Madonna Essay, Research Paper

One of the most famous controversial women in the world is Madonna Louise Ciccone. She is one of the biggest female popstars of the twentieth century. Madonna is an artist that knows how to take everything she does to an extreme.

Madonna was born on the 16th of August 1958, in Rochester, Michigan. She was the first girl born to the Ciccone family, which already consisted of five boys. She grew up in a very strict environment. When Madonna reached the age of six, her mother grew ill from cancer and died. From that point on Madonna struggled along with her family, through difficult emotions. Madonna and her sisters were sent to live with relatives, until her father married two years later. He unfortunately married the straitlaced housekeeper. All of these tragedies in her life forced her to grow up a lot faster than most children. Her family began to demand more responsibilities from her. Madonna was left to take care of the children all day.

At the age of twelve she was sent to the local catholic high school. There she proved herself to be bright, quick, and intensive. Madonna states, ?I was really competitive in school with my grades and stuff, because my father used to give us rewards if we got A?s on our report cards?(Norman 20). Along with being ambitious she was also growing up sexually. She began to chase boys around with her shirt off. She started to wear make up, shorten her skirt, and go out on dates. ?I wanted to do every thing everybody told me I could not do. I couldn?t wear makeup. I couldn?t wear nylons. I couldn?t even go to the movies with my friends?(Norman 20), Madonna stated. As she set out to find her identity she began to rebel against everything.

At first Madonna worked towards becoming a writer. But she discovered cinema and fell in love with Marilyn Monroe, Judy Holiday, and Carole Lombard. This geared her intuition towards singing and dancing. It was only high school but already she was the star! She was given the lead role in many of her schools productions. When Madonna moved in with her grandmother she was introduced to ballet. Madonna began classes and met a guy named Christopher Flynt. She grew really close to him. She recalls ?I really loved him. He was my mentor, my father, my imaginary lover, everything?(Bego 42). Madonna was only seventeen and a high school graduate in 1976. Her ambition to be noticed brought her to NYC.

Madonna tried out for a scholarship and won at the Alvin Ailey Dance Theater. She spent the next two years of her life working hard to get noticed. She Worked in the day and danced at clubs in the night. At one club the Blue Froggie, she met Steve Bray. He was a talented musician but their relationship was more on the physical plane. A while later she met Dan Gilroy and moved in with him. With the help of Dan she discovered music and began to sing. Madonna auditioned for theater and musical parts for a play called Patrick Hernendes. They offered her a lot of pay and a recording contract. She agreed and became their lead singer. The producers found her to be very talented but they did not do anything to help her career out. When she realized this she tried to go back to NY. Every thing became even more complicated, when she came down with pneumonia and was sent to the hospital. After six months she was better and she went to NY. Once home she moved back in with Dan Gilroy.

Dan needed a drummer for a band, so Madonna took over. Soon she realized that she was going nowhere, so she went off to form her own band. In 1980, she left the band and formed ?Emmy? with her ex-boy friend Steve Bray.

Soon Bray and Madonna began working on some dance/disco oriented tracks. Camille Barbone discovered Madonna sleeping in a rehearsal studio. Camille was in a rock management company that they called Gotham Productions. Madonna begged her to listen to her tapes and watch her perform. Camille was impressed and agreed to manage her. Camille got her an apartment, clothed her, fed her, and even got her musicians. After Madonna?s music was introduced to Mark Kamins, a N.Y. based DJ/producer. He introduced her music to Sire Records. The young upstart fled Camille’s nest and signed a management deal with Sire Records in 1982. This created another problem, when she signed the paper with Sire Records she had also signed an agreement that Mark Kamins would produce her first record. That meant Steve bray, her long time associate was out in the cold. It was unfair that he would not produce her first single, despite the fact that he had produced the tape that got her the deal in the first place.

