

# Raising Royalty: 1000 Years of Royal Parenting

by Carolyn Harris

How raising future kings and queens evolved

Publisher Dundurn Group Price £23.99 Release Out Now

**In July 2013, the world watched with bated breath for the arrival of Prince George of Cambridge.** Outside the doors of St Mary's Hospital in London, eager crowds gathered for the first look at Prince William and the Catherine Middleton, Duchess of Cambridge with their newborn prince. The royal pair are just one of 20 regal couples featured in Harris' latest book on how the parenting skills in a sovereign household have evolved into what they are today. In this book, Harris lays bare their journeys as parents, exploring European history and how young princes and princesses were treated and regarded by both their mother and father in their younger years.

Beginning in the 10th century with King Edgar of England (otherwise known as Edgar the Peaceable,) and his queen Elfrida of Northampton, the history of royal parenting visits Russian, French and British households. The accounts also follow how each royal birth was regarded by the public, and documents the reactions of the

enemies, which royal parents had to fend off – from vengeful Vikings to protecting an infant from the greedy eyes of the paparazzi. Through the author's niche research into domestic lives of royalty, the reader visits the parenting skills of William the Conqueror, King Henry VIII, Marie Antoinette and the Netherland's Queen Juliana. In each story, Harris looks at the political and religious influences of each family and how this shaped their parenting, as well as the worldwide events that impacted them and their children, such as gruelling wars and religious strife. Unfortunately, some anecdotes are more tiresome than others, with some details being ebbed out over pages where they need only take a paragraph. While Harris focuses mainly on the British royal families, she attempts to broaden the spectrum however, a fascinating addition to the book would have been to expand outside of Europe.

Just as being a parent is never an easy task, *Raising Royalty* also shows how hard a time it was for infants when some families

reached up to more than a dozen other siblings for them to contend with. The book also shows how children had to vie for the attention of their parents, with many kings and queens uninterested in their children due to their hectic lifestyles, although often because of events such as war, parents had no choice but to be apart from their children in order to keep them safe. What makes Harris' work so fascinating is how the ever-evolving beliefs, morals and cultures of each family affected the way in which they raised their children. Harris shows how each family is connected, and how the ideals of parenthood have evolved through time, often breaking the rules and shunning the advice of those who ruled before them creating much scandal.

The book is a fascinating source of well researched information and a great addition to the shelves of royalists and historians alike. Trying to cram 1,000 years worth of knowledge into one book is no mean feat, and Harris does it with flair, making the information easily digested.

Literally from birth Marie Antoinette's first child had a far more public upbringing compared to that of today's modern monarchs

