

WR152: Family Snaps and Stories
West and Hirsch Reading



This official handout Christening photograph released by the Duke and Duchess of Sussex shows **Britain's Prince Harry, Duke of Sussex (centre left), and his wife Meghan, Duchess of Sussex** holding **their baby son, Archie Harrison Mountbatten-Windsor** flanked by (L-R) Britain's Camilla, Duchess of Cornwall, **Britain's Prince Charles, Prince of Wales**, Ms Doria Ragland, Lady Jane Fellowes, Lady Sarah McCorquodale, **Britain's Prince William, Duke of Cambridge**, and Britain's Catherine, Duchess of Cambridge in the Green Drawing Room at Windsor Castle, west of London on July 6, 2019.

Chris Allerton—AFP/Getty Images

Additional Notes on the Rhetorical Context:

A Christening is a baptismal ceremony that initiates a person (in this case an infant) into the Christian church. Typically, godparents are present at the ceremony and designated to be spiritual guides to the christened one. The godparents – Mark Dyer, an officer of Prince Charles' household and close

caregiver to Prince Harry, and Tiggy Pettifer, Prince Harry's former nanny – are not present.

Lady Jane and Lady Sarah are sisters of the former Princess Diana Spencer, the deceased mother of Prince Harry and Prince William.

Questions to discuss.

Who do you think is the audience for this portrait? What do you think is its purpose?

Our reading should inform our ideas:

Drawing on Shearer West's definitions, is this photograph dynastic or interpersonal (or both)?

Hirsch claims that “[family] photography celebrates the details while it obscures ironies, ambiguities, and contradictions” (45). Why should the godparents be absent from this Christening photograph?