Kamins produced her first single ?Everybody?. When it was first played on the radio and in clubs, many fans mistook Madonna for an Afro-American disco diva. ?Everybody? sold over 250 000 copies and went to No.3 in the dance charts. John ‘Jellybean’ Benitez found Madonna the song ?Holiday? which was an instant hit and hey presto – She was a star! Madonna first hit the top ten with “Borderline”. It’s rumored her vocals were mechanically altered to make her sound more girlie. Her first album ‘Madonna’, released in 1983 won her wide acclaim and millions of fans plus invitations to move into films. Madonna has done it! Not only was Madonna setting the tone music wise, she was also creating a whole new fashion. In “Lucky Star” music video, she showcased her Boy Toy image. Madonna’s style was so popular that world famous lingerie store Fredericks of Hollywood reported a 40 % increase in sales, which they put down to the Material Girl’s image. Never letting an opportunity to make a fast buck pass her by, Madonna set up her own “Wazoo” clothing label. Among other things, “Wazoo” manufactured rubber bracelets and Boy Toy belt buckles. It wasn’t long before millions of girl fans the world over took on the raggy clothes of their number 1 pop heroine. But it wasn’t just the clothes that were developing Madonna’s raunchy reputation. Her music was about to take a new and controversial turn.

Madonna’s second album, the Niles Rodgers-produced Like a Virgin, was released at the end of 1984. The title track hit number one in December, staying at the top of the charts for six weeks; it was the start of a whirlwind year for the singer. During 1985, Madonna became an international celebrity, selling millions of records on the strength of her stylish, sexy videos and forceful personality. After “Material Girl” became a number two hit in March, Madonna began her first tour, supported by the Beastie Boys. “Crazy for You” became her second number one single in May. Desperately Seeking Susan was released in July, becoming a box office hit; it also prompted a planned video release of A Certain Sacrifice, a low-budget erotic drama she filmed in 1979. A Certain Sacrifice wasn’t the only embarrassing skeleton in the closet dragged into the light during the summer of 1985 — both Playboy and Penthouse published nude photos of Madonna that she posed for in 1977. Nevertheless, her popularity continued unabated, with thousands of teenage girls adopting her sexy appearance, being dubbed “Madonna Wannabes”.

In the “Material Girl” video shooting she met Sean Penn. Just after saying “I wouldn?t wish being Mr. Madonna on anyone” she married with him. Madonna remembers “I was jumping up and down on my bed, performing one of my morning rituals and all of a sudden Sean gets this look in his eye and all of a sudden I knew what he was thinking. I said: whatever you?re thinking Ill say yes to. That was his chance, so he popped it.”

On the 16th August 1985 they married in a Malibu media circus, 13 helicopters with paparazzi photographers were soaring in circles during the wedding ceremony. The groom Sean Penn tried to beat some paparazzi photographers, who were spying there in the bushes. The Bride Madonna was wearing a beautiful and traditional wedding dress. Madonna remembers: “I didn?t think I was going to be married with 13 helicopters flying over my head. It turned into a circus. At first I was outraged but at the end I was laughing. ”

Madonna?s marriage to Sean Penn officially ended on January 10,1989 when Madonna – for the second time – filed for divorce on the grounds of irreconcilable differences. She has not been married since. Madonna got a quickie divorce but even then the two couldn’t seem to leave each other alone. There were brief reconciliations and lost of recriminations, Sean had two children with actress Robin Wright and he later married her. The fighting didn’t stop then either. “I know that up until two weeks before the marriage he had another girlfriend,”(Bego 79) Madonna bitched, knowing her comments would get back to Robin. She repaid him by pulling faces behind his back during the filming of Truth Or Dare (1991), and two-timing him with a younger dancer.

When they split, Madonna decided to find a bigger star. Hollywood lothario Warren Beatty proved just the ticket. They co-starred together in Busy Malone and enjoyed a high profile affair.

Madonna began collaborating with Patrick Leonard at the beginning of 1986; Leonard would co-write most of her biggest hits in the ’80s, including “Live to Tell,” which hit number one in June of 1986. A more ambitious and accomplished record than her two previous albums, True Blue was released the following month, to both massive commercial success (it was a number one in both the U.S. and the U.K., selling over five million copies in America alone) and critical acclaim. “Papa Don’t Preach” became her fourth number one hit in the U.S. While her musical career was thriving, her film career took a savage hit with the November release of Shanghai Surprise. Starring Madonna and Sean Penn, the comedy received terrible reviews, which translated into disastrous box office returns.

