

PERSPECTIVES

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Displaying the family jewels



CAPTAIN SENSIBLE

PAT PAYNE

The British royal family: For centuries, names such as Plantagenet, Stuart, Tudor and York rang out as the cream of British society. Elizabeth I was a great patron of arts and letters, as well as the impetus for a new round of exploration of the Western Hemisphere. Queen Victoria presided over a period in history in which the tiny island nation ruled supreme over one-quarter of the earth's surface. King George VI was, in some ways, the glue that held British society together during World War II. Queen Elizabeth II and her brood can't seem to hold a candle to such predecessors. The House of Windsor has become an international laughingstock.

Two weeks ago, the sitcom "That's My Bush" premiered on the television channel Comedy Central. This irreverent show mercilessly lampoons the current first family, President George W. Bush and his wife, Laura. However, the British Broadcasting Corporation has never done a sitcom based on the current royal family. Partly this is the reverence that is given to the royals, even now. It's also partly that, after a good 20 years of making royal asses out of themselves, almost anything the sitcom writers could invent would be pretty tame. But that doesn't mean I'm not going to try.

So now I present my own sitcom, "The Family Jewels." The first episode pretty much writes it-

self: A few weeks ago, Sophie Rhys-Jones, the wife of Prince Edward and chairwoman of a public relations firm, began talking to a Saudi Arabian sheik to whom she told embarrassing revelations about the royals. Except he wasn't a sheik. He was an undercover reporter from the Sun, a British tabloid, and was taping the whole conversation. (Opening music and montage. Cut to the throne room at Buckingham Palace. Elizabeth is on her throne. Charles is sitting in an alcove, sticking pins in a voodoo doll of the queen. The doors fly open and Prince Edward rushes in.)

Edward: Mother! We've got terrible news!

QE2: What is it this time, Eddie? Your play go under? Your dance troupe gain mass arthritis? Or did you finally find that conscription notice the Royal Navy sent you in 1985?

Edward: No, Mother. It's even worse than that. Sophie, my wife, made a terrible mistake. She —

Charles: Married you.

Edward: I was going to say, she went and talked to the tabloids!

Charles: We thought you had a long talk with her about how "we don't go gabbing to the Sun."

Edward: Well I did, but she didn't know it was a tabloid reporter!

Charles: Of course not! Since when do tabloid reporters wear outsized neon signs saying "I work for Fleet Street — please tell me everything and anything"?

QE2: (muttering) Oh 'ell, this is as bad as Fergie going and doing commercials on telly for that Yankee fat farm.

Edward: He was dressed as a sheik!



Bryan Dixon Emerald

QE2: Oh, bloody 'ell. What did she tell the bugger?

Edward: She went and told how we all call you "the Old Dear." And that we think of the prime minister's wife as "hideous," among other things.

QE2: Tell the Beefeaters to go find this sod! Off with his head!

Charles: As I believe I've told you some nine times today, Mum, we can't do that anymore. Scotland Yard considers it homicide.

QE2: Oh, bloody 'ell! It's not like it was in the good old days. They don't let me declare war, they don't give me any power to rule other than opening bloody Parliament, and now you're telling me they've taken away my last bit o' fun — chopping people's heads off and displaying them at Traitor's Gate! Why in bloody 'ell do they

keep me alive anyway?

Charles: (with a covetous tone) We have all been wondering that, Mum ...

The family, after a few misadventures involved in trying to get the tape back from the tabloids (including a "Mission Impossible" take-off scene where the Queen is suspended by a rope over the editor-in-chief's desk) returns to the safety of Buckingham Palace's roof, which is decked out in party lights.

Charles: Well, we've avoided that embarrassment, no thanks to your wife, Edward. How we ever put up with you —

QE2: Need I remind you, Charles Phillip Arthur George ...

Charles: Oh damn! All four names.

QE2: Your fooling around with that Camilla hasn't been a great

mark on our family record. If you'd keep your little "Prince of Wales" where it belongs we'd be a whole bloody lot — (She tumbles off the roof, with a little helping push from Charles.)

Charles: Finally! Now I can be king! What do you think of that, Mum?

QE2: (shouting back) I think I'm not dead yet, you little sod!

Wait until next week when we see what wacky adventures happen when His Majesty King Harald V of Norway and His Imperial Majesty, Emperor Akihito of Japan, end up sharing a studio apartment in New York City.

Pat Payne is a columnist for the Oregon Daily Emerald. His views do not necessarily represent those of the Emerald. He can be reached at Macross_SD@hotmail.com.

Letter to the editor

Jacobson and Cook will help maximize group activity

As a member of the Student Senate this year, I know how much student government desperately needs new ideas. ASUO Executive candidates Bret Jacobson and Matt Cook have consistently put forth original ideas to the problems that other candidates have merely highlighted.

Bret and Matt are committed to making sure the executive actively supports student groups, especially when it comes to planning and paying for events. Not only will they hold student groups financially accountable, they will also help groups be responsible with student funds. This means assisting with wise money management, while effectively maximizing the group's activity.

One of Bret and Matt's innovative solutions is to create a new position in the ASUO, that of "Projects Coordinator," to guide students as they plan and execute their events, and assist with fundraising. The coordinator would know how money can be spent, the best ways to spend it, and the services available throughout campus.

Past presidents strived to make the ASUO more recognizable to students. The coordinator position would be the next step; an actual person inside the ASUO students could recognize for help. Bret and Matt want to solve that problem and others. The ASUO needs their creative solutions.

Last year, I ran on a platform of student fee accountability. Bret and Matt want to help student groups use their fees correctly, while getting the maximum bang for their buck. I recommend you vote Bret Jacobson and Matt Cook for ASUO Executive.

Skye Tenney
 senior
 business

Letter from the editors

Some readers may notice the full-page advertisement regarding slavery reparations in today's Emerald. The ad, which lists 10 reasons against paying reparations to descendants of slaves, has caused controversy on several college campuses across the country in recent months.

At the Emerald, we occasionally receive ads that have the potential to be controversial, and the paper has an advertising policy in place to determine whether or not to run an ad. Among other criteria, we decline to run ads that needlessly offend a significant portion of our readers. But the flip side of that is that we don't want to censor ads just because some people may not agree with the ideas or opinions contained in them.

Last week, representatives from the advertising, news and production departments at the Emerald met to discuss the ramifications of running the slavery reparations ad. The group acts only in an advisory capacity to the advertising director, who has final say over whether an ad runs or not.

The group discussed the ad and approached the issue by asking why we wouldn't run the ad. Some participants in the meeting expressed concern that the ad would offend some readers. But it was generally agreed that the opinions in the ad deal with a political issue being discussed at the national level, and that it's not our job to shield our readers — who are mainly college students — from those ideas or opinions that may be controversial.

We invite students and the campus community to debate the issues raised by the ad's content. Readers can write letters to the editor or guest columns that meet our standard guidelines, and drop them off in our office or e-mail them to ode@oregon.uoregon.edu. We will attempt to run all opinion pieces we receive regarding this issue.

CONTACT US!

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