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The public performances of pop star Lady Gaga: reading representations of gender, sexuality and feminist identities

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DECLARATION

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ABSTRACT

This research project seeks to critically analyse the gender, sexuality and feminist identity representations in the musical and performance work of pop star Lady Gaga. It considers the implicit and symbolic meanings communicated about gender, sexuality and feminist identities through the intentional constructions of meaning and representations in Lady Gaga's songs and music videos. This study focuses on Lady Gaga's lyrics, music and singing, as well as on her performances and the visual images communicated in her music videos, as the main site of analysis and as the main communicator of these specific representations. Pop culture and pop music serve as fundamental contextual settings for this study, with semiotics and myth forming the main representation theories and methodological constructs of the project. Feminist and Queer theory are also prioritized in providing the primary discussion on understanding gender, sexuality and feminist identities, in ways that serve this study. Furthermore, the main argument of this research project is that Lady Gaga as a pop star and celebrity uses her capacity of influence to communicate alternative and subversive meanings and ideas about gender, sexuality and feminist identities, through her music, performative and aesthetic representations in the mass media. In adding to this argument, the meanings and ideas communicated by Lady Gaga are also resistant to traditional and accepted norms of gender, sexuality and feminist identities and, importantly, this study argues the ways that these representations are disruptive and challenging to the dominant ideologies of patriarchy and hetero-normitivity.

DEDICATION:

For as long as I can remember, there have always been two things that inspire me most - music and strong women. I have always been deeply moved and influenced by the strength, freedom, expression, courage and boldness of the women of my time. I tend to gravitate towards women with such characteristics, in real life and in the realm of music. The freedom of expression within the art form of music, for women particularly, excites me today and left me in a wondrous awe as a child. These have definitively influenced my tastes, character and the projection of the woman I would like to be.

As such, it gives me great pleasure to dedicate this project to all the fabulous women who have inspired and influenced my identity so greatly, and who continue to do so. From the strength and unwavering faith my mother shows me every day; the humour and wisdom of my aunts; the strong sisterly bonds found in my cousins and girlfriends; the guidance and insights of my teachers and lecturers; the light in the darkness of difference shown to me by my twin sister, to those females who have been a source of hurt, betrayal and disappointment to me in life. Also, to the vast array of female artists and their music, that have inspired me with their fearlessness and vulnerability, comforted me with their words, voices and melodies, and who have motivated me to be bold, strong and proudly myself. I dedicate this work to all of you amazing and significant women- family, friends, teachers, artists and music icons, and I thank you all for your inspiration, positive influence and teachings.

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Chapter 1:

An Introduction

1.1) Aim

The aim of this research project is to critically read and analyse the representations in the songs and public performances of pop artist Lady Gaga. It attempts to understand and uncover the deeper, implicit and intentionally constructed ideas and meanings that her music and music videos represent and communicate. It is specifically focused on understanding Lady Gaga's representations of gender, sexual and feminist identities in her music and performances in music videos, as a potential site for changing discourses on these topics. Furthermore, this study considers the ways in which Lady Gaga's representations of these identities may be disruptive, transgressive and subversive in terms of patriarchal, hetero-normative ideologies

1.2) Background to the study: A focus on Lady Gaga

1.2.1) Who is Lady Gaga?

Lady Gaga, since her debut on the music scene in 2008 and to date, can most simply be described as the biggest pop music star in the world. With the highest grossing tour by a debut headlining artist as well as the one of the highest grossing tours of all time, *The Monster Ball tour*; millions of albums and singles sold worldwide; record-breaking numbers for music downloads, such as the single *Born this way*, breaking online music store *iTunes* record for fastest selling single ever; setting a new record with over a billion views on her *YouTube* page and most recently being named the world's number one most powerful celebrity and eleventh most powerful woman in the world by Forbes magazine; the force of Lady Gaga in the music arena and in popular culture is undeniable (Forbes Magazine 2011:1). Lady Gaga is the new definition of the Queen of Pop and her success, status and influence is unparalleled, not only to other pop stars and music artists but also to other political, social, economic, religious and cultural icons. She reigns supreme and her power and influence, exerted primarily through her music, performances and the identity she creates for herself in the media, is one of the strongest in the world. Her aesthetic and musical representations, and the messages carried in them, seems

to be very relatable and agreeable to her masses of fans, whom Lady Gaga fondly refers to as her 'little monsters'- her loyal fans who consistently and fanatically support her in everything she does. Her success may also be accredited to this huge following of fans, reflected on the social network Twitter, where she has over 13, 5 million followers and is also the most followed person on this social network (Twitter Counter 2011:1).

1.2.2) A history of Lady Gaga

Lady Gaga whose real name is Stefani Germanotta, was born on March 28, 1986 in New York City and is Italian American (Severt 2008: 1). She had been interested in music and began to learn how to play the piano by ear at the age of 4, and started writing and performing music by the time she was in her early teens (Lady Gaga.com 2010:1). She attended the notoriously strict Covenant of the Sacred Heart, Roman Catholic private school in uptown New York City, but as hard working as she was felt like an outsider, claiming "I used to get made fun of for being either too provocative or too eccentric, so I started to tone it down. I didn't fit in, I felt like a freak" (Lady Gaga Official site 2010:1; Sturges 2009:1; Bream 2009:1). Music always came first to her - she was an avid participator in school musicals and practised piano for 2 hours daily (Purves: 2010: 49). Her focus on academics and music eventually paid off, when, at 17, she became one of twenty students from around the world to gain early admission into New York University's prestigious Tisch School of the Arts, where she studied music and improved her song writing skills (Lady Gaga Official site 2010: 1). She dropped out of the school after a year however, in order to focus on a career as a music artist (Purves 2010:49).

It was during this time that Lady Gaga began to delve into exploring her musical identity. She explored many different musical genres including hard rock, electronica, pop and dance, till her persona eventually began to gel (Purves 2010:49). Her performances started to include elements of pop, rock and burlesque to many positive reviews, showcased by her performances with performance art DJ, Lady Starlight (Purves 2010:49). She met music producer Rob Fusari, who helped her develop her persona and music, even giving her the name 'Lady Gaga', saying that she reminded him of the Queen song, 'Radio Gaga'(Purves 2010:49). Lady Gaga received her first record deal at the age of 19 from Def Jam records, and it was here that she was introduced to producer and songwriter RedOne, who was also signed to Def Jam. Together, they struck a good working relationship, but she was dropped from the label after 6 months (Purves 2010:29).

Lady Gaga was then signed to Streamline records, a part of the empire of Interscope records, after a record executive for Interscope had heard the songs she had written and produced with Fusari (Mitchell 2007:1). While at Interscope records as a new artist, she initially and prominently worked as a songwriter for fellow label mates such as New Kids on the Block, Fergie and the Pussycat Dolls, and has also penned songs for Britney Spears (Harding 2009:1). Her song-writing skills as well as vocal abilities were also noticed by singer-songwriter Akon, who was so impressed with her that he signed her to his own label, 'Kon Live Distribution' through a joint deal between his company and Interscope records (Vena 2009:1). Lady Gaga continued to work with producer RedOne, who became the chief producer of her debut album. Their collaboration created many future hits, and it was from this, that Lady Gaga's debut album, *The Fame*, was born.

1.2.3) Lady Gaga's music

Lady Gaga's debut album, titled *The Fame* was released on the 28th of October 2008, under Interscope records (Lady Gaga Official site 2010:1). The album consists of 14 tracks, 6 of which were released as singles with corresponding music videos. The singles released to a mass pop music audience, were, in consecutive order, her debut single *Just Dance* featuring Colby O' Donis, followed by the singles *Beautiful, Dirty, Rich*; *Poker Face*; *Eh Eh, There's Nothing else I Can Say*; *LoveGame* and *Paparazzi* (Lady Gaga Official site 2010:1). This album may be best defined under the musical genre of pop, but also includes and combines many other different genres, "from Def Leppard drums, to hand claps, to metal drums on urban tracks" (Birchmeirer 2008:1). The songs musically, also draw inspiration from electro pop, dance pop and rock, resonating an 80s sound, with pop music influences, and catchy hooks.

The songs are also inspired by the main theme of the entire album, *The Fame.* This may be described as Lady Gaga's love and interest in what constitutes fame, and focuses on the complexities and sophistications that make up a rich and famous lifestyle, according to her. On the title and concept of the album she explains, *The Fame* is about how anyone can feel famous- "I want to invite you all to the party, I want people to feel a part of this lifestyle" (Lady Gaga Official site 2010:1). Lyrically, the songs are centred on ideas of love, fame and sexuality, but also describe notions of the desire to capture attention and achieve fame.

Tracks off *The Fame* are predominantly produced by RedOne, Rob Fusari as well as established Interscope songwriter and producer, Martin Kierszenbaum. All songs on this album are either co-written with these producers or written single-handedly by Lady Gaga, proving that she is more than just a produced package with no legitimate talent as many pop starts are considered, but may truly credited as a real musical artist. She writes all of her own songs, creates all her own melodies, plays her own keyboard, guides the sound of her music and does not lip-synch during her live concerts (Purves 2010:45).

The album also earned Lady Gaga recognition at the prestigious annual Grammy awards, where, at the 52nd Grammy Awards, she was nominated for Song of the Year, Record of the Year for *Poker Face* and Album of the Year for *The Fame* (Grammy Awards Official website 2010:1). She was awarded a Grammy for 'Best Dance Recording' for the single *Poker Face*, as well as for 'Best Electronic/Dance album' for *The Fame* album (Grammy Awards Official website 2010:1). She was also nominated for an outstanding nine awards at the 2009 MTV Video Music Awards, where she won 'Best New Artist' (2009 MTV Video Music Awards 2009:1). She also picked up awards for 'Best Art Direction' and 'Best Special Effects' for the video *Paparazzi* (2009 MTV Video Music Awards 2009:1).

The Fame Monster is the second studio album from Lady Gaga and was released on November 23rd, 2009 (Lady Gaga Official site 2010:1). The *Fame Monster* was released as a stand-alone album, representing a separate conceptual and musical body of work from *The Fame* and consists of 8 tracks. The album was released on Interscope records, and with tracks, again, chiefly produced by Lady Gaga's main collaborator, Red One, but also by other veteran music producers such as Rodney Jerkins and Ron Fair on a few tracks (Aceshowbiz 2009:1). Three singles have been released from this album. The first single released was titled *Bad Romance*, followed by *Telephone* featuring American Pop/R&B singer Beyonce and *Alejandro*, all of which have been released with corresponding music videos (Lady Gaga Official site 2010:1).

Lady Gaga's second album differs very much from her debut album, and this was one of the motivating factors in releasing *The Fame Monster* as its own album. Tracks off this album did not need the support of tracks off *The Fame*, as the content and tone of both albums are so different, although both thematic. As previously mentioned, *The Fame* album deals with

concepts of love, fame, money and sexuality, and *The Fame Monster* is representative of the dark, seamier nature of fame, as experienced by Gaga over the last 2 years of 2008 and 2009. She compares the mood and feel of the two albums as opposites and describes this dichotomy as "ying and yang" respectively (Vena and Colloway 2009:1). Regarding the subject matter and content of *The Fame Monster*, Lady Gaga comments that each song on the album represents a different fear that she has (Larry King Live 2010:1). She explains,

> "On my re-release of *The Fame Monster*, I wrote about everything I didn't write on *The Fame*. While travelling the world for two years, I've encountered several monsters, each represented by a different song on the the new record: my 'Fear of sex monster', my 'Fear of alcohol monster', my 'Fear of love monster', my 'Fear of death monster', my 'Fear of loneliness monster', etc etc" (Aceshowbiz 2009:1).

The songs on the album thus describe the darker sides of fame, and are expressed through a monster metaphor, that is 'The Fame Monster'. Lady Gaga's fears are thus likened to the 'monsters' of fame. Considering this, Lady Gaga further elaborates that she is "obsessing with the decay of the celebrity and the way that fame is a monster in society" - so the monster metaphor is the perfect fit (Carpenter 2009:1). Many of the song's lyrics also use zombie and monster metaphors. The atmosphere and aesthetic of the album are further enhanced by the monochrome cover shot and the crucifix logo, which provide a dark and gothic feel. Lady Gaga's concept for the album was to create something darker and edgier than anything she has done before (Vena and Calloway 2009:1).The album contains two cover shots-one with Lady Gaga in a blonde wig and black jacket, and the other with Lady Gaga in a wig of long, black stringy hair, with thick, black eyeliner running down her face, which reinforces the concept of ying and yang (The Fame Monster album 2009:1) The album's musical compositions are also inspired by gothic music and fashion shows, with Lady Gaga explaining that this album is a "pop experimentation with Industrial/Goth beats, 90's dance melodies, an obsession with the lyrical genius of 80s melancholic pop, and the runway" (Press Release 2009:1).

This second album has also performed well on the charts. In the US, the album charted at number 5 and also went on to top the Dance/electronic charts, replacing its predecessor, *The Fame* ((Pietrolungo 2009:1; Billboard: 2009:1). The Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) certified the album platinum in January 2010, for selling over a million copies (Recording Industry Association of America 2010:1). In February 2010, the album in a deluxe addition coupled with *The Fame* album, held the number one spot for 5 weeks on the UK albums chart and was certified platinum for shipment of over a million copies across Europe (International Federation of Phonographic Industry 2010: 1). The albums first two singles, namely *Bad Romance* and *Telephone* topped charts all around the world, and granted Lady Gaga her 5th and 6th consecutive number one singles (Pietrolungo 2010:1).

Lady Gaga's third studio album, *Born This Way*, was released amid much anticipation on the 23rd May 2011. This project however is focused specifically on singles off *The Fame* and *The Fame Monster* albums of Lady Gaga. A discussion and contextual understanding of these albums, is favourable in this study, as it helps us understand the background, value and scope of the songs. A discussion of the *Born This Way* album, though successful in its own right, is thus not entirely relevant to this study. Certain themes off songs on this album are shared by songs analysed in this project, on *The Fame* and *The Fame Monster*. However, and when suitable, specific reference will be made to these songs.

1.2.4) Understanding Lady Gaga in Pop Music and Pop Culture

In pop music and pop culture today, Lady Gaga is best known in a few distinctive ways to the public. She is first and foremost known as a pop artist and thus, for the music she makes. This is most prominently seen through her debut album *The Fame*, released in 2008, which became an international hit, producing 4 number one singles as well as the most number one pop song chart singles than any other album in history (Purves 2010:45). The successes of the albums that followed *The Fame*, namely *The Fame Monster* and currently, *Born This Way*, have also reinforced Lady Gaga's identity as one of the biggest pop stars in the world and also as a successful music artist.

Secondly, the performance of her public self through her music videos serve to represent her songs and music as well as characterize her, through the theatrical and entertaining, yet message

driven, high art and high culture, over-the-top quality of her performances. Her music videos tend to stand out in the realm of pop culture and pop music, as her music videos carry direct and specific meanings that are communicated through a distinctive narrative. She is also characterized through her dramatic, scandalous and entertaining live performances, which play a substantial part in her identity as 'Lady Gaga'. Thus, her music videos and live performances not only have an entertainment value, but contain more meaningful elements too, constituted by the cultural and societal messages they communicate. These music videos and live performances are also very high budget and extravagant and are deliberately produced to communicate certain narratives, as well as to represent Lady Gaga in a certain and intentional way.

Furthermore, her glamorous, provocative and usually outlandish fashion choices have led Lady Gaga to be heralded as a fashion icon by many within pop music and pop culture. Her fashion and body expressions too are included as part of the performance of her public self. Her fashion choices may be reflective of her eccentricities as well as creativity, and steps well outside of mainstream and traditional conceptions of fashion, ready to wear clothes and high fashion couture. It is clear to see that being alternative and independent of mainstream and traditional ideas is an important ambition of hers, even as a mainstream pop artist, and she expresses this by playing the pop game by her own rules. These important features, namely, music, music videos, live performances and performance art, fashion and identity as a pop star, all contribute to defining the pop phenomenon that is Lady Gaga. She asserts, "Lady Gaga is not a character-the fashion, the music, the films, the videos, are an extension of me" (Florino 2009:1).

1.3) Rationale

Throughout the last few decades, pop music has produced its share of pop stars, and thus the creation of new pop stars in current times is no extraordinary occurrence in popular culture. This study will focus on Lady Gaga, one of the biggest contemporary pop artists in the world, having sold over 15 million album and 14 million singles worldwide as well as earning 6 consecutive number one singles, a feat that is uncommon for such a then, new artist (Purves 2010:45). Her widely circulated popular music and music videos reach large audiences, through worldwide distribution of her videos shown on television, but primarily through the internet. This makes

the meaning behind her work important, as she communicates these specific ideas and representations to a mass audience, and this mass audience is willing to accept and support these ideas - clear from her large following on websites such as YouTube and Twitter. In studying meanings and messages represented through Lady Gaga's expressions, this study serves to critically engage with the hidden, overlooked and taken-for-granted meanings, messages and ideologies, represented through a new standpoint and conception of pop music. Thus, it makes the invisible visible, by exploring beyond the natural and generally accepted meanings and values within pop music. Instead of looking at pop music traditionally as cheap, insignificant, un-intellectual, sex-driven, 'bubblegum' music, produced solely to sell to audiences for a profit, this study considers the new cultural and symbolic depth and value that pop music, through Lady Gaga, may have.

The stance taken by this study is also shared by many other academic writers that have written about Lady Gaga as a topic of research, which will later be discussed in more detail. It describes taking a standpoint in popular culture and pop music that looks beyond general, superficial and accepted meanings and explores the symbolic representations and intentionally constructed deeper meanings communicated, around certain topics. Other academic literature on Lady Gaga, such as research by Katrin Horn (2010) and Kevin Gaffney (2010), recognises the same prominent meanings communicated in Lady Gaga's work that refers directly to her subversive representations of gender, sexuality and feminist identities as well as her undermining of patriarchy and hetero-normativity. This similarity between other Lady Gaga studies and this research reinforces the idea that Lady Gaga and her representational work in the media are important to consider and study. This study is however significantly different as compared to other academic literature on Lady Gaga due to, specifically, the rigorous and finely tuned, detailed semiotic analysis techniques employed, which zoom into specific aspects of Lady Gaga's work, and with this as the site of analysis, produces unique results that add to existing academic literature on Lady Gaga. This approach renders this research project unique and unlike other academic writing on Lady Gaga, allowing new and original results and findings about her representational work to be established.

