

ENCOURAGING WORDS FROM THE CANADIAN PRESS STYLE GUIDE

CP GETS IT RIGHT!

Not gushing – GG not head of state

Monarchists and other Canadians sometimes complain about media references to The Queen, members of the Royal Family and the Monarchy generally. Sometimes these are inaccurate, sometimes snide, sometimes downright hostile. As Canada's leading wire service, providing news packages to media outlets across the land, Canadian Press prides itself on being the arbiter of correct style in reporting. Its decisions are important, as they serve not only to guide its own staff writers, but also they also act as a standard reference source for many other journalists.

Recently, Carleton University Monarchist League member Brock Weir, Jr., drew to CMN's attention the following extracts from the 13th Edition of the CP Style Guide:

It is no more acceptable to write condescendingly about ordinary people's responses to a royal tour. The fact that someone puts on hat and gloves to watch royalty pass, or belongs to the Monarchist League, is a matter of personal choice, not an occasion for fun.

The best stories tend to focus on one or two events in the visitor's day, stressing human elements that are genuinely news worthy and describing them fully and frankly. The organization is also worth a story at times: in Halifax, they once used green paint on a bald stretch of the common as part of their spruce-up."

Monarchy:

The Queen and members of the Royal Family deserve normal respect for their constitutional role in Canada, but coverage of their visits to this country and other activities is governed by basic news standards.

In particular, that means stories should not gush (looking radiant). Nor should they pretend the visitor's casual asides are profound or witty, nor quote meaningless exclamations from bystanders ("It's the most thrilling day of my life," said 11-year-old Melanie Simpson) nor be littered with royal this's and that's (the royal breakfast, the royal limousine, etc.)

Such coverage [that of a royal visit] excludes the kind of social-page filler that lists every hand shaken, royal guard inspected, memorial book inscribed, and ribbon cut.

The Queen is Canada's head of state; the prime minister is head of government. Officially, the Governor General acts as head of state when the Queen isn't in Canada, but avoid referring to the Governor General in such terms.

*Unless there are problems with identification – for instance, in a story dealing with the number of monarchs – the preferred term for Queen Elizabeth is **the Queen**, rather than **Queen Elizabeth**. Use **Queen of Canada**, not **Queen of England**. Prince Charles is not **heir to the British throne**, he is **heir to the throne**.*

*Don't refer to the late Princess of Wales as **Princess Diana** since she wasn't a princess by birth.*