches Management & Marketing in western Canada after stints teaching EFL and secondary school courses in Bratislava, Tokyo, and Malaysia. Her next article will focus on Royal Younger Men-Older Women relationships.

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