This study is also useful as it situates itself in an existing social context and serves to be relevant to today's time. In documenting implicit and explicit meanings and ideologies represented in the

pop music and expressions of Lady Gaga within the sphere of popular culture currently, this study speaks directly to a time and place and therefore holds cultural currency, relevance and originality. Predominantly, most other academic literature on Lady Gaga has been published between the years 2009 and 2011 and this further serves to highlight the cultural relevance and importance of currently studying Lady Gaga and the work she produces. The analysis of the specifically chosen songs and music videos also adds to this idea, as no other academic literature and research on Lady Gaga has analysed these particular songs and videos to the extent that this research project does. Additionally, recent and relatively newly-produced work are analysed, making this research fresh and reflective of current undertakings of Lady Gaga's work in popular culture and pop music. Thus, this study appropriately addresses issues of the times and documents a potential changing in the landscape of pop music and popular culture, through Lady Gaga, as a site of discourse.

New ideas of how to deal and interact with pop music are introduced within this study, as the cultural and symbolic importance of pop music and pop artists are prioritised- something that is usually overlooked in popular culture. Pop music's ability, however, to affect and influence a mass audience more than any other music genre is highlighted in the study. Its meanings and messages cannot however go unchecked and unevaluated, especially as it reaches a mass audience, and thus needs to be analysed, which is a priority of this study. Additionally, it allows for content to be judged and evaluated according to the types of meanings and messages it sends to audiences in relation to societal norms. This particular detail of analysis provides this study with even more originality and innovation, as compared to other academic writing. It thus investigates the potential of pop music, with a focus on Lady Gaga, to create and disseminate certain meanings and messages to audiences which may be mainstream, traditional and accepted, or which may be alternative, unsettling and thus critical.

This study also reads Lady Gaga's performances in her music videos as watchdogs of pop music by reading them as critical dimensions to pop music. Thus Lady Gaga's music and performance of her public self can be analysed in terms of its intended effects in particular, whether it serves to be subversive or reinforcing to conventional hegemonic ideas in society. In so doing, such a study creates a new reality to inform how to engage with pop music and also extends and deepens understandings within the field of pop music and popular culture. It presents a critical

way of understanding pop music, and also applies a known scholarship to new and different ideas.

1.4) Hypothesis

This study hypothesises that Lady Gaga plays an important role in representing aspects of female power, sexuality and gender identity through pop music in the media. Lady Gaga serves to epitomize what popular culture is and how it functions in this present day, through her work in pop music. Lady Gaga thus works to characterize popular culture and pop music as a pop artist. However, this study further hypothesizes that Lady Gaga, acting within the realm of popular culture and pop music, serves to challenge mainstream and dominant ideas in society, in regards to sexuality, gender and feminist identity, through her musical and visual expressions. Lady Gaga exemplifies what a traditional pop star is, has all the makings of these and thus fulfils all the requirements of a pop star, but this study additionally hypothesises that she uses this power granted to her as a pop star, to communicate ideas that are subversive, trangressive and alternative to traditional and accepted norms in society, through her music and visual expressions. As such, Lady Gaga serves to challenge and question these traditional and accepted norms in society, and also provide her own social and political ideas and opinions through her music, performances and identity. Furthermore, she serves an activist through the musical and visual content she creates, for sexually and gender oppressed groups in society as well as for female empowerment.

1.5) Research Question/s

1.5.1) What meanings and ideas are generated in the representation of gender, sexuality and feminist identity/s in Lady Gaga's music, performances and music videos?

1.5.2) How are the constructions of hegemonic discourse, dominant ideologies and traditional ideas of gender, sexuality and feminist identity/s, challenged through their representations in Lady Gaga's music, performances and music videos?

Chapter 2:

Literature Review

2.1) Introduction

The literature review of this study discusses and examines particular parts of literature within cultural studies in order to provide a framework and stipulate the field within which this research project can be understood. Importantly this section is divided into two sections. The first section is titled "Setting the stage: The Culture of the Popular and Pop", with the purpose of providing a specific context to and understanding of the nature of this study. This section, accordingly, discusses the particular approaches to popular culture relevant to this study as well as explicates the field of pop culture and pop music by discussing their specific characteristics and uses in the media and society. This section also goes on to provides an explication on the medium of music videos and Lady Gaga's music videos as the primary site of analysis in this study, and also discusses celebrity culture as a more defining and specific description of Lady Gaga within pop culture. The next section of the literature review, "Understanding Representations: Music and Gender" specifically deals with the tensions and main issues that frame this study, namely issues of gender, sexuality and female representation in music. As such, the section discusses women's practises in music within a patriarchal society, as well as more specifically, studies Madonna as an example of transgression and resistance to the norm in pop music through the representations of gender and sexuality in her musical work. Lastly, other studies of Lady Gaga are also mapped out and explained, in order to provide an even more specific context within which to study Lady Gaga. A discussion of these now follow.

2.2.) Setting the stage: The Culture of the Popular and Pop

2.2.1) Popular Culture

This literature review begins with an explication of popular culture, specifically defined under the concepts of Mass culture theory; Structuralism and Feminist theory- with their main purpose

in this study to show the different approaches to popular culture that inform the study. The discussion of popular culture also serves as a pathway into pop culture. Popular culture and 'pop' culture share many common characteristics- they, both, are mass produce, mass appealing and mainstream cultures. The existence of popular culture in a society can be considered as being the basis for the emergence of a more contemporary and specific 'pop' culture. Pop music, the genre of music highlighted in this study, is as a result of this pop culture phenomenon. Discussing both of these is important in this study as they describe and explain the field in which pop music artists and pop music function. In so doing, we can understand this specific culture in which pop artists of our time not only work in, but are also born out of and sustained in, through the media and in society.

The 'popular' in popular culture importantly suggests that it is a culture based on being well liked by many people. It is also suggestive of "work deliberately setting out to win the favour of the people" and "a site where collective social understandings are created" (Storey 1993:5-7). The manifestations of these are evident and inscribed in a set of generally available media products or works of art such as films, music, clothing, TV shows, and magazines, to name the most common. These, through the media, are used to communicate the most popular meanings and the most appealing pleasures to society (Strinati 1995:1). To further understand this as well as understand how popular culture is developed, we must consider the two important features that make up popular culture, namely culture and ideology (Storey 1993:2).

The concept of culture can generally be described as a way of life that is acquired or adopted by a group of people, based on a system of meaning and understanding. These are imprinted in and reflected by things such as language, lifestyle patterns, rituals, art forms, symbols, clothing, music, dance and all other expressive, intellectual and communicative behaviour that is associated with specific groups. Culture may also be used to refer to the works of intellectual and especially artistic activity (Storey 1993:2). It thus refers to texts and practises whose use it is to signify and produce meaning (Strinati 1995:1). Making culture, whether this refers to a way of life or the production of art, is a social process and reflects a shared understanding and shared social experience of the people it represents. From this, social identities of people sharing the same culture are developed. Cultures in this twenty-first century are not limited to geographical locations or certain languages as they previously were - the development, influence and access

to media all over the world allows for cultures to be shared as well as for different, heterogeneous and disparate people to be a part of the same culture. Popular culture is an example of this. It is a culture that is shared and understood around the world, based in a shared meaning and appeals, disseminated through mass media messages.

Producing popular culture is a social process, as previously discussed, but is also formed by being based on certain ideologies. All discourses and texts that play important cultural roles, can only circulate in relation to the social system, and this social system is based on certain ideologies, such as patriarchal capitalism, that dominates society today (Fiske 1989: 1). The nature of any culture is thus informed by the ideologies that they are based upon, because these ideological social systems cannot function alone and depend on cultural systems to stabilize them (Fiske 1989: 1). Put simply, cultural systems and ideological systems need each other to function, and one cannot effectively function without the other. This makes the concept of ideology an essential concept in understanding popular culture.

Ideology refers to a belief system and to a systematic body of ideas, articulated by a particular group of people (Storey 1993:2). It is based on material practice as well and not just on a body of ideas (Storey 1993:5). This means that ideology is encountered in everyday life practise and not just in ideas about these practises. This definition also suggests that certain material, ideological practises, inscribe a social order in society. Roland Barthes describes ideology in a way very relevant to this study. Barthes argues that ideology operates mainly at a level of connotations or secondary, unconscious meanings, that texts and practises carry (Storey 1993:6). Ideology is thus inscribed and communicated through implicit meanings, in texts and practises, which in this study, refers specifically to songs, music, performance and music videos. The ideologies that inform Lady Gaga's representations of gender, sexuality and feminist identity are examined in this study, with results illustrating whether these representations support the ideologies that make up popular culture, or whether they are alternative to them. In so doing, Lady Gaga in her representational work falls into the category of popular culture, but does not necessarily play by the rules and follow expectations within the field of popular culture. Extending on Barthes's conception, ideology or "myth", as Barthes calls it, is a site of hegemonic struggle to fix, restrict and produce new connotations, something Lady Gaga makes use of in the representations of her

music and music videos (Storey 1993:6). Thus this understanding of ideology in popular culture is very appropriate to this study as the 'myth' in Lady Gaga's work is priority here.

Ideology may also be defined as referring to a certain "masking, distortion or concealment" (Storey 1993:2). Ideology may also be defined by "ideological forms", which draws attention to the way in which texts present a particular image of the world (Storey 1993:5). In this capacity, ideology is used to indicate how some cultural texts and practises present distorted images of society. This is done by producing a "false consciousness', and works in the interest of those in power against subordinated, less powerful groups in society (Storey 1993:2). This refers to notions of capitalist ideology, which indeed is the ideology dominant in society and the media today. Producers of media messages in the realm of popular culture are thus responsible for the intentional and specific ideologies that underline the text and the 'myth' that is communicated through the text, as this is not a natural process.

Operations of ideology attempt to pass off that which is cultural as something that is natural, and also attempts to legitimise and make universal that which is partial and particular (Storey 1993:6). This is important to consider because the media meanings communicated in popular culture become liked and acceptable, even ideological messages that presents partial truth as the whole truth. Because ideologies present particular views and belief systems, cultural texts are political as they offer competing ideological significations and meanings of the way the world is. Within these operations of ideology, pop artists like Lady Gaga who play part in the production processes of their work, are able to use the terrain to challenge ideas that are meant to come across as natural and legitimate, by producing meanings contrary to and free from these. Ideology thus refers to relations of power and in this study is referent to the power of patriarchal and hetero-normative ideology that works to conceal, mask and distort gender relations and representation of sexuality and female power in the media and in popular culture. This implies that popular culture is something more than a simple discussion of entertainment and leisure.

Popular culture may be defined in various ways and from different critical approaches. From the above discussion, we can see that definitions of popular culture are a complex combination of different meanings of popular, culture and ideology. The different approaches of popular culture that are applicable to this study will now be explored.

The first definition of popular culture, suggests that popular culture is simply a culture that is widely favoured or liked by many people (Storey1993:7). It a quantitative index, that meets the approval and acceptance of a large majority of people. Thus, in understanding this quantitative index, one could examine sales of cultural artefacts, such as albums, movie tickets or concert tickets. Such counting serves as the quantitative dimension in understanding the 'popular', in popular culture. This notion of popular culture applies to this study, as the music of Lady Gaga may be considered as 'popular', based on album sales, singles sales, ticket sales and the large amount of time her videos are viewed. These, thus constitute her as popular, as well as define the landscape within which she works as a pop artist, namely, popular culture. Thus, her pop music can be defined as popular culture, under this definition.

Popular culture can also be defined as "mass culture", meaning that it is a culture produced by mass production and industrial techniques; and is marketed for a profit to a mass public of consumers (Strinati 1995:10). This implies that popular culture is a strongly commercial culture, which is mass-produced for a mass market. The Frankfurt school's approach to the culture industry also views popular culture as a mass culture, which is produced by the culture industry to secure the stability and continuity of capitalism (Strinati 1995:55). Popular culture as a mass culture, is a "standardised, formulaic, repetitive and superficial culture, which celebrates, trivial, sentimental, immediate and false pleasures at the expense of serious, intellectual, time honoured and authentic values" (Strinati 1995:14). It is from this, and mass culture definitions that a more specific and contemporary culture namely pop culture, emerges-a culture where open sexual expression, the search for bodily pleasures and a "stick-it-in-your-face" attitude toward authority reign supreme (Danesi 2009:3).

In a mass culture, cultural forms such as popular music are thought to function to secure the continuing economic, political and ideological domination of capitalism, as a dominant ideology (Strinati 1995:56). This notion also suggests that mass culture begins to define social reality for the mass public, because it lacks intellectual challenge and stimulation, and instead, offers the audience fantasy and escapism (Strinati 1995:14). In so doing, however, audiences are perpetuated as powerless, regressive, dependent and passive, through the cultural products produced (Strinati 1995:64). It discourages the audience from using their own minds and working through their own responses, and rather replaces the consciousness of the masses with

automatic conformity to the dominant ideologies of society. The production of cultural products by Lady Gaga, may be considered as veering away from dominant ideologies. Her representations also work to awaken audiences and make them aware of the misrepresentations of society that the media perpetuate. Lady Gaga, although largely operating within a mass culture, also takes a stand against ideas of mass culture, by challenging audiences with her messages and representations that do not always conform to dominant ideologies. This serves to illustrate a very vital and shared attribute of popular culture, pop culture and pop music- its emancipatory potential.

Approaching popular culture from Structuralist and Semiotics view points is relevant, as this study uses signs, signifieds, signifiers, decoding and encoding as tools of analysis for texts. It focuses on structure in language, culture and other signifying systems as communicating meanings in cultural products (Strinati 1995:88). Semiology, a scientific study of sign systems in culture, is prioritised here, in understanding popular culture, and is the main methodological approach utilised in this study (Strinati 1995:88). It is focused on how humans communicate through signals, such as gestures, adverts, food, objects, music and clothes for example. Semiology stresses the role of popular culture in obscuring the interests of the powerful, making this approach important in uncovering ideologies that are hidden or disguised in communicative systems (Strinati 1995:115). It employs the work of Roland Barthes and his conception of myth, for example, as a way of uncovering ideologies embedded in cultural artefacts (Strinati: 1995: 115). Thus this approach to popular culture can be understood through analysing the meanings within language, music, visual texts, and other features that constitute popular culture, which is one of the aims of this research project.

Lastly, popular culture may be looked at through the model of feminist theory. Feminist theory defines popular culture as a form of patriarchal ideology, which works in the interests of men and against the interests of women (Strinati 1995:180). In this sense, popular culture is again seen as working in favour of and upholding dominant ideologies in society. It also views cultural representations of woman in the mass media, as working to "support and continue the prevailing sexual division of labour and orthodox conceptions of femininity and masculinity". (Strinati 1995:181). It sees the mass media as "symbolically annihilating women", by confirming their roles in society as mothers, wives, housewives, and thus create expectations of women in a

patriarchal society (Strinati 1995:181). In examining the workings of Lady Gaga in popular culture in this study, it is essential that Lady Gaga's representations be analysed through the lens of feminist theory, as one of the main points of this study is to analyse whether Lady Gaga's works serve or transgress dominant ideologies in society. These dominant ideologies are inclusive of the representations of women in terms of gender and sexuality, as well as their expectations form society, perpetuated by mass media representations.

This discussion introduces ways of understanding popular culture generally and in relation to this study. This brings us to discussion of a more modern form of popular culture - pop culture. Pop culture has been born out of a contemporary culture of technology where cultural products can easily be mass produced, re-distributed and shared by masses not confined to space or time, and is thus a global culture. The terrain, in which pop star Lady Gaga exists specifically and currently, is in pop culture. Importantly pop culture carries its own history and is defined by its own particular features that allow it to characterize itself as a particular and specific genre, functioning in the media and in society presently.

2.2.2) Pop Culture

Certain popular culture theories share commonalities with attributes of pop culture and serve to reinforce pop culture as a popular culture. Pop culture however, is a very specific form of culture that has its own history, characteristics and uses in society and media. Much like popular culture, pop culture in essence can be considered as made up of symbolic forms of communication and meaning that are expressed through the means of cultural artefacts, such as movies, music, fashion, art and even lifestyle. These symbolic forms of communication are, however, specific - they are the source of pop icons, pleasures, trends and information, and encompass an array of pop culture products including holidays, cars, TV and lifestyle choices. Pop culture is an appealing, mainstream and contemporary culture that is based on the expression of sexual and bodily pleasures as well as based on celebrities and celebrity culture. It has fundamentally been described as a platform for the performance of "kitsch and vulgar spectacles" spread through the media and society (Danesi 2009:16). In essence, pop culture acts as a means of expression in its products, that meets the instinctive bodily and sexual desires, needs and pleasures of human beings in a practised and customized way (Danesi 2009:17). Pop culture is also popular and appealing because it consists of what people make or do for themselves, and through it people

are able to represent themselves (Storey 1993:5). The characteristics of pop culture are thus reflective of the desires and needs of its producers and of what they think their audiences expects.

Before discussing how pop culture specifically came about, a discussion of how popular culture emerged in society is needed as a basis for the development of pop culture. Popular culture first emerged in America in the 1920s where consequent modernization in societies had taken place due to the Industrial Revolution (Chambers 1985:1). This allowed for common people to have financial means and capacity to seek pleasure in the arts and its consumption as well as to engage creatively in them - a power they did not have before (Danesi 2009:17). Commoners were now affluent and possessed a large amount of buying power, which meant that they were also propelled into the unprecedented position of shaping trends in fashion, music and lifestyle, using the power that they had. From this, popular culture developed into a mass culture - a culture created "by the people, for the people" (Danesi 2009:4). By the end of the 1920s, a full-blown pop culture had developed, promoted by powerful media conglomerates, who saw popular trends in music, movies, novels and fashion as having market value that could be sold to audiences (Danesi 2009:4). Pop culture and its changing of popular trends also resulted in particular time periods being characterized and referred to by these popular trends, for example, "the disco era, the punk era or the hip hop era" (Danesi 2009:4).

