Many grow up hearing all about the newest top artists and obsess over the newest music. Unfortunately, we never get to see the real person within those artists, since it is all covered up by the flashing lights and glamour. Stefani Joanne Angelina Germanotta, known as Lady Gaga, from New York started her music career after dropping out of NYU’s Tisch School of the Arts. Pop culture icon Lady Gaga, discovered in 2008 by her hit song “Just Dance,” is an artist who has multiple perceptions. Throughout her journey, she has been recognized by her unique presentation. There is so much more to Lady Gaga than the eccentric image she has put in the world. Lady Gaga’s Netflix documentary *Five Foot Two* is spectacular because of the rawness of the material, the balance between fame and personal life, and the overall film production.

When the name “Lady Gaga,” is brought up, people instantly think about her creative yet meaningful outfits such as the meat dress. The meat dress caused controversy because it was a political statement to bring light to the Don't Ask, Don't Tell policy in America, which was not allowing gay men and women to provide service in the military. She wore meat because it is symbolic of how “If we don't stand up for what we believe in, if we don't fight for our rights, pretty soon we're going to have as much rights as the meat on our bones,” (Kit). When I was little, I always thought Gaga’s style was unique. Now I realize how critical people were, yet Gaga stood up for herself which is brave, and that is a characteristic that everyone should look up to her for. In addition to her creative style, Gaga has always been compared to “Queen of Pop,”
Madonna, since they both have had similar styles in their music and fashion. An issue stirred up between Lady Gaga and Madonna, when Gaga released, “Born This Way” in 2011. The feud began when Madonna made an offensive comment calling Lady Gaga’s music “reductive”. “She wouldn't look me in the eye and tell me I'm reductive,” (Carter) Gaga discusses this issue more in depth in her documentary. Many individuals experience comparison between themselves and another individual. This is why many teens today have confidence issues due to the image society has set as a standard, such as tiny waists and flawless skin.

Immediately when you start the documentary, you see Lady Gaga wearing sweats, a body suit, and no make-up. This can be a shock to many because Gaga always wears something unpredictable whether it is a double eyeliner look, crazy wigs, or 12-inch heels. When she is in the comfort of her house in Malibu, she can let that go and be herself, Stefani. She bought her home in Malibu with acres of land with an ocean backyard to escape the fame. Many clips in this documentary are unscripted and filmed on the spot like this, “Five Foot Two feels intriguingly raw” (Berman). You get to truly see her emotions and everyday life in this film; “The Netflix documentary Gaga: Five Foot Two tears the curtain away completely, or at least it appears to, with fly-on-the-wall footage of rehearsals, studio sessions, public appearances, massages, late-night conversations, doctors’ appointments, and multiple crying jags” (Modell). I really love the idea of this because people often forget that celebrities, have normal lives too.

Additionally, Gaga talks about her suffering chronic pain with her fibromyalgia: “She tells the camera that if she gets depressed, her body goes into a full-body spasm,” (Billboard). She obviously hides it a lot especially when performing because I had no idea that she has been in consistent pain in the past few years. She has become so good at it that you do not know she is even going through it on stage and this is because when she performs she has so much adrenaline
that she doesn’t pay attention to it. During *Five Foot Two* you see Gaga at her doctor’s office in a robe and expressing herself regarding her stress and physical pain, “Inside one doctor’s office, she gets a series of shots on camera; minutes later, she’s being made up for an interview. It’s an intense, weird life” (Modell). This scene demonstrates her professional determination with her musical career. Personally, I started to think to myself, “I complain about situations being difficult but Gaga was able to take care of her heavy workload while in pain, so I should not be complaining about my issues.”

Along with her health conditions, Gaga has to be able to separate her famed lifestyle from her normal lifestyle. Lady Gaga had to postpone her Joanne World Tour in September because of her hip condition coming back (Billboard). This demonstrates that she is aware of her limits on and off stage, as Gaga and Stefani. Relationships are emotional and personal, and Lady Gaga briefly mentions her serious engagement with ex-fiance, Taylor Kinney. “I just want to make music and make people happy, and, like, I'm on tour and I have a family and I just can never get it all right at the same time. I always have a shoot ... My love life's imploded,” during this hectic time period, Lady Gaga was preparing for the release of her latest album Joanne and her performance at the Super Bowl, yet she was able to put her emotions aside in order to have a successful outcome (Billboard). This separation of lifestyles can be very difficult, and this is also relatable for everyday people. For example, many cannot divide work from home conflict, and because of this those people then do poorly on both ends. Gaga clearly demonstrates that it is possible no matter how big of a hill you need to avoid. However, in Gaga’s case it may be easier to go around problems because of the amount of money she has, and this is where her fame comes into play.
Five Foot Two was co-produced by Lady Gaga herself, and the stylistic approach to her documentary is very organized and specific. Gaga wanted to produce this documentary as a very personal film, which is the reason as to why she shared so many intimate moments. In the past, she did not talk much about her private and personal life, so this decision was a big move because this was her way of allowing the audience to get an insight into her and her life. With that being said, as co-producer, she had the ability to choose the parts of her life that she was ready to let the entire world see. Gaga clearly chose to be selectively honest since her whole life story was not in the film itself. In my opinion, this is reasonable because privacy is a right that everyone should want to keep. Moreover, the film was specifically in chronological order. The scenes went from one event to another; you see her in her house getting ready to perform, then the next day in the studio making music.

Five Foot Two allows her fans to see that she is more than “Lady Gaga,” she is Stefani Germanotta. Her well thought film allows us to have different perceptions of her and lets us realize that the Gaga she was before, is no longer the Gaga of today. Her film also helps the viewers reflect their own lives, by showing that popstars also struggle no matter how successful they are.
Work Cited


