

# Madonna-a legend essay



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

Singer, performer, actress.

Born Madonna Louise Veronica Ciccone in Bay City, Michigan, on August 16, 1958, to parents Silvio “ Tony” Ciccone and Madonna Fortin. Tony, the son of Italian immigrants, was the first of his family to go to college, where he earned a degree in engineering. Madonna’s mother, an x-ray technician and former dancer, was of French Canadian descent. After their marriage in 1955, the couple moved to Pontiac, Michigan, to be close to Tony’s job as a defense engineer.

Madonna was born three years later, during a visit with family in Bay City.

The third of six children, Madonna learned early on how to handle her role as the middle child, admitting that she was “ the sissy of the family” who often used her feminine wiles to get her way. Her parents’ strict observation of the Catholic faith played a large role in Madonna’s childhood. “ My mother was a religious zealot,” Madonna explains. “ There were always priests and nuns in my house growing up.

Many elements of Catholic iconography-including her mother’s statues of the Sacred Heart, the habits of the nuns at her Catholic elementary school, and the Catholic altar at which she and her family prayed daily-later became the subject of Madonna’s most controversial works. Another heavy influence on Madonna’s early life was her mother, who was diagnosed with breast cancer during her pregnancy with Madonna’s youngest sister. Treatment had to be delayed until the baby reached full term, but by then the disease had grown too strong. On December 1st, 1963, at the age of 30, her mother passed away.

Madonna was five years old. Her mother's death significantly affected Madonna's adolescence. Haunted by the memories of her mother's frailty and passive demeanor during her final days, Madonna was determined to make her own voice heard. " I think the biggest reason I was able to express myself and not be intimidated was by not having a mother," she says.

" For example, mothers teach you manners. And I absolutely did not learn any of those rules and regulations. " She fought especially hard against the rules imposed by her stepmother, Joan

Gustafson, who met Madonna's father while working as the family housekeeper. Madonna says Gustafson often made her take care of the younger children in the household, a task she greatly resented.

" I really saw myself as the quintessential Cinderella," Madonna later said. " I think that's when I really thought about how I wanted to do something else and get away from all that. " She rebelled against her traditional upbringing by turning her conservative clothing into revealing outfits, frequenting underground gay nightclubs, and rejecting her religious background.