The term 'pop culture' was developed in the middle part of the twentieth century. It was fashioned after the 'pop art' or 'popular art' movement - a movement in which artists appropriated images and commodities from the consumerist popular culture, as their subject matter (Danesi 2009:17). Pop art saw artists depicting everyday life using, for example, brand name commercial products, fast food items, comic strip frames, celebrities and the like as their materials and subjects. Their art was a happening or an event that consisted of improvised spectacles and performances that appealed to and that was enjoyed by all (Danesi 2009:17). Thus pop art was not just constricted to art-gallery patrons, as other art forms had previously been. American Pop artist Andy Warhol (1928-1987) can be considered as the most famous representative of the pop art movement. He created highly publicised paintings and prints of commonplace objects, such as soup cans and pictures of celebrities, such as Marilyn Monroe as

the subject matter for his art (Danesi 2009:17). It is from this pop art movement that pop culture became aesthetically developed and from which its specific characteristics became emphasized.

Pop culture is also much contrasted from historical and traditional cultures and is a typical culture. The main reason for this is because pop culture operates in the public domain, ensuring that it is for everyone and not just for an elite class of artists, controlled by authority figure for their own entertainment, as it historically was. This conception of pop and popular culture and its objects further significantly departs from tradition in that it annihilates the "ritual space" between art and everyday life - spheres that had previously been separated. As such, it is thought of as being loosened from "the tyranny of tradition" (Chambers 1985:2). Furthermore, it mocks at earlier, historical arts forms that were limited and commissioned, and rather creates new criteria for these forms that are free to be expressed and shared (Chambers 1985:2).

In discussing pop culture, it must be noted that pop culture, like popular culture, is importantly "commercial in organisation" and is sold to audiences to generate a profit (Chambers 1985:6). The rise of pop culture can be accredited to a change in the world of production and leisure, which in turn contributed to the massive expansion of consumerism (Chambers 1985:7). This is because ideas of leisure have been reorganised and reconceptualised and now encompasses a potential lifestyle through pop culture products made possible through consumerism. People longer prioritise staying home and spending time with family, but now rather opt to watch a movie, buy, go shopping or go to a concert. An actively constructed style of living has been developed through pop and other popular cultures. Modern leisure is now guided by pop and popular culture and has transformed into the fabric of personal lives (Chambers 1985:17). People are also able to affirm their "selves" and their individuality through the cultural products they spend money on and consume, within the context of pop and popular culture

Fundamentally pop culture grew in response to the repression of a lifestyle that prioritised bodily pleasures, making pop culture essentially based on the need to express bodily and sexual pleasures (Danesi 2009:2). Expressing and admiring bodily pleasures in early America, was viewed negatively and consequently stifled. The emergence of popular culture however, became an "unconscious vehicle", driving the freedom of expression for previously repressed impulses, giving these impulses a voice in society (Danesi 2009:2). This new trend in lifestyle, which included young women moving away from conventional expectations of dress and gender roles

and new sexually suggestive ways of dancing, was condemned by many, but this did not stop this culture from spreading (Danesi 2009:2). This indicated a major change in the American society, towards a new liberal and sexually permissive lifestyle. Pop culture had entered the cultural mainstream and this was characterized by Broadway musicals, night clubs, dance halls and burlesque theatres that emerged throughout the States in the 1920s, leading to this period being named the "Roaring Twenties" (Danesi 2009:2). By the 1930s, pop culture and its proposed lifestyle has reached many American societies and other parts of the industrial world, despite legislative measure taken against it and prohibition in the form of censorship placed on it (Danesi 2009:2).

Pop culture has now emerged across the world as an "unstoppable social force, challenging moral stodginess and aesthetic pretentiousness in tandem" (Danesi 2009:2). It is the driving force behind American and worldwide social change and triggers debates about art, sex and culture. Mainstream culture in today's modern world, is an embodiment of cultural products that reflect this. Pop music has been developed as a site for the expression for pop culture - the subject matter of pop music is traditionally based on expressions of ideas of love, romance, desire and sex. In pop music today, Lady Gaga has become a controversial figure in her overtly sexual representations through her music and performances - more than any other pop star. The songs on her album *The Fame*, for example, are based on love, fame and sexuality and her visual performances on stage and in music videos are, in the pop category traditionally sexy, sexual and enticing. She exemplifies the characteristics of pop culture unequivocally and it is this space that allows her to freely express herself in terms of sexuality and desire. Pop culture acts as an emancipator for representations such as these, due to its nature and at characterising features. Thus, through pop culture, dominant ideology and forces of hegemony may be resisted and subverted, and the way Lady Gaga functions within pop culture, is testimony to this. Looking at Lady Gaga through uncritical lens, she seems to embody all that is typical of a pop star in pop culture - her music and performances carry strong sexual sentiments, she presents her body in a way that makes her desirable and sexy, and she sells ideas of sex in her music. However, in examining the meanings behind her typical 'pop' representations as this study does, one finds that Lady Gaga's representations carry more symbolic depth and serious messages than a shallow reading of her implies.

Pop culture has thus become revitalized and more prominent in society today due to modernization, globalization and consequent transformation in the ways we live. The motivation behind the spread of pop culture in recent times can be credited to the developments of cheap technology (Danesi 2009:19). These cheap technologies make for an easy and accessible spread of the artefacts and products of pop. Living in a modern world has resulted in rapid communication, rapid travel and fast food - all of which are examples of important signs of a culture characteristically based on the new ways of living that prioritized instant gratification and faster paced, borderless living. (Chambers 1985:1). This "triumphant immediacy" in the past, became realized through, for example, an Elvis Presley record selling a million copies, films being viewed by millions across continents and famous paintings being reproduced thousands of times-a mass spread of information as it has never existed before (Chambers 1985:2).

More currently, the internet is a major example of cheap technology and advancement to the way we communicate and share information. Without question, spread and allure of American pop culture today is due to new technologies that make it possible to spread instantly across the globe (Danesi 2009:19). The internet allows for easy and cheap access to many of the products of pop culture and this is how the "triumphant immediacy" of our modernized lives is now manifested. Through this, pop culture is now a commodity for one and all and is also available to one and all. The internet has created a global village and a space for pop culture to be consumed and spread. The work of pop artists can now easily reach millions of people, not only creating a larger international fan base, but now influencing the masses through their stylised aesthetics and music based-messages in pop culture. Lady Gaga is exemplary of this, particularly through the large numbers of downloads of her music on internet, as well as having her music videos viewed over a billion times online (Larry King Live: 2010:1). Furthermore, her Official YouTube channel, which contains her official music videos and copyrighted live performances, has been viewed over 36,000,000 times and has over 300,000 subscribers (YouTube 2010:1). Her music videos generate 25% of traffic on Vevo, a music video website (Sandoval 2010:1). This is clearly indicative of the mass and global consumption of her cultural products through the internet.

As mentioned, communicating ideas of bodily pleasure and sexual desire in society and in the media describes the essence of what pop culture is. However, pop culture is also inscribed with its own features that make it unique and specific and that allow us to understand the nature of

pop culture as well as the field in which pop music and pop stars function. Theorists such as Strinati (1995), Storey (1993) and Fiske (1989) highlight the ideas of popular culture as a wide and historic culture, but fail to focus on the genre of pop culture specifically, as a modern culture stemming from popular culture. The study of pop culture is vital to this research project mainly because it is this culture that speaks to the specific time and context within which Lady Gaga and other pop artists as well as pop music, situate themselves in. It is a terrain that speaks to current times, and this necessitates an explication of pop culture in this study. Danesi (2009) and Jenkins' (2007) perspectives of popular culture draw strongly upon pop culture, and in so doing, brings a currency and fresh take on the study of popular culture. Many theorists overlook pop culture in their discussion of popular culture, and as such the work of Danesi (2009) and Jenkins (2007) are prioritised in this discussion of pop culture.

To begin, the 'pop' in pop culture essentially refers to a culture that makes little, if any, categorical differences. Firstly, it is most simply and fundamentally a culture that is *popular* across the social spectrum (Danesi 2009:3). As with popular culture, it has a mass appeal to people around the world and is not an isolated culture. Because of this vast mass appeal, it has the potential to bring about social change (Danesi 2009:22). This is testimony to the power and influence of pop culture, articulated particularly through the media in society today. To encourage voting amongst young adults during the 2004 American presidential election, for example, music artist P. Diddy created a campaign called "Choose or Lose", endorsed by over 100 celebrities and pop starts and promoted on music channel MTV (Nir 2004:1). P. Diddy attempted to reach the pop culture masses with this campaign and as such, mobilize and encourage the young pop culture audiences to vote. Pop culture perpetuates itself due to its appeal to large masses of people and the power of this, and pop stars and celebrities use this to disseminate their messages to the pop culture audience, as P.Diddy did.

Pop culture is secondly a 'hip culture', implying that pop culture has a smooth and ambiguous attitude (Danesi 2009:23). Being 'hip' culture further implies that is a culture that is 'cool' and socially accepted, desired and admired by its audience. It is a culture that is felt, rather than understood and thus diminishes intellectual aspects and emphasises emotional responses. Pop culture is departing from mainstream conformity and providing a way to put oneself in contrast to it, to stand out, to look and be different and to feel cool. This is evident in the way female pop

stars present themselves within pop culture today. An example of this is in the way current pop stars carry themselves - Amy Winehouse's claim to fame besides her musical ability was her fight against drug abuse, Katy Perry attempts to stand out from her peers by adopting a pin-up girl and quirky, bi-sexual persona and Pink sets herself apart by being more rock-inspired, rebellious and athletic.

Thirdly, pop culture is always characteristically 'new' and trendy, and constantly presents new ideas and expressions (Danesi 2009:4). The subject matter that pop culture is based upon, however, does not change - it still prioritises expressing bodily pleasure and sexual desire. This has become a cornerstone for pop culture. Expressions of these are however always new, trendy and fashionable, with pop stars, old and new, uniquely expressing and representing themselves in this way. Females in pop culture are all always represented as sexually appealing, thus, in pop culture they communicate this same message but not in the same way. The body in pop culture is a site for the communication of sexual desire and visual appeal. Actress Marilyn Monroe, for example, was famous for her curvaceous and full-figured body that became the representation of the ideal women during the 20s, whereas in the 90s, the ideal female body changed in its represented to thin, skeletal, model-figures. As such, subject matter remains the body as a site of sexual desire and visual pleasure, but the way the body is viewed, changes according to the trends in pop culture. It is essential to note that trends within pop culture come and go quickly, and are consequently changeable, temporary and unpredictable (Danesi 2009:4). This also however suggests that the tastes of the mass people are bound to be fickle and erratic. New trends created through pop culture are sometimes seen as immoral and vulgar, but even so, the mass appeal of pop culture cannot be denied even if it is disparaged (Danesi 2009:18).

Danesi (2009) and older work by Chambers (1985) both view pop culture as a form of "catharsis" and as providing a sense of "escapism" for people (Danesi 2009:18; Chambers 1985:17). Accordingly, an important feature of pop culture is that it satisfies the human need of expression, escapism and a feeling of freedom and fun, where pent-up energies and desires can be harmlessly and effectively expressed. This idea is crucial in understanding pop culture, its appeal and its strength. Being effectively cathartic, pop culture provides liberation, energy and healing to people (Danesi: 2009: 18).This is done through many forms and uses within pop culture, whether it is screaming and yelling at a rock concert, over emotionally reacting to scenes

in movies or dancing energetically and openly in a club to a favourite pop song. Consuming objects of pop culture allows for a sense of escapism and provides a possibility to its consumers to move from "colourless walls of routine" to "bright environs for an imaginary state" (Chambers 1985:17). Pop culture provides the contexts that allow people to release energy and express their emotions. It also expresses a view on pleasure that is not simple and commonsensical, but rather based in a sexual and social reawakening and self-realisation (Chambers 1985:17). These cathartic and escapism elements are found in all forms and products of pop culture, in one way or another and attributes to the widespread appeal and popularity of pop culture.

Pop culture is characteristically made of emotional features and factors that appeal to audiences. Both Danesi (2009) and Jenkins (2007) describe pop culture as something felt with emotion, rather than understood and rationalised with the mind. This is a basic inference made about pop culture-pop culture "makes us think by making us feel" and is felt rather than understood" (Danesi 2009:23; Jenkins 2007:3). Certain parts of song lyrics or movies might move us and make us feel more than the cultural product as whole does, and this would encourage one to re-consider and think about the significance of the whole product. Through pop culture products, a fair amount of effortless emotion is generated from its audience and consumers. This is because pop culture is shaped by logic of "emotional intensification" that occurs by following well-trod and dependable formulas (Jenkins 2007:3). The emotions generated by pop culture are not personal, but are rather, have to be "popular" (Jenkins: 2007:4). This is because pop culture texts have to evoke broadly shared feelings in their audiences in order to make the text popular. The most emotional experiences of pop and popular culture, are ones that are based on emotions central to the culture, such as conflicts, anxieties, fantasies and fears (Jenkins 2007:4). Emotional experience is also valuable as a premise of popular culture, as emotions go beyond demographics and individuals, and rather, speaks and appeals to undifferentiated people as a whole that are bonded through their human ability to feel and experience.

A necessary part of pop culture products is that it creates excitement, exhilaration and thrill in its audiences, adding to the idea that pop culture is based on emotions. Pop culture has, what Jenkins (2007) call a "wow" factor to it and this expresses a particular enthusiasm, wonderment, astonishment and absolute engagement between the art and the consumer (Jenkins 2007:1). This

describes part of the emotional experience of pop culture on audiences. This development and emergence of celebrity culture within pop culture, also adds to this wow factor, where artists are transformed into celebrities, and they themselves become the cultural product and embody the "wow" factor. Pop culture products and artists have to find ways to twist and transform used formulas into something marvellous and unexpected - if they want to survive (Jenkins 2007:3). When pop culture remains formulaic, it becomes boring and unexciting to audiences and no longer provokes an emotional reaction (Jenkins 2007:3). Pop stars too are focused on maximizing the emotional response of their audiences and do this through their performances, narratives of songs and music videos, singing ability and also through the persona they create for themselves in the media that does not necessarily have to be part of their music work. Besides Lady Gaga's shock pop antics in her performances, her highly-stylised music videos and her catchy electro pop 80s songs, her wow factor is contained in her public persona particularly through the use of fashion. Her fashion choices and dress sense play a huge part in the image that she creates for herself. Her fashion also refers to her non-stop feats of theatre, expressed in everyday life, at award shows, in her performances and in her music videos. Lady Gaga uses her off beat, unconventional and unique fashion sense as her wow factor and has become defined in pop culture according to this.

Pop culture is not without criticism, despite its positive qualities. Pop culture received most of its criticism and condemnation during the twentieth century from the Frankfurt School, where most of its members discredited it as a "passing fad" (Danesi 2009:19). Influential theorists such as Theodore Adorno (1903-69), Max Hokheimer (1895-1973), Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937), Herbert Marcuse (1989-1979) and Walter Benjamin (1892-1940) were among the key members of the Frankfurt school who criticised pop culture, each with their own reasoning. Adorno viewed mass communications technology as contributing to the now increased spread of "barbaric elements", whereas Horkheimer pushed his critique even further, by condemning the capitalist forces behind pop culture that conform to the logic of marketplace capitalism above all else (Danesi 2009:19). He saw those in power in the capitalist system as controlling a "culture industry" that prioritises capitalism and profit instead of the existing principles of art, aesthetics and expression (Danesi 2009:19).

Gramsci used Marxist ideas to criticizes pop culture within the concept of hegemony - a criticism that is attractive to many pop culture theorists, especially as it seems to provide reasoning and explain why pop culture is so appealing. Within hegemony, the pop culture industry is seen as a "hidden instrument of social domination and control", disguised through spectacles and products that offer the promise or fulfilment of pleasure and controlled by those in power (Danesi 2009:20). Thus, by keeping the masses entertained and unreflective, those in power are able to gain consent of the passive masses of common people. This is due to the masses being "improperly educated and thus unable to recognize the controlling agencies behind the scenes" according to some Marxists (Danesi 2009:20).

British social critic, Matthew Arnold saw pop culture as a "dumbed down" version of "serious" culture (Danesi 2009:17). He believed that the Industrial Revolution resulted in a mass society that had become far too homogenized and whose preferences where reflected in "low" culture (Danesi 2009:17). His ideas were based in the belief that this mass form of culture had its roots in materialism and affluence and had harmful effects on human potential and growth. Arnold presented an idea used to differentiate between two different levels of culture- high culture and low culture. High culture implies a type of culture with a higher and superior value, aesthetically and socially, compared to other lower forms of culture. Additionally, these distinctions in culture are also associated to class distinction. Traditionally, high culture was associated with the church and aristocracy, whereas low culture was linked to the common, working class folk (Danesi 2009:18). Pop culture is considered by many critics, such as John Storey, as having changed these distinctions of culture by obliterating them and creating new representations and forms of artistic expressions in pop culture that are not defined by as high or low, but are common and consumed by the masses.

These criticisms, although, relevant to their time, seem very stark and limited in their approach to pop and popular cultures. The theorists speak of pop culture from a strongly theoretical basis and not from a place of engagement in the workings of popular cultures and in the practical nature of pop culture. As discussed, many theorists saw pop culture as a trend that would pass and end - this has however proven to be untrue, with pop culture having grown and developed from the twenties and into the present day. It is been prevalent and strong in society for just under a century. Pop artist like Madonna and Michael Jackson had successful and active careers in the

pop music and pop culture industries for over 20 years, and famous movies from the pop culture genre are still consumed and loved by pop culture audiences. Deeming it a "passing fad" diminishes the power of the cultural products and the relationship they form with the audience - these theorists clearly underestimated the appeals of pop culture and relationship between cultural products, artists and the audience. These criticisms also fail to consider the development of communication technology that would consequently allow pop culture to grow in strength and to be consumed in ways that both high and low culture never could.

Although the products that are produced in pop culture today are produced within a capitalism market place, it is key to note that some cultural products are produced with deeper, meaningful messages that challenge the status quo of society, even while being entertaining. Pop culture follows standardised formulas and is based on making a profit, but it is diverse in terms of the texts and representations found in different media forms. This dissertation on the meanings behind Lady Gaga's work in pop culture and pop music speaks to this notion, and shows that pop culture is not a "dumbed down" form of culture, but rather is a place of expression and art. Thus, pop culture operates in a capitalist marketplace, but significantly still produces art and expressions than can be challenging and subversive, not just shallow and pleasant.

