

Michael Jackson: a brief biography



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Introduction:

Michael Jackson, without doubt, is one of the greatest entertainers of all time. He is most remembered for the ecstatic energy of his musical performances. He was as proficient in his dance moves as he was smooth and superlative in his singing. His talents extended to writing lyrics for his own songs as well. In many ways, he was the most complete and accomplished musician-dancer of his generation. He was also a great humanitarian, who associated himself with various noble causes. But deep inside he was an insecure person with a disposition toward childish behavior. This is exemplified by his keeping of a pet zoo, which was not fully compliant with laws governing animal rights and civic safety. He was also accused and later exonerated of charges of child molestation and abuse. Despite the factuality of these claims, his image was irreparably tarnished by them.

Thesis statement: the three main aspects of Michael Jackson's popularity was his family background, life style and his death. This essay will flesh out this thesis.

His Family Background:

Michael Jackson was born into a family of musicians. His parents and all his siblings were musicians. Even before he turned 10, he was a star member of the pop group Jackson Five – named after the five Jackson brothers who comprised it. But the flip side of this early fame is the lack of a proper childhood for Michael. He was forced to grow up too fast and as a result his psychological development remained uneven in later life. This explains his fondness for private zoos and strong identification with children. That he had

retained certain childish qualities well into adulthood is borne by his legendary boyish voice. This most unique gift of Michael's is smooth, silky and subtle. Right from a young age, his parents recognized the genius of Michael's talents and made him the central feature of their troop performances. The only other sibling who could rival his great musical gifts is his younger sister Janet Jackson, who went on to have a successful career of her own paralleling that of Michael's. (Feller 34)

The vocal dexterity and mellifluousness of the child prodigy will remain in the heart and minds of legions of his fans. He was also an extraordinarily talented dancer. The dance sequences to his super-hit songs ' Billy Jean', ' Beat It', ' Smooth Criminal', ' Black or White', etc are etched in the memory of all those who were privileged to witness it. The innovative dance move of Moon Walk served as a metaphor for the out-of-the-world inspiration he brought to bear on his songs.

His Lifestyle:

Michael Jackson's lifestyle was both colorful and controversial. The kind of attire that Michael wore has become his trademark symbols. The white glove, the slippery hat and the studded leather jacket are all integral parts of his appearance. His dressing sense was as much a source of his appeal as his musical and dancing talent. Just with a twitch of his hand or a tap of his hat, Michael Jackson could bring to his feet. The fast rhythmic R&B and pop numbers of his were particularly popular. They were remarkable in terms of the sheer energy they possessed. Michael's high pitched voice was suited to this genre, as the pitch carried the energy to the audience. A good indicator

of his widespread popularity is the number of impersonators he has had. During the 1980s, doing a moonwalk was a rite of passage for the youth of that generation. That was how they identified themselves as capable and special adults. It was part of their process of identification with a role model and individuation from parental control. (Cole 16)

It is fair to say that Michael Jackson was the greatest entertainer of his era. Though there were competitors like George Michael, Madonna, Prince, Tina Turner, etc, Jackson had the greatest fan following due to his global appeal. In other words, while many of his contemporary singers had great fan following within the United States, they could not gain fans worldwide the way Michael Jackson was able to do. It was perhaps a reflection of the universal themes and motifs in his albums that Jackson's appeal has reached a broad audience. Jackson's female fan following is vast. Due to the power of his personality and the way in which he dresses and performs on stage, he could bring his fans into a state of trance. The ecstatic outpour of joy by his female fans during his concerts is a sight to behold. (Williams 107)

The eccentric aspects of Jackson's personality and behavior also contributed to his fame. For example, the re-creation of the Peter Pan project for his grand mansion garnered a lot of media publicity. Michael allowed children were allowed to visit this private theme park. The rumored bleaching of his skin so as to appear White is another interesting facet of his appeal. Likewise, the numerous plastic surgeries he has had over his adult life, especially on his nose have given his face an artificial appearance. Yet, these weird tendencies on part of Michael Jackson have not affected his artistic

talent, which hastened his fan support through the ups and downs of his life.

(Cole 15)

Michael Jackson's marriage with Lisa-Marie Presley created a sensation when it happened. But the relationship quickly deteriorated and they got divorced. Later, his marriage and parenthood with Debbie Rowe – a former Australian nurse – was full of speculation about the true paternity of his children, etc. In these respects, the media had intruded on his private life unfairly, which may have increased in mental agony.