At the beginning of 1987, she had her fifth number one single with “Open Your Heart,” the third number one from True Blue alone. “La Isla Bonita,” taken from the soundtrack of her third feature film, Who’s That Girl? , was another Top Five hit, although the film itself was another box office bomb; the title track from the movie became her sixth number one single. 1988 was a relatively quiet year for Madonna, as she spent the first half of the year acting in David Mamet’s Speed the Plow on Broadway. In the meantime, she released the remix album You Can Dance. After withdrawing the divorce papers she filed at the beginning of 1988, she divorced Penn at the beginning of 1989.

Like a Prayer, released in the spring of 1989, was her most ambitious and far-reaching album, incorporating elements of pop, rock and dance. It was another number one hit and launched the number one title track and “Express Yourself,” “Cherish,” and “Keep It Together,” three more Top Ten hits. In April 1990, she began her massive Blonde Ambition tour, which ran throughout the entire year. “Vogue” became a number one hit in May, setting the stage for her co-starring role in Warren Beatty’s Dick Tracy; it was her most successful film appearance since Desperately Seeking Susan. Madonna released a greatest hits album, The Immaculate Collection, at the end of the year. It featured two new songs, including the number one single “Justify My Love,” which sparked another controversy with its sexy video; the second new song, “Rescue Me,” became the highest-debuting single by a female artist in U.S. chart history, entering the charts at number 15. Truth or Dare, a documentary of the Blonde Ambition tour, was released to positive reviews and strong ticket sales at the end of 1991.

Madonna returned to the charts in the summer of 1992 with the number one “This Used to Be My Playground,” a single featured in the film A League of Their Own, which featured the singer in a small part. Later that year, Madonna released Sex, an expensive, steel-bound soft-core pornographic book that featured hundreds of erotic photographs of herself, several models, and other celebrities — including Isabella Rossellini, Big Daddy Kane, Naomi Campbell, and Vanilla Ice — as well as selected prose. Madonna was then at her most outrageous – wearing coned Jean-Paul Gaultier corsets and lashing her male dances on stage with whips. As the sexual theme got an increasingly arduous workout, she made what most people believe to the worst move of her career with her book Sex. It pictured Madonna in every type of sexual pose possible and indulged her flirtations with lesbianism and sado-masochism.

At the time Madonna is living in Miami, Coconut Groove, but she has houses in New York and in Hollywood too. (She?s also house hunting in London). Madonna lives with Carlos Leon. (Cuban trainer and cyclist) They met in year 1994 in the New York Central Park, where Madonna was doing her everyday jogging. Since that time they live together. On the October 14th, 1996 Madonna?s and Carlos Leon?s child was born. In Good Samaritan Hospital in L.A. at 16.01 p.m. Madonna named the little girl: Lourdes Maria Ciccone Leon. Now Madonna?s main passion is naturally Lourdes. Since giving birth, Madonna and child have emerged as a double act. Even though Madonna has employed a nanny, it’s clear that she aches if they are apart for even a few hours. Being a mother has finally mellowed out the outrageous Madonna.

Since year 1985, Madonna is known as a person who can do anything: she is a singer, an actress, a composer, a producer and an executive. Madonna has success everywhere. Madonna has broken every available radio, video, sales, and box-office record, racking up no fewer than 29 Top Ten singles, 11 of those reaching No. 1. Pivotal as recorded music is to Madonna’s unparalleled success; she has had more videos, played more often, than any other artist in the history of the MTV network. Multi-awarded for these videos, Madonna has made a ground-breaking contribution to the video art form, as she has in her unstoppable sell-out music tours that combine music, theatrics, spectacle, and dazzling charisma and have packed stadiums globally for nearly two decades. Those big chart breakers mean of course big money and that?s why Madonna is the richest woman in the world. Madonna makes about 130 millions USD for a year! Continuously releasing albums, singles, music- videos and movies hold Madonna?s myth high.

Madonna has achieved many things. She manipulated the media and the public with her music, her videos, her publicity, and her sexuality. As you can see Madonna is truly the earth?s greatest pop star.

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