Criticism of pop culture from a Marxist perspective underestimates the appeal and consumption of pop culture. This is because pop culture cannot only be considered a hegemonic tool in society that keeps those in power in control, because pop culture is made by the people, for the people, and is a site of expression that reflects of the needs and desires of the masses. Thus it is a site of liberating expressions and appeals, rather than being used to control the masses. A hegemonic system also de-emphasises the power of the audience, as it views the audience as a homogeneous and undifferentiated mass. It is however this power of the pop culture audience that calls pop culture into existence as well as sustains it through what cultural products this audience chooses to consume. The texts and products of pop culture are also diverse, and cross different media mediums and genres, and thus cannot be indicative of one undifferentiated mass. Popular culture theorist Walter Benjamin was against the notion of hegemony and argued that the nature of pop culture was not a product of capitalism but rather just a way that people can seek catharsis and allow certain energies and expressions to escape harmlessly (Danesi 2009:20). Further Post-Marxist criticism comes from both Marcuse and Benjamin, who saw the profanities or vulgarities

of pop culture as a way that the youth could release and express their pent-up energies and desires - a defining characteristic of pop culture (Danesi 2009:20).

This discussion is rooted in understanding popular cultures and more particularly, pop culture, and their relevance to this study. It provides specific context for this study and it also grants a point of departure to this study. Focus has thus been placed on understanding what constitutes a popular culture as well as which specific popular culture approaches apply to this study. Furthermore, it has delved into understanding pop culture as the main site of the work of pop stars such as Lady Gaga by understanding its characteristics and constituents, and thus provides a framework for understanding the meanings and expressions in her pop culture work. As a music artist, Lady Gaga hold a more cultural relevance in the field of pop music - the genre of music she produces as a singer. Pop music however, is derived from and functions in the field of pop culture. This literature review now moves on to discuss the specific genre and conventions of pop music.

2.2.3) Pop Music

The study of pop music is important because it speaks to the exact genre that shapes this study. Popular music is also an important point of discussion as it preceded pop music; just as popular culture preceded pop culture. In the past, academia had failed to illuminate the importance and necessity of popular music in the lives of young people. Thus the power and pertinence of music as a form of communication have been overlooked. This study seeks to show the importance popular music holds in society, in terms of the messages and representations they communicate to audiences. Reviewing literature on pop music helps to show the shortcomings of the field as well as help understand conceptions of what pop music is.

Music may be described in many ways, but theoretically and generally, it is defined as "a passionate sequencing of thoughts and feelings that expresses meaning in a manner that has no parallel in human life" (Lull 1987:10). Music, like aspects of pop culture, is based on human emotion and feeling. Music expresses this through the use of sounds, instruments and the voice. What makes music and its expression unique is that it is a communication that blends personal, social and cultural signification in a way no other artistic expression does. Music allows the makers of it and the listeners of it to experience, express and share in the human emotions of

vulnerability, triumphs, celebrations, heartache, confusion and happiness into reflective tempos, rhythms and beats, to be experienced privately or sheared with others (Lull 1987:10). The feelings and emotions contained within music bonds people through its ability of relating these human emotions back to people. Popular musicians are thus revered by their listeners, not only for their ability to write and perform music, but for their ability to "speak' to their audiences through records that somehow communicate "personally" to the listener (Lull 1987:11). Music, across all is genres, styles and expressions, is a communication form that many people can relate to, and this may be considered as the basis of its appeal. Expanding on this is the fact that music is separated in to different genres and styles, within which, its appeal to its audience is further enhanced.

Popular music is a leisurely past time to enjoy, for many people, and is usually associated with concepts of relaxation, dancing, frivolity and enjoyment. Because of this, the symbolic and implicit meanings contained within songs become neglected. Musical expression and meaning beyond its entertainment value, tends to not be taken seriously. Theorists such as Lull (1987) however, view popular music as a unique and extremely influential communications form that deserves serious analysis in terms of the communicative role of musicians, the music and how it is transferred to audiences, and the ways in which the music is received and interpreted by audiences and listeners in different contexts (Lull 1987:11). Studying meanings in music allows us to understand the intentions and purposes of these. It also highlights the cultural symbolism and meanings within music as an important part of cultural studies academia.

There are many varieties of popular music and new genres of music are constantly evolving. Popular music refers to the music and genres that are widely liked and accepted by a large a majority of people at given time, and may even be considered as trendy or popular. It can be identified as music that developed after the industrialization of the 1800s and is reflective of tastes and interests of the urban middle class (Lamb 2010:1). Contemporary popular music encompasses genres that were previously seen as the alternative and sub-cultural, such as rock, soul, punk, dance and heavy metal (Lull 1987:10). Pop music, on the other hand, is a specific genre or type of music, also reflective of popular acceptance. Popular music is thus not specific to genre, while pop music is a specific genre of popular music.

Both the pop music and pop culture are characteristically commercial industries. As such, record companies and the producers of pop music have the task of producing and marketing music as a commodity for consumption in a pop culture context (Lull 1987:12). The content of specific genres of music tends to be based on the same ideologies and submit to the same acceptable subject matter. Gospel music for example, praises God; Punk rock music is based in angst and non-conformity and hip hop is based on street culture. Genre conventions are not set rules however, and rather serve as expectations of each music type. Popular and pop music artists, by nature of their creativity, artistry and freedom of expression expressed in their music, sometimes make music that does not fall within the "favoured ideological parameters" of the culture industry (Lull 1987:12). Artists deviate from genre conventions through their music by presenting ideas and expressions that may not always coincide with the dominant ideology of the specific genre or the culture industry. This is indicative of the emancipator potential that pop music has. It is important to note that music across all genres is a form of symbolic interaction and the encoding and decoding of music are intentional activities that serve many purposes (Lull 1987:12). Thus when music in a certain genre does not conform to dominant ideology, it is intentional and purposeful.

This study is a key example of the above statement. It argues that in the genre of pop music, Lady Gaga deviates from traditional, expected and ideologically favourable representations of women, gender and sexuality. Lady Gaga's music thus is not always reflective of the dominant ideologies that guide society. Dominant ideologies refer to the conservative, safe "status quo" way of thinking about political, economic, social and cultural issues in society (Lull 1987:13). Music that rebels against these within the realms of pop and popular are not representative of prevailing ideologies and modes of thought (Lull 1987:12). From this, it can be argued that a clear tension is developed between 'forces of convention' and 'forces of resistance', in the production of popular music in popular culture. Music that communicates dominant ideologies and genre expectations are thereby in conflict with the less financially viable music wherein "patterns of resistance" are found (Lull 1987: 13). This argument points to pop music as a viable site of expression that can be used by artists to articulate alternative or sub-cultural ideas. Furthermore, pop music thus proves itself as a site for the freedom of expression of unpopular and inferior ideology by pop artists. Lady Gaga is a clear example of this. As the biggest star in

the world currently, she also disproves the notion that the representation of alternative ideologies in her make her music "less financially viable", as Lull (1987:13) suggests.

Conventional or contemporarily produced music, such as pop music, have many indicators in popular culture particularly in terms of their structure. In pop music, songs are written to follow a predictable structure of sound, for example, a chorus is included, lyrics are simple and instrument solos are kept short (Lull 1987:13). Popular music has the ability to "penetrate the consciousness of its audience" through repetition of themes in the music, such as guitar riffs, vocal climaxes, and "hooks" or lines of song that are repeated many times within the song (Lull 1987:13). This implies that the same kind of music, with the same ideals and ideologies are typically reproduced in popular music. This idea can be more critically understood by applying Theodore Adorno's theory of popular music in the theory of popular culture. Essentially, Adorno championed avant-garde and non-commercial music, and frowned on music produced by monopoly organisations, sold and consumed to mass audience (Strinati 1995:66). He was critical of popular music formats, and saw it as a way a way of illustrating the power of the culture industry and the alienation found among masses in capitalist societies (Strinati 1995:65).

Adorno views popular music produced by the culture industry, as dominated by two processes, namely, "standardisation" and "psuedo-individualisation", based on the idea that songs in popular music come to sound more and more like each other, as they are characterised by a core structure (Strinati 1995:65). Standardisation, accordingly, refers to the large amount similarities between popular songs (Strinati 1995:65). Both these processes signal a likeness and repetition in songs in popular music. This is evident in pop music where songs are typified using "thirty two bar structure" and of two cells each with 8 measures or bars (Chambers 1985:8). This process is thought to define the way in which the culture industry evades challenges, originality, authenticity and intellectual stimulation from the music it produces, and focuses only on selling this music (Strinati 1995:65). Psuedo-individualisation refers to the incidental differences in popular songs, thus it provides the "hook" to songs in an attempt to make the song seem new and interesting to the consumer (Strinati 1995:65). It thus disguises the similarities of songs by attachments of "peripheral frills, novelties and stylistic variations" to songs, in order to make the songs seem unique (Strinati 1995:65). Thus, psuedo-individualisation is a strategy used to make songs seem more varied and distinct from each other, even though they are based on a standard

formula. Adorno's criticism of popular music was reflected by musical critics of the 1950s who consistently condemned the use of the same musical formula in songs. The critics saw this as the clearest sign of "standardised, automated and commercial production" (Chambers 1985:8). However, there also existed other vast bodies of known popular music that did not subscribe to this formula.

Adorno approaches popular music in a disapproving manner premised mostly on the fact that popular music is standardised and restricted due to its commercial constraints. Drawing contrasts between classical and avant-garde music and popular music extends this argument. Adorno's view establishes a superiority of serious music over popular music, as serious music is non-standardised (Strinati 1995:66). An important reason for this is because he claims "structural standardisation aims at standardised reactions" (Strinati 1995:66). Furthermore, he believes serious music challenges the culture industry because it rejects the commodity form that popular music exemplifies, as serious music cannot be contained by standardised production or consumption (Strinati 1995:66). These distinct definitions of "serious" and "popular" music as proposed by Adorno are archaic in the music industry today. Genres are changing and evolving and as such, these definitions are no longer as clear cut as Adorno describes. Although popular and pop music are commercial, Adorno fails to acknowledge that music is fundamentally a symbolic interaction, indicating that within the industry of selling music, meanings and messages are still produced as disseminated in music. Popular music has the capacity to carry provoking and important meanings and messages that influence listeners, even if standardized. Although most pop stars usually stick to the standardized formulas of producing music, there are artists in pop music who, within the standardised production of music, are committed to communicating important meanings in their music. This study argues that this is where the value and importance of pop music lies, irrespective of the limiting properties and structures that define pop and popular music.

This literature review now turns its attention to a study of pop music - the genre of music that defines this study. Extending on the definition of pop music that was previously mentioned, pop music is abbreviated from the term 'popular', is indicative of popular tastes and may be defined as having popular appeal. It refers to a specific genre of music that is typically associated with music most popular on the music charts. The sound of pop music evolved out of the rock 'n' roll

revolution of the mid-1950's and is also stylistically associated to dance and R'n'B music (Lamb 2010:1). It refers to a commercially recorded music aimed at a youth market, who are considered as a major product as well as a major consumer of this music market. Songs are usually short, with an emphasis on the themes of romance and love.

The arrival of 'pop' as a distinctive sound emerges from the particular world of popular music and the history and developments of popular music (Chambers 1985:7). There was a specific change in the terminology of mainstream music, in the 1950's, from 'popular' to 'pop' (Chambers 1985:7). This change signalled a simple but historical divide between the fields of commercial popular music in general and a more precise area associated with a 'teenage' public. It also solidified the genre of pop music in society, as something new and different. This teenage public was seen as the messenger of this change and by the late 1950s, the youth became the centre of consumerism (Chambers 1985:15). This also suggests that the characteristics and defining factors within pop music, appeals to and focuses on the desires of this teenage public. The move from 'popular' to 'pop', thus not only indicated a generational division in taste, but also suggested a precise musical and cultural shift (Chambers 1985:8). This shift is still strongly prevalent in society today, sustained by the influence and force of pop music.

Pop music is constantly changing and evolving in terms of sound and style, but there are certain patterns and characteristics that define pop music and contrast it to other music genres. Pop music is thus constituted by characteristics and features that are specific to it and that create expectations of its content and make it appealing to its audience. Firstly, the cultural economy of pop music is rooted in romance. Chambers (1985) additionally views pop music as "generally used, responded to and appropriated through romance" and "acquires its extensive, imaginative resonance" through romance (Chambers 1985:207). Romance and love tend to be the general themes in the content of most pop songs, currently and historically and is thus an important characteristic of pop music. Pop music's symbolic universe and representations, aesthetic and sound confirms this, with images and words constructing fantasies around romance and desire. It is also shaped by a masculine-influenced romanticism of the night, with rear-view mirror scenes, motor bikes and cars and chasing after girls (Chambers 1985:207). Through this, females are represented in a passive and secondary way, with their male counterpart as foremost in defining the romance, although it is suggested that the romance in pop music comes from the irrational

projections of the female psyche (Chambers 1985:207). This is however a generalisation and limits the diverseness of female identity, as all women do not define romance in the same ways. Issues such as these, surrounding the representation of men and women in of pop music and in the media, sparks the main issue and interest of this study.

Historically pop music was viewed as being in line with not only 'teenyboppers', but was also predominantly associated with the tastes of pubescent girls (Chambers 1985:125). Pop music was considered as being most appealing to young teenage girls. This however is a trend in popular music that has always been around. On this premise, pop music can be considered as tapping into the specific responses of young girls to pop. This however does not suggest that female pleasures are automatic and also does not suggest that teenybopper pop music was a tool for teaching young girls the required cultural cues of femininity (Chambers 1985:126). Rather it highlights the complexities and struggle of pop music in distributing and positioning sexual power, according to cultural and social expectations and practises (Chambers 1985:126).

Music is also an important counter-space in our everyday lives. This is because there is a loaded relation between music and particular spaces that continually connect and undo the public and private divisions of everyday life in a series of imaginative re-workings (Chambers 1985:209). The power of this lies in the division and separation of the 'public' and the 'private', in terms of routine, roles, and the social relations we are confined by. Because of this, pop music is not only regarded as an escape from reality, but also as an "interrogative exploration of its (reality's) organising categories" (Chambers 1985:209). Pop music is thus a way in which we can temporarily redefine and express ourselves, outside of roles, responsibilities and expectations, and as listeners, take pleasure from this attribute of pop music.

Lastly, the physical body is considered as one of primary sites of the pop music experience. This is because it is the body that ultimately makes, receives and responds to music (Chambers 1985:210). The wrenched sentiments of soul, the energy of electronic music, the angst of punk and the verbal expressions of rap, for example, all propel the body into the centre of not only pop music, but music in general too. It is the physical sense of music that is concentrated in dance and musical performance and this is crucial to pop culture. Dancing, for example, realises the implicit and explicit regions of socialised pleasure and individual desires, and carries with it the main criteria of pop music. The body is also important to pop music as it connects sound, dance,

fashion and style to subconscious ideas of sexuality and eroticism in the mind (Chambers 1985:210). Through the body, romance and reality can be fused together, and common-sense is mocked and discredited (Chambers 1985:210). In this way, pop music serves as an escapism and fantasy world for its listeners - something very appealing to audiences.

2.2.4) Music Videos

In more recent times, the developments in music have been driven by changes in the media environment and information economy. Central to pop music and pop culture in this modern day of media and technology, is the release of music videos by pop music artists. Music videos are the aesthetic representation of music and have become accepted as a form of pop culture around the world (Abt 1987:96). The growth of music television channels, like MTV, has also resulted in a swift growth and popularity in music videos (Abt 1987:97). More recently from around 2005, the proliferation of video content on the internet, identified with pioneering user-generated video website, YouTube, has made music videos more popular and accessible than ever before (Holt 2011:50). Characteristically, music videos are three to four minute visual statements, designed to artistically join with a song and thus accomplish several communicative objectives (Abt 1987:97). The music video may be considered as a visual interpretation of the song, through the performances and narrative used to physically describe and represent the song. The interest and excitement in the music video is stimulated by special effects, story lines and editing, combined with different scenes and characters, making the music video, visually and thematically dynamic. Also presentation techniques and imagery shown in the music video, is already common on television and in other visual media, and thus do not present the audience with unfamiliar visual experiences (Abt 1987:98). Furthermore, music videos are also designed to gain and hold a viewer's attention; establish, vitalize or maintain the artist's image and sell the image and products associated with it (Abt 1987:97). Thus they may be viewed as a promotional tool for the pop artist to sell their music and are underpinned by a marketing function.

Early music videos used predictable technical treatments and visual clichés, but many artists now avoid these conventions, and are now more creatively expressed (Abt 1987:98). Their music videos carry one or more direct and indirect messages (Abt 1987:97). Some artists use their music videos not in the typical ways of selling sex and presenting themselves as attractive, desirable and glamorous - as is the expectation in pop culture, but rather to communicate their

view points, messages and comment on social, political, and cultural issues. An example of this is Madonna's *Like a Prayer* music video which strongly addresses representations of race and religion in a way that mocks and undermines (hooks 1992:3). The video has caused a public outrage due to issues of religious and sexual imagery and representation. Music videos can also be used as a tool of protest. Rap star Eminem, for example, displayed the sentiments of protest against American president George Bush through depiction of a rebellion against the government in his music video for *Mosh* in 2005.

Lady Gaga's music videos, in this study, are used to understand the implicit meanings and representations of sexuality, gender and feminist identity. As such, we will now move on to reviewing pop culture literature and discussing criticisms of Lady Gaga's music videos, with the purpose of introducing her stylistic approaches and setting the context for understanding the general and common features within her music videos. Importantly her music videos stand out from that of her peers, because, of her unique approaches to music and visual art (Torre 2010:1). Pop culture commentators and writers such as Torre (2010), Kelly (2010), Kromachal (2009), Gornstein (2009), Kady (2009) and Lamb (2009) credit Lady Gaga for redefining music videos as we know them. She is described by critics as "revitalizing pop music and music videos in particular" (Kelly 2010: 1). Lady Gaga's music videos thus make her stand out from the crowd of pop artists in the music industry (Torre 2010:1). She is credited with bringing back the music video as an art form, and through them, sells art, instead of sex (Krochmal 2009:1). This is an important point of departure in this study, in understanding the representations communicated in her music videos. She is thought to be redefining music videos as we know them, by taking advantage of music videos not only as an entertainment and promotional tool for pop music artists, but more as a site for the potential of meaning making and symbolic interaction. Lady Gaga's music videos, their representations and the messages contained in them stand out in pop music, and can be credited with adding to her fame and celebrity.

Characteristically, her music videos are very fashion inspired, include a lot of choreographed dancing, have high production values and usually carry a storyline. The storylines of her music videos, however, are considered as "fit for feature films" and take audiences on a journey through he song, rather than just a simple display of lyrics (Torre 2010:1). The music videos thus show alternative ways of understanding the message of the song. Clear examples of these are the

music videos for *Telephone* and *Alejandro.* The song *Telephone* is about Lady Gaga going out and partying and ignoring a lover's phone call because of this. The music video however shows her escape from jail, the poisoning of a man, the mass murders of the occupants of a restaurant and an escape from the police. The song *Alejandro* is about leaving a lover, yet the video depicts themes of homo-eroticism, cross-dressing, religious irreverence and war. Her music videos are rife with choreographed dancing, typical of a pop music video, but contain other forms of visual imagery and signifiers, such as wheelchairs, homicides, coffins and charred skeletons, leading some of her videos to be compared to a "one woman horror movie" (Krochmal 2009:1).

Her music videos also depict an "avant-garde performance art" and have an "artsy aesthetic", which she communicates to an audience (Krochmal 2009:1). They are complex, not straightforward and not always easily understandable but always carry purpose, meaning and intention in their depictions. These visual texts and stylisation in her videos tend to shock and surprise audiences, something Lady Gaga intended. Lady Gaga's music producer admits that no one can ever predict Lady Gaga's next artistic move, as she "always wants to shock people" (Vena and Elias 2009:1). The production value of her music videos are very high and are directed by prominent and established music video directors, such as Ray Kay, director of 'Poker Face', Jonas Akurland, director of 'Paparazzi' and 'Telephone', Francis Lawrence, director of 'Bad Romance' and Steven Klein, director of 'Alejandro' (MTV 2010:1). Her music videos also do not display poor editing, cheap graphics or cliché concepts, but are always of the highest and best quality. This is another reason they stand out when compared to other music videos.

Her music videos are not positively viewed by all however. Her music videos have been criticized for being "unsuitable for younger viewers", due to its explicit content, graphic violence, expletives, nudity, risqué performances, a lesbian kiss and mass murder sequence in the *Telephone* music video (Daily Mail 2010:1). The meanings they communicate and represent are viewed by some critics as "non-sensical", as "making no valid points in its cultural commentary", as "epitomizing the insanity of the contemporary pop mainstream" and "as distorting pop culture pleasure into nonsense" (Horgan 2010:1; White 2010:1). This highlights the fact that music videos, as with all pop culture products, by no means carry one message but are rather layered with meanings and may be interpreted in different manners.

2.2.5) Celebrity culture

Celebrity culture may be considered a culture that has emerged through pop culture and pop music. Pop culture has allowed for the creation of a space for the emergence of 'idols' and 'stars'. Most simply, a pop star or pop icon can be defined as a famous singer or musician who performs pop music. They are developed by and encompass those who create pop culture products that are popularized and also that are loved and consumed by many. In narrowing it down, pop stars further emerge through pop music, as they are the performers, owners and composers of this music. Pop stars and pop idols are nonetheless not limited to this definition. Describing pop stars and pop idols as performers or musicians, tends to highlight their artistic abilities and talents. Being pop star or pop idol especially in current times however, catapults these artists into the media and pop culture sphere not only as an artist, but with the identity of 'celebrity'.

Celebrity is an identity definition that highlights the persona or created personality of a pop star and highlights certain aspects of identity. The media underlie and perpetuate the creation of these personalities, and it is through the media that celebrities are sold to an audience. With this status of individuals, the culture of celebrity has become very pronounced in society and the media and entails a fanatic and devoted characteristic of fans towards these celebrities. Celebrities are not only considered music artists, but also include actors, performers, TV personalities, and so on. Lady Gaga as a pop star, pop artist and consequent celebrity developed this identify out of a mass popular culture, which accounts her popularity and widespread appeal. This section is focused on the celebrity of music stars, particularly, Lady Gaga within pop music. This celebrity status provides a basis for which pop stars can disseminate and communicate their music and the meaning within their music to masses around the world easily. It is thus a powerful position to occupy - a position Lady Gaga owns in pop music. A discussion about celebrity culture, its nature and its characteristics now follows.

The media is often perceived as powerful in their capacity to shape and frame the messages and representations of particular cultures. In the public sphere, certain individuals are given a greater presence and a wider scope of activity and agency than the rest of the population. Thus they are active in public arenas and on public stages while others watch (Marshall 1997:1). These overtly

public individuals are called ‘celebrities’ and their representations through the media have created the strong culture of celebrity in society. (Marshall 1997:1). Celebrities are not considered as politically powerful, but rather possess cultural power (Marshall 1997:1). Other definitions simply describe celebrities as “a famous or well-known person” (Marshall 1997:4). A more modern understanding of the word ‘celebrity’ is “the condition of being much exalted and talked about; notoriety or famousness” as well as “a person of celebrity, a celebrated person: a public character”, according to the Oxford English Dictionary (Marshall 1997:5). Turner sites Daniel Boorstin (1961) in his description of ‘celebrity’. Boorstin asserts, “Celebrity is a person who is well known for their well known-ness” (Turner 2004:5). Thus, a celebrity is famous for being famous. This is prevalent on society, where people are turned into celebrities because they appear on reality TV shows, or simply because they are wealthy socialites.

Celebrities possess strong power of influence, not only in spreading their work, but also in selling their work. This power is granted to celebrities through the contained and dominant systems in society. Discursive studies of celebrities tend to focus on and culturally trace the development of the celebrity as a public individual (Marshall 1997:2). Celebrities operate at the centre of culture and resonate with Western ideological conceptions of individuality. Additionally, the distinctive discursive quality of the celebrity is derived from discourses of modernity, namely, democracy and capitalism (Marshall 1997:4). Modern use of ‘celebrity’ is linked to heightened significance of popular and democratic culture (Marshall 1997:7). These are the systems that allow for as well as sustain celebrity power and influence in society and through the media. Importantly, the power of the celebrity is also a tool for strong self-promotion the selling of cultural products of the artist, by creating a strong fanatic following of devoted fans in the public. The celebrity as a concept of the individual thus moves in a celebration of democratic capitalism.

‘Celebrity’ can also be thought of as a label that works to differentiate layers of the bourgeoisie (Marshall 1997:6). The celebrity is also described as “fabricated on purpose, to satisfy our exaggerated expectations of human greatness” (Turner 2004: 5). Celebrities are seen as acquiring their fame not through achievement or talents, but by virtues of their character, as celebrities are differentiated by the trivia of their personality. Dyer argued that stars “articulate what it is to be human in a society, and that is that they express the particular notion of what we hold of the

individual" (Holmes 2005:9). Entertainers dominate the ranks of celebrity, and this is because "they are skilled in the marginal differentiation of their personalities" (Turner 2004:5). Thus, celebrity power is based on the way they express their individuality, as this results in the public remembering who they are.

This process holds strong similarities with Adorno's approach to popular music, as discussed earlier, where music production is standardised and where music is made to seem unique through certain strategies to disguise the fact that it is standardised (Strinati 1995:65). Celebrities can also be considered as 'standardized', in that they all serve the same purposes, i.e., to use their identities in pop culture to sell products. Furthermore and especially in pop music, celebrities are very similar to each other and embody the same features, but attempt to be different from each other through the way they express the individuality of their personas. All in all, the same concepts, geared at commercial gain, are applied to the construction of pop music and celebrity culture-they are both extensions and tools of commercial gain. Marshall (1997) and Turner (2004) extend this argument of the celebrity as a commodity. The celebrity is produced, traded and marketed by the media and publicity industries and in this context, the celebrity's primary function is commercial and promotional (Turner 2004:9). Thus a 'star' or celebrity may be defined by such terms (Turner 2004:9).

The signification or meaning of 'celebrity' may be viewed and understood in a very antagonistic manner. Importantly the sign of 'celebrity' represents the centre of value (Marshall 1997:6). Using Marxism, the sign of the image of the celebrity is explained as lacking materiality and productivity and is "pure exchange value cleaved from use value" (Marshall 1997:6). The success and achievements of celebrities is seen as being acquired without doing any real work. Because of this there is no substance to the sign of celebrity and without such embedded significance, the celebrity sign is entirely image. The tabloid press also provides a scandalous turn on the meaning of the celebrity, and presents us with the possibility that the supposed 'unique talents' of celebrities, that which makes them unique, are vulnerable and subject to "dramatic falls" as well as moments if contrition and resurrection (Marshall 1997:1). However, the sign of the celebrity in an ideological system is not coherent and may rather be described as ambiguous (Marshall 1997:5). This is because it inscribes a tension of signification within its formations. Approached in an alternate way, the celebrity represents success and achievement in

contemporary society, with recognition and public fame forming a part of the act of celebrating their importance and significance. Furthermore, celebrities are seen to deserve their positions in society and culture because of their abilities and talents (Marshall 1997:5). The celebrity sign thus contains a tension between authentic and false cultural value.

Celebrity status invokes a message of possibility in a democratic age. This ascribes certain characteristics to the celebrity. The celebrity is not distant but attainable, and can thus be shared and celebrated. It is also considered the potential of capitalism, it celebrates new kinds of values and orders and it debunks customary divisions of traditional society (Marshall: 1997: 6). It also acknowledges new sense of public sphere and sees celebrities as embodying the empowerment of the public to shape the public sphere symbolically (Marshall 1997:7). Celebrity in contemporary cultures and society, are also considered as having many different social functions, both positive and negative. Certain critiques of celebrity such as Boorstin's, sees celebrity as the epitome of all that is trivial, superficial and deplorable about popular culture (Turner 2004:23). Others scholars see society's interest in celebrity as a form of "mass delusion" and imply contempt for the experience of the popular audience (Turner 2004:23). Within the context of this study, Lady Gaga is viewed as having a positive or productive social function of celebrity through her public representations and performances, in that they highlight positive representations of misrepresented groups, such as women and bisexuals, in society.

There are more productive social and cultural functions of celebrity in contemporary culture. The fact that celebrity has extended its purchase upon the public imagination across cultures and over time, provides due reasoning in considering celebrity as performing some kind of social function for its consumers (Turner 2004:23). An explanation of the productive social function of celebrity is explained through the argument that celebrity generates para-social interactions (Turner 2004:23). This refers to relations of intimacy constructed through mass media, rather than through direct experience or face-to-face meetings (Rojek 2001:52). Celebrities currently function in more literal ways when interacting with fans, due to the developments of technology, access and social media platforms. The extension of their celebrity can now literally reach fans. Celebrities take to social media networks such as Facebook and Twitter in order to directly represent themselves and to directly interact with fans. This creates a more fanatic, yet closer relationship between fans and celebrities. Fans also respond positively to this - Lady Gaga has

over 13, 5 million ‘followers’ on Twitter and pop star Rihanna is the most ‘liked’ female pop star on Facebook (Twitter Counter 2011:1; RihannaDaily 2011:1).

Celebrity culture also possesses and integrating functions, which explores parallels with religion. There is a relationship between religion and celebrity culture in society (Turner 2004:25). This relationship between fans and celebrity frequently involve usually high levels of non-reciprocal emotional dependence, as fans project intensely positive feelings onto the celebrity (Rojek 2001:51). It can be argued that in pop culture today, celebrities do in fact react to their fans and are not as disconnected as defined above. Celebrities, particularly pop stars, form strong bonds with their fans and in a possible attempt to maintain fans, have started a trend of naming their fans. Lady Gaga consistently refers to her fans as ‘Little Monsters’ and to her self as ‘Mother Monster’; Rihanna’s fans belong to the ‘Rihanna Navy’, and rap star Nicki Minaj calls her fans ‘Barbz’. This process thus creates a strong bond and relationship between stars and fans as well as re-emphasises loyalties to certain pop stars. This new and evolving celebrity culture is a significant institution in the normative achievement of social integration. It is however argued that celebrity culture, new or old, is not a direct substitute for religion in society. Rojek states that celebrity culture has emerged as a replacement strategy of organised religion that promotes new orders of meaning and solidarity (Rojek 2001:99). Representations and meanings communicated in the public performances and music of pop stars in the media, are thus very important understand, since fans idolize celebrities and celebrity culture has similar power and influence to that of religion.

2.3) Understanding Representations: Gender and Music

The discussions of pop culture, pop music and celebrity culture leads us to a cornerstone discussion, which holds much importance and relevance and which shapes this study, namely, a discussion of music and gender. The above discussions have functioned to explain the context and nature that surrounds this study, as well as Lady Gaga's place in this context. The literature review now turns its attention to the particular issues of this study - the representations of specifically, sexuality, gender and feminist identity/s in Lady Gaga's music. These are the major units of analysis within this study, and understanding it in conjunction with representations in music adds a richness and significance to this study. As such, this discussion maps out the relationship between females in music within an economy of patriarchy. Adding to this is a discussion of Madonna as an example of a pop star that resists dominant ideology and patriarchy, and this contextualises the study of Lady Gaga in pop music today. Other academic studies of Lady Gaga are also examined, in order to understand the limitations and strengths of this research project, which additionally strengthen the rationale of this project.

2.3.1) Female artists and music

The work of Lucy Green (1997) is prioritised in joining and discussing the historical scholarship on women's work in music. This section is focused on discussing the fundamental issues in women's musical practice. Lady Gaga and her music fall into this category and are affected by these same issues. Lady Gaga does not only work in the capacity of a pop star - her gender too plays a part in her representational work. To begin this section, one needs to understand what is meant by certain terms. This discussion runs parallel to one of the main theoretical discussions that shape this research project, namely queer theory, which will be discussed later in more detail. It refers to the definitions of sex, gender and identity, and is used to construct identity placement in music. Green (1997), like Queer theory theorists, Gauntlett (2002) and Butler (1991), understands the term 'sex' to refer to the biological characteristics of men and women, and 'gender' to refer to their historical constructions of masculinity and femininity (Green 1997:12; Gauntlett 2002:137). Discussing sex and gender brings up questions of where biological determinants end and historical constructions begin (Green1997:11). However, certain things such as reproductive organs are biologically determined, but other factors such as femininity and masculinity are not as easily categorised. The discourse of women musicians

sometimes produces certain characteristics, in which it is difficult to separate the biological from the historical (Green 1997:11). Additionally, music discourse constructs certain biologically determined men as having feminine characteristics and certain biologically determined women as having masculine characteristics. Thus, the distinguishing lines between woman and femininity and men and masculinity, particularly in music representations, can be blurry.

Discussing gender and sex also lends itself to a discussion of sexuality. In the world of music, the idea of heterosexuality is considered as normal and unquestionable; is regulated and standard, much like the ideas of heterosexuality generally (Green 1997:12). There also exists another world where homosexuality exists and subverts that normality. This has been consistently accurate in the history of music. Sexuality within music, visually and through lyrical content, tends to construct romance and sexual desire hetero-normatively, and in so doing communicate and teach expected ideological roles of sexuality and gender through pop music. Both sexualities however, experience music together, although heterosexual culture tends to experience music differently, with different nuances, and alternative layers of fascination, ambiguity or difficulty (Green 1997:12). The heterosexual music experience, is one that is intertwined with an experience of ease, expectation and with the reassurance that it is their ideological culture is being represented and referred to in music. Through this, homosexuality is included in popular representations in music. Representations of homosexual love and desire and not popularly represented in pop music and pop culture, traditionally. This 'others' homosexuality, highlights difference and sustains dominant ideology in popular culture representations.

The concept that is central and fundamental to issues surrounding women and music is that of patriarchy, because a patriarchal society affects the cultural products that come out of it (Green 1997:13). This concept is important as it indicates a social structure where there are "multiple relationships of power, including economic power, physical power and the discursive power to construct 'truths', but in which the overall balance of power is held by men, rather than by woman" (Green 1997:13). This contributes to and maintains the unequal balance of power between men and women and further increases the division between the two. As such, the cultural work that emerges from this economy and ideology of patriarchy tends to reflect patriarchal conceptions about society. Patriarchy can be explained by the difference between the public and private spheres. Most commonly the public sphere is involved with paid work and

jobs, whereas the private sphere is associated with unpaid domestic work. The roles within the private sphere can be further be described as that of caring, nursing, cleaning, catering and bringing up children. Within patriarchy, men circulate in the public sphere more than women do (Green: 1997: 13). Women in the private sphere are generally known to work jobs that maintain the same characteristics as jobs in the private sphere (Green 1997:13). The terms 'public' and 'private' thus denote a type of work that is gendered (Green 1997:14).

Within patriarchy, men and women fulfil practical gender roles in terms of the work each is meant to do, but they also construct and negotiate a set of "gendered characteristics", which are generalisations and expectations about each sex (Green 1997:14). In an extreme form, masculinity is usually defined as "active and productive, as committed to the pursuit of knowledge, as rational, inventive, experimental, as scientific and technological and as creative" (Green 1997:14). Femininity is oppositely defined as "passive and reproductive, as caring and nurturing, and as diligent" (Green 1997:14). The roles of men and women are further separated with the role of men associated with knowledge and the mind, and the role of women highlighted by their reproductive and nurturing functions, stemming from their body processes (Green 1997:14). These definitions are however limiting and ideal and do not take in to consideration men and women who differ from their roles. Thus, they do not account for all men and women. There is a tendency for these characteristic to be associated with each sex, but they are adapted to greater and lesser degrees in terms of femininity and masculinity, by men and women.

Green (1997) further asserts that patriarchy is a relationship in which men, overall, have more power than women (Green 197:15). A patriarchal society is thus dominated by male ownership of power, and this power is articulated through the public sphere and the construction of gender characteristics. The nature of a patriarchal society is however not one where a one-dimension assertion of power by men over women is had (Green 1997:15). Both sexes are seen as contributing to the perpetuation of symbolic and practical roles and expectations in a patriarchal society, and this involves consent as well as resistance.

The history of the musical practise of women calls into action the concept of 'musical patriarchy', where in Western music history, music and musical work is divided largely into a male public sphere and a female private spheres (Green 1997:15). This has become a trait in Western music and other musical cultures and is also reflected in the content of music produced

by both sexes. The division between the two musical spheres is however not absolute or clear-cut, and this because women have actually been able to enter the public sphere through music, in the same way that male musicians do (Green 1997:15). As with general conceptions of patriarchy however, the public musical work of women is derived mostly from their private musical work. Furthermore, the work of women in music traditionally has tended to perpetuate certain ideas that enable a symbolic expression of feminine characteristics (Green 1997:15). This is because patriarchy still asserts itself strongly within the concept of musical patriarchy and as such, upholds patriarchal ideas of the construction of masculinity and femininity, as well as gender and sexuality. In a discussing Lady Gaga's role as a woman in music, one has to consider that Lady Gaga does in fact seem subscribe to these patriarchal expectations of women in her musical representations. The way she uses them and the meanings created behind them, however, are important too, because they seemingly contradict, and almost mock these ideas, through the performance of them.

In performing music, women and men are provided with equal opportunity to express themselves, although these expressions differ considerably. The musical practice of women in terms of singing and performance contains an "element of display", where the female performer is constructed as the displayer and is in an active position. The displayer has the power of the lure, whereas the onlooker is passive and has the potential of being seduced (Green 1997:22). Performance and display occurs informally everyday all around us. Institutionalised display however refers to a specific form of performance - a performance in which display itself is recognised as an integral part of the performance and which usually occurs on stage or a place where there is symbolic separation between the audience and the displayer (Green 1997:22). Examples of institutionalised displays are television shows, live concerts and music videos, amongst many. An important factor in the institutionalised display of a performer, is the sex of the performer (Green 1997:24). It must be noted that the male displayer and the female displayer are not the same, and the nature of these institutionalised displays or performances involve different connotations and gender roles (Green: 1997:24). As such, the gender of the performer shapes the representations communicated within the performance, and this may be considered as a limiting factor in the symbolic and expressive nature of music.

A performance by a male is characterised by a highly ritualised display of an intimidatory nature (Green 1997:25). Conversely, women tend to enact overt sexual displays in their characterising performances; more than men do, and this has becoming a characterising feature in female performance (Green 1997:25). These sexual displays are not limited to strip clubs or pornography on television, but also occur in musical performances. Very significantly, these symbolic meanings of sexual display connote femininity (Green 1997:25). This means that the most common institutionalised representations in display and the most normal deployment of gender-roles within an economy of patriarchy, involve implicit and explicit sexual displays in which the displayer is coded as 'feminine' and the spectator as 'masculine' (Green 1997:25). The female performs to the pleasure of the male, and through this, ideas of male as dominant and superior to women are maintained and supported. Institutionalised display and performance is thus predominantly a feminine act. The world of display for the female performer is seen as affirming her discursive position as feminine - also a limiting identity role for a performer as femininity is not the same to all women, as patriarchy supposes. Affirming the female's discursive position as feminine in her performance also works to communicate the same ideas of this 'femininity' as defined by patriarchy, and offers no challenge to this conception, even though it is a generalised and restrictive approach in the representation of women. This notion is agreeable to Green (1997), who views the singing and musical performances of women as largely reproducing and affirming patriarchal definitions of femininity, usually by the nature of their performances (Green 1997:27). The display of women singers and the musical meaning behind them plays an important role in this study, as it discusses Lady Gaga as a female singer and performer as well as the meanings communicated in her work as, as mostly resisting patriarchal ideas.

In a musical performance, the woman is on display and is thus engaged in an activity, coded as 'feminine' as discussed. In singing, there are certain aspects of women's vocal display which make a woman's singing particularly affirmative of patriarchal ideas of femininity. Firstly, according to Green (1997), the singing display involves a metaphorical mask which both, protects and draws attention the body (Green 1997:28). The singer however, does not intend for her body to be the focus, by virtue of the fact that she is using her voice to sing, and thus does not simply just display herself. She displays her body alongside the instrumental source of the singing (Greenm1997:28). The voice is the primary instrument on display and comes directly

from the body without any external sources and without any intrinsic links outside the body. This embodied quality of vocal display means that the female singer is seen as no threat (Green 1997:28). However, there does lurk danger behind the musical ability of a woman. This is because the woman singer as self-possessed and in her ability to lure is invested with a power that is unavailable to onlookers and spectators. This becomes a threat that increases fear and aggression of men towards these women, and this is how she affirms her position in patriarchy (Green 1997:28). This is a main source of antipathy towards women singers. Women singers are thus opposing and in terms of their ability, safely embodied, yet still dangerously alluring (Green 1997: 28). This constitutes as an affirmation of femininity.

Secondly, female singing affirms patriarchal views of femininity due to the absence of technology within singing (Green 1997:28). This is because, as discussed, in patriarchy, man is constructed as being in charge through the harnessing of technology and women are simply part of the nature than man controls. The distinct sound and sight of the woman singing, shows that there is no lasting and serious relationship between the woman and instruments and technology (Green 1997:29). This is thought to enhance patriarchal ideas of femininity - that females are associated with nature, rather than technology and the display of the singing woman with no interrupting technologies, solidifies this association.

This idea however, is rooted in a historical approach to women in music. Modern times have seen women musical performers break away from this passive representation, particularly in terms of technology, with musical instruments being apart of this definition and as something that refocuses the approach to female performance ability. Lady Gaga for example, strongly incorporates the piano in her live performances which she plays, Alicia Keys is classically trained in piano and her performances are defined by her instrument, Alanis Morrisette plays the harmonica, guitar and flute in her performances and Katy Perry and Avril Lavigne play the lead guitar in their live shows. Popular female music artist Imogen Heap, uses the advanced and intricate technology of 'looping', where she records the different musical layers to her songs live on stage alone with her technology. In this way creates the backing vocals and musical instruments live on stage by recording pieces of music that repeat and form the song. This goes against notions of patriarchal femininity, as Imogen Heap uses technology, not specifically musical instruments to create her music in live capacity, and also does this all by herself,

affirming her strength and capabilities as a female artist. Examples of thee female pop stars and musical artists, illustrate the modern female performer and singer as having other objects, besides her natural vocal ability, that control or interrupt her construction of display. Contemporary women in music are now using and appropriating objects that are usually considered as male-orientated in their performances and these challenge, rather than affirm patriarchal femininity. The female performer now uses other tools to represent herself in her performance.

Thirdly, the image of the paid, female singer who puts body and voice on public display in a patriarchal society has inevitably become associated with that of a "sexual temptress" or "prostitute" (Green 1997:29). This is not because females want to be viewed in this ways as performers, but rather because they have to be, within a patriarchal society. There is typically no place for any other kind of representation, without going against dominant views of femininity. As such, female performances are usually 'sexy', seducing and appealing, especially to men. Women thus have to work within these boundaries where their representations as performers are predetermined for them. To be successful in this patriarchal culture, they have to succumb to these expectations and work within them. This renders female singers, as not necessarily involved over their intentional acts of display, but are considered as dangerously close to doing this, when in the public arena (Green 1997:29). For this reason, the female singer is again seen as a threat, and as such, is open to abuse (Green 1997:29). This idea speaks vociferously to Lady Gaga's construction of herself as a female performer and within patriarchy, as a threat.

Lastly, public female singers are associated with "public sexual availability" as opposed to constructions of a female within patriarchy which articulated rather by a mother singing to her baby, for example, and performing in public (Green 1997:29). Just as the conception of women as mothers and caretakers have existed for a long time, so too have the associations between the public signing woman and sexual availability within a patriarchal society. Thus, this age old dichotomy of woman as "whore/Madonna" is reproduced in her musical practice as a singer and thus supports patriarchy, instead of empowering the woman (Green 1997:29). This limits the female identity of many female performers, where they are seen in a manner that is not reflective of who they are as individuals. Within the context of music, these female performers are further disempowered by being viewed as "sexually available", because this asserts a masculine power

and control over their performances. The representations within their performances are viewed in a one dimensional and shallow way, and resulting in the messages and meanings communicated in their music being muted.

These four characteristics of femininity are affirmed and reproduced in the act of display invoked by women's singing. They construct a space which articulates femininity in contradictory ways- desirable yet dangerous, and sexually available yet maternal. The ideas put forward here are important to discuss. As discussed in the hypothesis, this research project attempts to show how female pop artist Lady Gaga challenges these patriarchal ideas as well as goes against them in her representations of herself as a female singer as well as of ideas of sexuality, female power and gender. Approaching music from a patriarchal standpoint thus provides the knowledge needed to contrast such ideas against Lady Gaga's musical practice. It allows us to clearly see how Lady Gaga uses music and singing to seemingly transgress patriarchy and present a new understanding of the singing, female in the public sphere that is independent, free and empowered.

In discussing patriarchy and music, a clear understanding of the norms and ideals of patriarchy are provided. However, the social system of patriarchy is not necessarily the dominant system in society today. In the realm of pop culture and pop music especially, there exist many representations that transgress and subvert previous systems of belief, such as patriarchy. This literature review now moves on to discuss and consider studies done on subversive pop stars, who through their music and representations, seem to go against dominant norms particularly in terms of gender, sexuality and the expected roles of women in society.

2.3.2) Subversive Pop stars: A focus on Madonna

Madonna as a subversive pop star corresponds to Lady Gaga as they both transgress and challenge dominant and traditional ideas, particularly in the way they construct representations of gender and sexuality in their musical work. Madonna has also been a big influence of Lady Gaga, and the two are often compared to each other in pop culture. Lady Gaga has been described as having made pop music exciting again in a way that has not been experienced since Madonna (Purves 2010:46). Madonna has even noted that she "sees herself in Lady Gaga" (Snead 2009:1). This is also acknowledged by Lady Gaga, who says in response, "I've made it

my goal to revolutionise pop music, the last revolution was launched by Madonna 25 years ago" (Dingwall 2009:1). This shows the similarities these two female pop stars share and develops the idea that their representations have the same goals in pop and popular culture. As such, this section discusses studies on Madonna as a subversive pop star, transgressing traditional and expected ideas of gender and sexuality. Additionally, Madonna's representations exemplify this study's hypothesis. As such, this section focuses on studies of Madonna that have the same approach as this study does to Lady Gaga. Both pop stars are the most popular artists to present themselves as subversive and challenging to dominant ideology in gender and sexuality. Studies on Madonna serve to show that the way in which Lady Gaga is studied in this project, has been done before. This situates Lady Gaga in the same field of study as Madonna has been in the last two decades.

This section presents findings of representations of Madonna, from three different authors. Fiske (1989) in his book "Reading the Popular", thus focuses on Madonna's appearance, personality, lyrics of songs and music videos as subjects of analysis as these are "the main carriers of her most accessible meaning" (Fiske 1989:95). Newitz (1993), in her study entitled "Madonna's Revenge", studies Madonna by focusing on the constructions of her identity-image in terms of herself, her audience, history and postmodernism. More specifically, Madonna is looked at as strategically positioned famous marginalized person, who exists in a time when marginal identities are powerful and recognizable (Newitz 1993:1). Lastly, Hawkins (1997) in his study of Madonna entitled "'I'll never be an angel': Stories of Deception in Madonna's music", places Madonna in the same position that this study places Lady Gaga - as capturing the fascination of popular culture through the theatricality of pop music and in the significant meanings in her songs and music videos (Hawkins 1997:1). Hawkins approaches studying Madonna through features in her musical expressions, as music that constitutes a primary mode of her expression. Importantly, the studies of Fiske (1989), Newitz (1993) and Hawkins (1997) are all shaped by Madonna's performances of sexuality and gender identity in her songs and visual images in her music videos. These authors further view Madonna as an icon of non-traditional and subversive gender and sexuality representations in pop music.

Madonna has been a major phenomena of popular culture throughout the late 1980's, the 1990's and to date, primarily due to the success her songs music videos, and also because of her personality. It is also important to note that fans and critics pay more attention to her appearance, identity and what she stands for, rather than what she sounds like (Fiske 1989:95). Because of this, Madonna's work is not a collection of songs, but is better defined as a collection of 'images' (Newitz 1993:1). These images have become popular because of her representations of gender and sexuality.

Fiske's analysis of Madonna is focused on her music videos and song lyrics. He uses textual and semiotic analysis, and thus reads signifiers of the text and also recognises that these signifiers exist in the text as well as extra-textually, in myths, counter-myths and ideology of their culture (Fiske 1989:97). Fiske's methodology and the methodology undertaken in this research project use the same singular techniques of analysis, and thus, results from Fiske's research and this project should be similarly produced. Hawkins, a musicologist, considers the impact of gender and identity on pop music, by examining music and vocal structures as well as visual images in music videos (Hawkins 1997:1). Furthermore, Hawkins considers this as an important point of departure in his study, as "music ignored by these meta-narratives, such as gender and identity, is primarily the mainstream commercially `successful' pop" (Hawkins 1997:1). Madonna however, represents features of gender and identity in pop music and is still an embodiment of successful pop music, another similarity she shares with Lady Gaga.

In a lyrical analysis of selected Madonna songs, Fiske's research shows a strong use of puns by Madonna. He finds that this use of puns in her lyrics invite a creative, producer-like relation to the text and allows the text to produce different meanings as it is may be interpreted in different ways (Fiske 1989:107). Puns arise when one word occurs in two or more discourses, and while the immediate context may give one priority, trace(s) of the other are always present (Fiske 1989:107). Madonna's songs use puns excessively, something not uncommon in popular culture (Fiske 1989:108).

A semiotic analysis of the lyrics of the song *Like a Virgin,* for example, contains puns that with at least four discourses, namely, religion and religious love, sexuality or physical love, romantic love and a discourse of street wisdom and urban culture (Fiske 1989:108). The words "touched' in the lyric "touched for the very first time", also has religious meanings of being blessed as well

meanings of being physically and sexually touched or emotionally touched by true love (Fiske 1989:109). There is no final meaning nor do puns preach. Rather, they raise issues, questions and contradictions and invite imaginative participation of the reader in its resolution (Fiske 1989:109). This is a primary way in which Madonna communicates messages to her fans and represents herself and her ideological viewpoints, as well as allows for interpretation of the messages in her songs.

Madonna's music videos refer to the production of her image, because through them, she visually and physically represents herself in a certain ways (Fiske 1989:107). This emphasis on the making of the images allows and invites a control by the viewer over its reception, just as the puns in lyrics allow for interpretation of messages. The music video provides Madonna with control over her own image and music because she had control over the performance of her physical body in her music videos (Hawkins 1997:1). She uses her music videos as a prime outlet for encoding new identities in popular culture, by challenging assumptions on gender, sexuality, self-empowerment, girl culture and female social relationships (Hawkins 1997:1). She influenced an entire generation of fans who began imitating her style in their quest for recognition and empowerment. Madonna's representations in music videos, further allows girls to see that meanings of feminine sexuality can be in their control and used to serve their interests, and does not have to be determined by dominant patriarchal ideology (Fiske 1989:107). In this way, the representations in her music videos are empowering to females and challenge dominant ideas in her performance.

Newitz's (1993) study offers a way of understanding Madonna as an exemplary case study of gender and sexuality in multi-culturalist terms. Madonna offers a case relevant to "identity politics", because she represents a fantasy idea of what gender and sexuality might mean to her audience and critics. She does this by reproducing images and products of herself in her music and music videos. These images represent her as 'making fun' of her 'boy toy' self, as androgynous and as 'girly'. She fashions herself as a sex symbol in some ways, evident in the ways she exploits the sexuality of her face and body and how she is frequently show in postures of submission or subordination to men in videos such a *Burning Up* and *Like a Virgin* (Fiske 1989:96). Thus, through her visual representations, she embodies masculine fantasies. Because of this fans have described her sexuality in patriarchal terms such as "tarty" and "seductive"

(Fiske 1989:98). Importantly, Newitz (1993) considers all Madonna's identity-images as sexualized (Newitz 1993:1).Two music videos that epitomize this are *Open Your Heart* (1986), in which Madonna portrays herself as a stripper in a peep show gallery, and *Express Yourself* (1989), in which Madonna dresses up in masculine 'fascist drag,' wears chains, and sings to very wet, well-muscled men who appear to be slaves (Newitz 1993:1).

Hawkins (1997) additionally views Madonna as woman who exudes sexuality in her representations but who is more interested in pleasing herself than in inviting male desire and approval. In so doing she taunts the gendered `gaze' through a sense of autoerotic enjoyment linked directly to her personal notions of empowerment (Hawkins 1997:1). This is evident in her video for *Material Girl* where she parodies Marilyn Monroe, and is considered by Hawkins as "one of the first displays of confrontation expressed through the song's blatantly manipulative narrative" (Hawkins 1997:1). Her parodist representations in music videos in which she makes fun of 'girliness' and of the emotional instability of women, contest traditional images of women as unstable, insecure and emotional (Hawkins 1997:1).

Hawkins (1997) concludes that readings of Madonna's texts provide an insight into the complexities of our gendered identities within the context of postmodern sexualities. This is because Madonna representations in her performances and music all carry a wealth of identities-she deceives by playing a slave to male last in the music video for *Like A Virgin*; she functions in an androgynous and masquerading capacity in the music videos for *Vogue* and *Express yourself*; and in *Justify My Love*, portrays ritualistic transvestism and hypnotic androgyny, which, initially positioned her as the ultimate target of misogyny (Hawkins 1997:1).In many of her representations she is considered as a threat to both men and women, by positioning herself in a place of power within both genders. Hawkins essentially argues, through his analysis of Madonna music and music videos, that the performance of gender identity is a central political issue in understanding the pleasure in music. Gender in Madonna's case might therefore be considered as 'performative' or as an act, in that it displays a range of `performed' acts that emphasise the complexity of traditional or normative representations (Hawkins 1997:1).

Patriarchy, defines women through binary oppositions, namely as the "virgin-angel" and "whore-devil" (Fiske 1989:103). However, Madonna is seen as mocking conventional representations of female sexuality, as well as conforming to it. An analysis of her song *Human Nature* points to

representations in the narrative of a certain female desire to be successful and powerful in the face of patriarchy, and thus Madonna confronts chauvinism head on this song, through singing the lyrics "And I'm not sorry, / I'm not your bitch, don't hang your shit on me" (Hawkins 1997:1). In this way, Madonna's style of performance and her use of visual and musical signification, link up to the politics of gender identification, through her music and music videos.

In conclusion, these studies all view Madonna's voice as well as her lyrics and the visuals in her music videos as creating strong images and ideas of sexuality, women and self-empowerment as well as of certain gender identities. Her expressions are viewed as strong and powerful, and as threatening to patriarchal institutions, through her parodies of conventional representation of woman in her performances. The findings of the analysis of Madonna's representations of gender, sexuality and female empowerment, allow us to understand the main issues of contention in representations of female subversive pop stars, as this study's hypothesises Lady Gaga to be. It also allows for a comparison between Lady Gaga and Madonna, in terms of the way they engage with patriarchal ideas and dominant ideology in pop music.

2.3.3) Other academic writing on Lady Gaga: Gaps and supporting arguments

Focusing on Lady Gaga's work as a pop artist within the contexts of gender and sexuality representation has become a hot topic of engagement and enquiry. Before early 2010, published research on Lady Gaga in any respect was scarce, but a year later, there are many studies on Lady Gaga's work in pop music. Studies of Lady Gaga include discussions of her as an "Illuminati puppet" producing occult meanings, as a representation of the Anti-Christ and as being sacrilegious, and also as being intersex and a "tranny" (The Vigilant Citizen 2009:1). The more popular Lady Gaga studies are however centred on the same topics as this study, namely, gender and sexuality. As such, the work Lady Gaga by other academics to be discussed, hold similar arguments to that of this project.

To begin, Katrin Horn (2010), in her paper entitled, "Camping with the Stars: Queer Performitivity, Pop Intertextuality and Camp in the Pop Art of Lady Gaga", studies Lady Gaga's pop artist identity construction as "polarized" compared to other pop stars such as Beyonce, Taylor Swift, Rihanna or Celine Dion (Horn 2010:1). However, she specifically looks at this through the strategic use of the theory of Camp, as a distinct mode of mass media

communication. She asserts that Lady Gaga's uses camp in her music, outfits and performances to construct her identity. Camp has its origins in gay subculture, as a "means of survival and communication for gays", but works primarily through popular culture and is formulated as a subversive strategy in popular culture (Horn 2010:1). Camp is characteristically marked by its use of irony and parody in achieving its subversive potential in popular texts (Horn 2010:1). The main argument produced in Horn's study, is that camp is no longer solely rooted in gay subculture, but through Lady Gaga, has been introduced into academia and pop discourse.

An important finding from this study additionally is that Lady Gaga uses camp in the production of her aesthetic identity and persona, specifically communicated through her appearance and fashion. Lady Gaga's clothes and accessories mark an important transition in her public persona and tend to become more elaborate and extravagant with every public appearance (Horn 2010:1). These aesthetic constructions of Lady Gaga are seen as means through which she performs Lady "an outrageous femininity" (Horn 2010:1). This brings up an important point because Lady Gaga's fashion in an important part of her persona. Lady Gaga manages to be a "parodic subject" and "sexy object" at the same time, and this unsettles ideas about presumed naturalness of gender and desire (Horn 2010:1). The argument and focus on Lady Gaga's fashion and aesthetic representation in a general sense, adds to another branch in her tree of subversive representation around the issues of gender, sexuality and feminist identity. By focusing on the musical work of Lady Gaga strictly through her music products, other factors of Lady Gaga's persona, such as her fashion identity, that also function as subversive are overlooked, and this study depicts this idea. Horn's study brings this lack in the author's project to light. However, the sites of analysis of the author's project research project, ensures sound and dependable results, based in actual cultural products. Horn has no specific site of analysis, and instead approaches Lady Gaga's identity from general representations in pop music and pop culture, shaped around ideas of parody and irony.

A 2010 study by Kevin Gaffney entitled, "The Lady Gaga Saga", traces and analyses Lady Gaga's workings in pop music by approaching his study from many different angles, in ways that are different to the authors study and in ways that are similar. Gaffney's comprehensive study, examines Lady Gaga in all her glory - he studies her representations of beauty, her capitalist nature, Lady Gaga as a brand, her fashion persona as well as the different themes and meanings

found in her songs and music videos. He firstly, studies Lady Gaga's practice in pop culture by drawing parallels to her art practice and capitalism (Gaffney 2010:2). Her 'low-brow' post-postmodern pop music can be seen as another symptom of advanced capitalism. Gaffney argues that her power as 'the other' and as subversive does not become diminished when appropriated by the masses through commercial consumption, but rather Lady Gaga uses her cultural power, along with the power of capitalism to "allow herself a huge freedom to test her ideas on the world, rather than in a white cube gallery to a select audience" (Gaffney 2010: 2). Mass consumption of her work within capitalism is thus to her advantage.

Lady Gaga as a brand is analysed by looking at the different constructions of herself that she presents to the media. Her most important identity as asserted by Gaffney, is in locating herself amongst discourses of gender normality and sexuality, where she is represented as a drag queen, as a sexually desirable woman, and in masculine terms (Gaffney 2010: 17). Gaffney furthermore views her identity construction as complicit and critical. She is critical in her exaggerated and mutated gender identity construction and her aggressive sexuality threatens mainstream ideology.

Gaffney (2010) also studies Lady Gaga in relation to Madonna - a link that the author's research report also makes. Here, recognizing Madonna's cultural worth and importance as an artist provides a framework to contextualize Lady Gaga's work. Lady Gaga and Madonna are also argued to be similar in their representation of beauty in that they both "heavily construct" this (Gaffney 2010:20). Madonna is seen as embodying post-modernism, in that although she finds her power in constructing beauty and shocking female sexuality, she is still linked to modern ideas of female icon - that she should be lusted after by both men and women. This is reflected in other pop stars such as Britney Spears, Beyonce and Christina Aguilera, who also present themselves as sexually attractive and alluring, prominently in their pop star identity. Opposing this, Lady Gaga is seen as being freed of post modern feminism because she is sexy but also weird, bizarre and challenging.

Important observations made from Gaffney's study, as mentioned above, are not encompassed in the this project, but other observations are similar to this study too. This specifically comes in

when Gaffney examines songs and imagery in music videos of Lady Gaga, from the albums *The Fame* and *The Fame Monster*. His analysis draws staring connections to this study, although Gaffney does not look at the representations of specific features. Rather, he approaches texts in a broader manner. Musically and lyrically, Gaffney finds that Lady Gaga is most persistent is her use of assonance, alliteration and repetition in her melodies (Gaffney 2010:29). Her songs also tend to consists of "cult-like, quasi-nonsense chants sections", evident in the songs *Poker Face*, *LoveGame* and *Bad Romance* (Gaffney 2010:29). To understand her pop music formula, Gaffney uses a quantitative approach to her songs. Thus does not seek to understand symbolic or implicit meanings in songs, but rather focuses on its pop formulation.

He also exposes Lady Gaga songs as low brow through his analysis. *Poker Face* for example, is played off the word "Fuck her face", and this obscenity is seen by Gaffney as aggressive and as minimizing part of her identity (Gaffney 2010:30). From this perspective, her music is not empowering to any groups, but is rather indecent and repelling. *Bad Romance* portrays Lady Gaga's music as seemingly indulgent and pleasurable, fetishized and shallow, but with a subtext of loneliness and desperation (Gaffney 2010:30). As such, Gaffney presents alternative reading to Lady Gaga's music and work, not as liberating but as trashy and low brow. It should be noted that his analysis deals with shallow reading of Lady Gaga's work and not in symbolic meanings- the appropriation of which produces different results.

Gaffney's analysis also takes Lady Gaga's music videos into account. Here, he asserts that the music videos for *Paparazzi*, *Bad Romance* and *Telephone* form a "Violent trilogy" (Gaffney 2010:30). Performances within these videos portray Lady Gaga as a femme fatale that embodies a powerful sexuality. It is posed-sexuality that is more shocking and unexpected in a bubblegum-pop setting (Gaffney 2010:30). Positioning Lady Gaga as a femme fatale attributes her with being both sexually appealing to men and women, as well as empowering her as a woman who is strong in her sexiness and who is in control through, her seducing of others.

Gaffney's study of Lady Gaga is relevant and revealing in many ways because of its wide scope of analysis. It is comprehensive and deals with Lady Gaga from different relevant and important standpoints, such as Lady Gaga as a capitalist brand, through fashion appropriation and creation,

as the new Madonna, and through mythic construction of her live shows. The shallow nature of these analyses, however, is strongly contrasted to the author's study on Lady Gaga. Gaffney employs a superficial and generic reading on Lady Gaga's cultural products and representations in the media, and in so doing, does not engage with how Lady Gaga specifically represents certain elements in her performances and music. His analysis of songs and music videos are also based primarily on assumptions on the first level of signification, making them one-dimensional and literal. This kind of shallow reading however, is valuable as it presents new ways understanding Lady Gaga's work by producing new and different results through analysis. Gaffney's study however leaves a huge gap in terms of Lady Gaga's specific representations, particularly on gender, sexuality and feminist identity. The author's study, however, prioritises these Lady Gaga representations and in so doing, zooms in on them in a clear and decisive way. Gaffney's research is however valuable in discussing Lady Gaga as it provides a reading on Lady Gaga's work in pop in general and thus explains Lady Gaga's identity thoroughly, especially as it lends Lady Gaga's identity analysis from various parts of pop culture.

Lastly, a more current study on Lady Gaga in 2011 to be discussed is by Birgitta Abrahamsson. Her paper, entitled "Gender roles in pop lyrics: A discourse analysis of the lyrics of Lady Gaga" focuses on a lyrical analysis of Lady Gaga's songs, specifically in terms of how they construct and communicate gender roles and subsequently, sexuality. This is shared characteristic in the analysis of Lady Gaga with Abrahamsson's study and that of the authors. The main argument of her paper is that the songs analysed, demonstrate Lady Gaga's quest for sexual and personal freedom. The theme of sexuality is found to be dominant in Lady Gaga's songs, with the lyrics of the songs analysed, all explicitly dealing with sex; and these songs also represent an emotional detachment of Lady Gaga. These, map out the main arguments of Abrahamsson's study.

Abrahamsson prioritises the analysis of lyrics, as lyrics are viewed as having an urgency to be analysed, especially when they are most relevant in pop music, i.e., when they are new. This is reflected in Abrahamsson's study where she analyses the most recent songs of Lady Gaga-select songs off *The Fame Monster*, namely, *Bad Romance*, *Monster* and *So Happy I Could Die* and the first single off Lady Gaga's most recent album *Born This Way*, with the same title (Abrahamsson 2011:3). She prioritises Lady Gaga as the site of analysis mainly because Lady Gaga's songs dominate the pop music charts, writes and co-writes all her own songs and because she views

Lady Gaga as a conscious lyricist (Abrahamsson 2011:3). Additionally, discourse analysis is the main technique of analysis used and is applied to lyrics from a gender perspective (Abrahamsson 2011:4).

Abrahamsson approaches gender in ways similar to this study - as a social and cultural interpretation of sex. Both studies also importantly assert than women are passive, while men are active and in control (Abrahamsson 2011:4). They thus have the same foundation in the start of analysis. Through analysis of songs off *The Fame Monster* , Abrahamsson finds Lady Gaga's lyrics as "gender-blending"- a term which describes what happens when women become more masculine or when men become more feminine (Abrahamsson 2011:8). Lyrics in songs are also strongly indicative of lesbian experiences. The song, *So Happy I Could Die* starts with Gaga's female voice declaring her love for "that lavender blonde" and this is representative of a lesbian love affair described in this song. This is viewed as "a sign of her social commitment to gender-bending and sexual diversity" (Abrahamsson 2011:8).

Other songs represent Lady Gaga as a strong and liberal woman. *Telephone* for example, portrays the quest for reclaiming power over one's own life and sexuality (Abrahamsson 2011:10). Furthermore the lyrics of *Telephone* also show the power and agency in solidarity between two women. Essentially, in discussing the gender roles of Lady Gaga as portrayed in her songs, it can be concluded that some songs construct the female as completely in charge, namely *Telephone* and *Teeth*, while other songs, such as *Monster* and *Dance in the Dark* express female submission. What Abrahamsson fundamentally argues is that repeatedly using the blonde, passive, submissive, silent beauty in her lyrics Lady Gaga seeks to make her audience react and form an opinion, and to take a stand against narrow, traditional gender roles (Abrahamsson 2011:10). Her lyrics and performance offer us an escape from dominant gender ideas, performed by Lady Gaga as she takes on the role of the active subject in her songs.

Because of her ideas of sexuality and gender communicated in songs, Abrahamson defines Lady Gaga as representing the 'other' and also as celebrating this 'otherness'. This otherness is rooted in ideas of not fitting in and of being a misfit, and it is this experience that helps Lady Gaga create her art and performances (Abrahamsson 2011:14). Lady Gaga embodies otherness by celebrating herself as a 'freak', 'misfit' and 'monster' (Abrahamsson 2011:14). In analyzing Gaga's celebration of monstrosity and otherness, focus is given to the animalistic metaphors

evident in the lyrics (Abrahamsson 2011:14). The song *Teeth* is suggestive of vampirism, while *Monster* is about a "wolf in disguise" (Abrahamsson 2011:14). These metaphors are used to make a point - the monster imagery in the songs *Monster* can be interpreted as being about men who try to manipulate women. Abrahamsson analyses the context of monsters and animals as "an escape from living up to ideals and expectations from other media or from society" and through this, allows for an experience of a sort of freedom or relief, perhaps even power over their lives (Abrahamsson 2011:15). The animal/monster/vampire elements of Gaga's lyrics give a sense of being out of control, not caring about rules or laws, acting on impulse and thus releasing the animal/monster within (Abrahamsson 2011:15).

Lastly, Lady Gaga's treatment of otherness is also looked at in terms sexual orientation. It focuses on analysis of the song *Born This Way,* which contains a straightforward message of diversity, in sexuality and ethnicity. Throughout the song, the listener is encouraged to be who they are, even if they are gay and this song portrays this ideas as supported and accepted by her mother and by God, in the lyrics, "She said, 'cause he made you perfect, babe" and "God makes no mistakes" (Abrahamsson 2011:17). Taking a cue from the lyrics of *Born this Way*, namely, "Don't be a Drag, Just be a Queen", brings up imagery of a drag queen. The drag queen rebels against constraints of identity and in doing this, deconstructs gender by pointing out the artificiality of femininity in society. This imagery is used in many visual representations of Lady Gaga's work, such as in the *Telephone* video, and Lady Gaga is thought to look like a drag queen on stage. The main point that Abrahamsson asserts here is that Lady Gaga creates a distance to her own performance by appearing as a drag queen for example, in order to turn her performances into a play with gender and sexuality. She uses this to provoke ideas of gender and sexuality and also invites her audience to celebrate in this 'otherness'.

This discussion seeks to present summaries that include aims and findings of research, in order to understand the different ways that Lady Gaga is analysed and approached within media and communications studies. In so doing, the limitations, gaps and also the strong points of the authors study can be reflected back to the author, by looking at other studies. Essentially all these studies including that of the authors, share a common thread in their analysis of Lady Gaga, and this is that Lady Gaga undermines dominant notions of gender and sexuality by resisting conformity and conventions. The three studies discussed also all prioritise and read discussions

around Lady Gaga's fashion, aesthetic and beauty constructions. The analysis techniques used in these studies all differ and but are not as in depth and specific as semiotics, the technique of analysis used by the author. These three studies also seek to strengthen this study's rationale by emphasising the strong points of this study and by revealing its importance. It is important compared to theses studies, because it engages with the representations of gender, sexuality and feminist identity constructions in Lady Gaga's work, instead of merely stating it as an issue. Thus, it deals with the symbolic and implicit meanings of Lady Gaga's work through a specific technique analysis, and this is what makes the author's study valuable and different.

2.4) Conclusion

The discussions presented in the entire section attempt to situate Lady Gaga's representational work in a more distinctive and less general place in media studies. This is done by discussing the popular culture approaches that are most relevant to this study and providing a specific way in which to approach the study as a whole. Importantly the main argument produced in the first part of this literature review, is that Lady Gaga's representations as the focal point of this study, needs to be understood and examined within certain parameters, and this is within the context of pop culture and pop music specifically. Thus, it situates Lady Gaga's musical work in the current conceptions of this 'pop' context, and as such provides a specific manner in which to understand her music, music videos and the representations within them. The second part of this literature review provides a thorough and in-depth discussion on the primary issues of this study, regarding the representation of sexuality, gender and feminist identity through popular music. Discussing these issues by prioritising female artists in music helps contextualise this study, as Lady Gaga too is a female artist in music. This section further contextualises this study by providing literature on the analysis of pop star Madonna, as an example of a subversive female star whose representations in her musical work defies dominant ideology. Discussing Madonna shows that discussing the female pop star in this manner is not something new, but is something uncommon in pop music. Lastly, the other academic studies of Lady Gaga that are discussed, maps out the scope of this study, its relevance and its limitations. This chapter attempts to provide the relevant literature around this study's main aims and research questions, and as such provides specific discussions and literature that speak to these.

Chapter 3:

Theoretical Framework

3.1) Introduction

This section embodies the fundamental theoretical work on which this study is based. It is divided in two important parts, the first of which discusses the theories behind media representations that are to be utilised in this study. Within this, theories of representation, semiotics, myth, ideology and hegemony are prioritised as the main theories applicable to studying Lady Gaga and her representations in her music and public performances. Next, Queer and Feminist theories are discussed. This section explicates the primary theories and different schools of thought behind the main units of analysis in this study, namely, gender, sexuality and feminist identity. As such this section engages with theories of feminism as well as in Queer theory, as the fundamental mode of understanding theoretical constructs of gender, gender performitivity and sexuality.

3.2) Media Representations

Representation embodies a theme in the media that is used to construct meanings about the world in which we live. The media represent the world in certain ways and from this, audiences are able to understand and make sense of the world in certain ways. In order for representation to be meaningful to audiences, there needs to be a "shared recognition of people, situations, ideas and values" (O'Sullivan 2003:69). Representation is central to this research project and is prioritised as a form of enquiry and analysis in understanding the meanings with Lady Gaga's songs and music videos. Representation encompasses a wide field as mapped out by Hall (1997), and this includes language, linguistics, semiotics, structuralism, myth and discourse (Hall 1997:15-63). These are all important theories and inform verbal and non verbal language. These theories of representation are a means through which meaning can be made and understood, and as such form a large part of this study. This study furthermore focuses on representation processes in texts in terms of language, semiotics and myth, as the primary ways of decoding and understanding the ideas and meanings within the representation of Lady Gaga's work. More specific aspects of representation and how they will be used to analyse data are further explicated

in the Methodology section of this project. The theories and processes of representation will now be discussed.

The theory of Representation in cultural studies is useful, as practices of representation connect meanings and language to culture (Hall 1997:15). Representation may be defined as "using language to say something meaningful about, or to represent the world meaningfully to other people" (Hall 1997:15). Representation is a *re-presentation* of reality. In this vein, it can be said that the media is a tool though which reality is re-presented. Chandler (2008:1) defines representation in the following manner:

> *Representation* refers to the construction in any medium (especially the *mass media*) of aspects of 'reality' such as people, places, objects, events, cultural identities and other abstract concepts. Such representations may be in speech or writing as well as still or moving pictures.

To re-present or to mediate, suggest a process whereby a pre-existing given, whether it is a physical object or a philosophical abstraction, is translated so that it can be comprehended and experienced by an observer or audience (Geraghty 2005:46). In this process of media representation, the representation may imply that reality is relatively unchanged by the process or it may present questions of bias, distortion or reframing, indicating that the purity of the original is lost (Geraghty 2005: 46). Additionally, there may be shared understandings of representation and in the world that work through the use of familiar or dominant images and ideas (O'Sullivan 2003:69). There are also representations that render little social consensus about these meanings behind those representations and therefore allow for the possibility of alternative representations (O'Sullivan 2003:69). Thus, a closer examination of representations helps one understand the ideas and meanings that these representations construct.

O'Sullivan (2003) asserts, that in understanding representations in the media, one first needs to understand that these representations are not entirely innocent and thus the analysis of these texts need to be understood within certain frameworks (O'Sullivan 2003:69). He recognises these theoretical frameworks as that of hegemony and ideology. These have been previously discussed in terms of being a base for the understanding of popular and pop culture. Here, however, ideology and hegemony refer to dominant framework that allows for or inhibits media

representations. Hegemony has its origins in Marxist theory, and its underlying assumption is that there are "fundamental inequalities in power between social groups" (O'Sullivan 2003:69). The social groups with the most power are able to exercise their influence by force, as a well as culturally and in so doing, the ruing class are able to protect their economic interests (O'Sullivan 2003:69). Hegemony refers to "the winning if popular consent through everyday cultural life" and this includes through media representations as well as through social institutions (O'Sullivan 2003:69). It is achieved through ideology according to O'Sullivan (2003) and thus needs to be considered in the discussion of hegemony (O'Sullivan 2003:69).

Ideology is a complex and layered term, but generally speaking, it refers to a "set of ideas which produce a partial and selective view of reality" (O'Sullivan 2003:70). Also based in Marxism, the notion of ideology entails widely held ideas or beliefs, which are often seen and presented as 'common sense'. (O'Sullivan 2003:70). This legitimises ideologies and allows for certain forms of social inequality to be widely acceptable. Ideologies are thus able to disguise or suppress the real structure of domination and exploitation which exists is society (O'Sullivan 2003:70). All belief systems and world views are considered as ideological under this theory. There is however no accurate truth to measure against these representations, even though they are depicted as truthful and natural. In terms of media representations, it is important to consider what ideological perspectives are prioritised, how they are prioritised as well as whose perspectives they are, as this refers to issues of power inequalities. The media's role is seen as "circulating and reinforcing dominant ideologies or undermining and challenging such ideologies" (O'Sullivan: 2003: 70). Within popular culture and media output, issues regarding the representations of gender and race have always been at the forefront and are the site of constant struggle over the production of meaning. Other contested media representations include the representation of politics, stereotypes, sexuality, nationalism and third world images (O'Sullivan 2003:69-108).

Language and meaning are very important to consider in representations as these are primary ways in which the human race communicate. Hall (1997) affirms that representation connects meaning and language to culture and is an essential part of the process in which meaning is produced and exchanged between members of a culture (Hall 1997:15). As such, it fundamentally involves the use of language, signs and images,

which stand for or represent other things. Representation is thus the production of meaning through language. More specifically, representation is the production of the meaning of the concepts in our minds, expressed and manifested through language. Representation essentially creates a link between "concepts" and "language" (Hall 1997:17). The term 'sign' is used to culminate the meaning between the language and the concept, and is the general term used for words, sounds and images which carry meaning (Hall 1997:18). These sounds, words, images and objects function as signs and are integrated with other signs into a system capable of carrying and expressing meaning, and can be referred to as a 'language' (Hall 1997:19). This language is not just linguistic, but encompasses meaning made from visual and audio signs too. It is the relations between things, concepts and signs that lie at the centre of the production of meaning (Hall 1997:19). The process linking these three elements together is a way of understanding representation.

In general terms, there are three approaches to explaining how the representation of meaning the use of language, works, namely the reflective, intentional and constructionist approaches (Hall 1997:24). The intentional approach is also known as the mimetic approach and within this approach, meaning lies in the object, person, idea or event in the real, physical and manifest world. Language is used as a mirror in this approach, to reflect the "true meaning as it already exists in the world" (Hall 1997:24). This approach bears obvious truth to ideas of meaning in that it represents things in the way it actually exists in the physical world but it is one dimensional and overlooks the two-dimensional sign within meaning, the association or concept which the physical object refers to.

The second approach to meaning in representation is contrary to the first in that it sees the speaker, author or person who speaks as imposing his or her unique meaning on the world, through language (Hall 1997:25). This is called the intentional approach and highlights that words essentially mean what the author intend they should mean. However this approach asserts that people's unique expressions are the sole source of meanings which further means that everyone speaks their own private language. This is not true, as meaning and languages are shared and understood through codes, rules and conventions that we share, with language essentially a social system that is public (Hall 1997:25).

Thirdly, the constructionist approach recognizes the social and public character of language and acknowledges that neither things in themselves nor people through their expression can fix meaning in language (Hall 1997:25). This constructionist approach to meaning in language purports that we "construct meaning using representational systems, namely concepts and signs (Hall 1997:25). It thus focuses on the language system that we are using to represent concepts.

Work on representation in the media is crucially marked by the development of semiotics in linguistics and the application of its techniques to communication systems which involve verbal and non verbal cues, such as images and videos (Geraghty 2005:47). Semiotics is privileged in this project, as the primary analytical tool of texts and also in shaping the theoretical framework with its core theory that helps in the understanding of representation. Semiotics is also a practise of representation and provides a clear understanding of concepts between the relationship of language and meaning.

Semiotics is the study of the science of signs, as postulated by Swiss linguist Ferdinand De Saussure (Culler 1976:19). The underlying premise of this approach is that all cultural objects convey meaning and are focused on the meaning that signs convey (Hall 1997:36). Semiology postulates a relationship between two terms, namely, a signifier and a signified (Sontag 1993:97). A 'sign' for Saussure is the union of a 'signified', a concept, and a 'signifier', through which that concept is manifested and thus becomes the 'sign' (Moriarty 1991:23). The sign may thus be considered the associative total of the signified and the signifier. Barthes reconciles his understanding of these concepts, with Saussure's conceptions: the signified is the concept; the signifier is the linguistic sign such as words or a 'sound-image'; and the relation between concept and word/sound-image, is the sign, which is a concrete entity (Sontag 1993:98).

The key principle in Saussure's theory of language concerns the essential quality of the sign. The key principle in the study of signs is that the link between the signifier and the signified is arbitrary (Saussure 1990:67). Thus, the linguistic or visual sign is arbitrary (Culler 1976:19). This means that there exists no inevitable or natural link between the signifier and the signified (Culle 1976:21). Signifieds are also not pre-existing concepts, but are changeable and contingent concepts that vary from one state of language and culture to another (Culler 1976:23). The sign

is arbitrary in nature, but it is important to note that selection of the sign to produce meaning in the material form is not arbitrary, but selected and intentional.

The use of 'myth' as a process of representation is additionally important as myth provides a secondary or connotative meaning, from the first and denotative meaning. Myth, conceived by Barthes is a language, a mode of communication and a form of signification (Moriarty 1991:19). It wishes to account for certain 'duplicities' in mass culture and mass media, such as in magazine illustrations, films, advertisements and news articles (Wasserman1981:28). These duplicities are based on the signification of 'naturalness' that dresses up and constructs representations of reality in a specific way, so that is they are seen as natural and obvious. These are however determined by history or society, and are thus not natural constructions at all (Wasserman1981:28). It thrives on an explication of paradoxes, an underlying characteristic of myths, and seeks to understand and expose them. Barthes's analysis of myths aims at exposing the mechanisms of false beliefs and ideological abuse, and also how these mechanisms mediate social ideologies.

Myth, functionally, uses secondary sociological order, or Meta language, as its signifying system (Wasserman 1981:30). Mythology is a science of reading that involves a semiological analysis of the mechanics of the language of mass culture, and an ideological analysis and bearing on this language. Myth as an analysis technique is based on semiology as it studies signification and meaning. Myth is based on Saussure's tri-dimensional pattern of the signifier, the signified and sign, and uses this as the first-order semiological system (Wasserman 1981:30). This is used as the first step in the analysis of myth.

Myth is thus constructed from the results of a pre-existing semiological chain, namely the sign produced from this first order system. In the second order semiological system where the myth is situated, combining a signifier and a signified produces the mythic signification or sign (Moriarty 1991:23). The uniqueness of the mythic system is that it uses the sign produced in the first order system, as the signifier or 'form', in the second order system (Wasserman 1981:30). Thus the original sign produced, becomes the signifier of a new sign by attaching it to a new concept or 'signified' in the myth system. This new sign produced in the second order system, is the myth. Furthermore, the relationship between the signified and signifier in the system of myth, is not arbitrary but motivated, because the signifier in this system is filled with meaning as a

sign, and empty as a signifier (Wasserman 1981:33). The signifier thus 'motivates' the myth to choose it's signified, in order to create the myth.

Myth moves from a narrow linguistic level to a wider cultural level, and thus, in myth, there exist two semiological systems, namely, the linguistic system and the myth itself. The first order system may thus be considered as literal and denotative, while the second order system is mythic and connotative, according to Barthes (Hall 1997:38). Furthermore, the level of myth, yields significations that are usually ideologically framed, with an intentioned new meaning (Hall 1997:39). Myth systems thus linked to cultural, political and economic levels and themes in society.

In order to explain how myth works and how it is applied in example, Barthes describes certain characteristics of myth. To begin, the basis of how myth works and how it is applied in examples, is seen as paradoxical, in the sense that at first, it seems to confusing and nonsensical, but upon further inspection, the application of myth makes sense (Moriarty 1991:20). Secondly, the common sense view of the world, largely consists in understanding the use of something, but to bracket out and exclude an object's utilitarian function, can enable one to be become aware or 'hear' previously unsuspected messages, and this constitute the myth (Moriarty 1991:20). Myth is explained through its duplicitous meanings that work ideologically as well as aesthetically. Examples are used to illustrate this.

In his famous example wrestling, Barthes asserts that 'wrestling is not a sport, but a spectacle', and this is the mythic message in wrestling (Moriarty 1991:20). This is because in a wrestling match, wrestlers do not conceal their agony as would be expected from them in a proper sports match. They display their agony, rather than conceal it. Furthermore, foul play in wrestling is blatant. This is because the wrestler is not so much trying to win, but rather, is trying to fulfil the role expected of him by the spectators, and this role is to visibly suffer, and in so doing to put on a show. This is what Barthes means by 'wrestling is not a sport, but a spectacle, and this is thus the secondary meaning which constitutes the myth (Moriarty 1991:20). This meaning is communicated aesthetically, through the visual performance and observations made from watching a wrestling match.

3.3) Feminist and Queer Theory

The media have always been at the centre of feminist criticism because of the media's power in imparting patriarchal and ideological messages (Fourie 2002:383). Thus, the media are seen as key contributors of communicating patriarchal messages, such as the role of the father as head of the family, the power men hold over women in the working environment, as well as other representations of the subordination of the female to the male. Ideologically, this may be demonstrated by the media's portrayal of men of all classes and races, as being oppressive towards women. Feminist theories, thus, seek separatism from male dominance, especially in terms of the production of female representations in the media.

Feminism begins with a keen awareness of exclusion from male cultural, social, sexual, political and intellectual discourse (Dolan 1988:3). It is a societal critique that reveals the prevailing social conditions that formulate women's position as outside of dominant male discourse (Dolan 1988:3). In general, feminism can be defined as "a critique of male supremacy formed and offered in the light of a will to change it, which in turn assumes a conviction that it is unchangeable" (Gordon 1986:29). Feminism exercises many different ways of addressing male dominance, with specific feminisms developed out of certain ideologies and strategies. These will now be discussed.

Within feminism, there are different schools of thought that all contribute to the bigger picture of what constitutes feminism as well as the differences of thought with feminism. As such, there is no one feminism - feminism is multi-centred and indefinable (Grant: 1993: 1). Grant (1993) and Evans (1995) identify important schools within feminism as including liberal feminism, early radical feminism, cultural radical feminism, socialist feminism, Marxist feminism, psychoanalytical feminism and postmodern feminism (Grant 1993:1; Evans 1995: 8). However only the most relevant and suitable aspects of these theories will be discussed as this research project prioritises certain strands of feminism over others. All of these schools of thought focus on two concepts that are central to feminism, namely, equality and difference, specifically in terms of equality and differences between men and women (Evans 1995:2). In this regard, feminism can be described as

> "[a] means that we seek for women to have the same opportunities and privileges

> that society gives to men, or that we assert the distinctive value of womanhood against patriarchal denigration" (Young 1990:85).

Most basically, the equality-difference argument concerns women's dissimilarity from, or similarity to men. The primary motivation within this argument though, is not about the need to find out what sex difference, beyond basic biology, there exists between men and women and how these are caused; rather, it is concerned with a "quest for equality between sexes, in terms of rights and opportunities, as well as more radically, in terms of conditions" (Evans 1995:3). Equality however, does not equate 'sameness' and furthermore does not mean that women can only be equal to men if they are the same as men (Evans 1995:3). 'Difference' is seen as equivalent to identity politics, which is a politics anchored securely in identification with, for example, blacks and lesbians (Evans 1995:6). This however, is not a concept all feminists are comfortable with as it tends to define feminists stereotypically for example, lesbian feminism or white feminism.

Liberal feminists believe in equality in the sense that a minimum, there should exist a form of equality of opportunity for both sexes, thus women need to have chances equal to that of men (Evans 1995:15). Therefore, they seek equality of opportunity with men in a hierarchical society like ours and this refers to equal opportunity in terms of occupation, career, education and income as well as in terms of equity and fairness of treatment, for example (Evans 1995:15). This is the standard way of looking at the issue, though radical feminism differs from this as it suggests that in order to gain an equality, men and women must possess the same amount, be treated identically and there should exist a form of allocation of goods according to need (Evans 1995:16). Radical feminism also seeks for the eradication of discrimination based on sex and race and is it is a characteristic of radicalism to address oppression within and as caused by the existing structure of sex (Evans 1995:16).

In Feminism, an unconditional focus is placed on analysing gender as a mechanism that structures material and symbolic worlds and our experiences of them (Van Zoonen 1994:4). The issue of gender is an important unit of analysis of this study and will be further explicated in the theoretical framework of queer theory. Along with gender, power is another key element of feminist thought (Van Zoonen 1994:4). This is because women are emphasised as a disadvantaged minority group that needs equal opportunity, rights and power in society. Also,

studying feminism entails a self-conscious determination to show that both the content and form of existing knowledge, is related to the unequal distribution of social power between men and women (Evans 1983:18). Thus, gender and power form the main constituents of feminist thought (Van Zoonen 1994:4). In understanding gender and power, gender is received as a "particular discourse that is a set of overlapping and often contradictory cultural descriptions and prescriptions referring to sexual difference that arises from and regulates particular economic, social, political, technological and other non-discursive contexts" (Van Zoonen 1994:33). Furthermore, a fundamental goal of feminist theory is to analyse gender relations (Kemp and Squires 1997:6). Thus the study of gender relations includes distinctive feminist issues, such as the position of women in society and the concept of male domination.

An essential feature of feminist theory is that feminism challenges male intellectual hegemony (Evans 1983:18). In asserting, describing and documenting the existence of woman, proposes a radical change in "the theoretical organization of the universe" (Evans 1983:18). This is because much of the social inequality and power differences between men and women, are reflected in the forms and contents of existing knowledge. There are many ways of defining and explaining feminism - and currently, it seems to be a term without any clear significance. Thus feminism is at times, misunderstood by many. For example, women from other exploited or oppressed groups dismiss feminism as they see it as supporting a radical racist movement, while other women wrongly consider feminism as synonymous with lesbianism (hooks 1984:24). Definitions of feminism are however, usually liberal in origin and focus on the individual woman's right to freedom and self-determination (hooks 1984:24). Such a definition is reflected in Barbara Berg's definition of feminism, where she expands on this notion that feminism is the freedom of a woman "to decide her own destiny; have freedom for sex-determined roles and to have freedom from society's oppressive restrictions" (hooks 1984:24). These liberal definitions of feminism evoke notions of personal freedom, seen as appealing to liberal feminists.

Radical feminists, however, asserts that as society of sexism and male domination will not stop existing if feminism focuses only on woman as autonomous human beings worthy of personal freedom, or focuses on an attainment of equal opportunity with men (hooks 1984:25). hooks asserts the notion that Feminism is a struggle to end sexist oppression (hooks 1984:25). Feminist theory is best characterized by some theorists as being critically analytic of the dynamics of

gender and sexuality (Kemp and Squires 1997:6). Thus, feminism is necessarily a struggle to eradicate the ideology of domination that permeates Western culture on various levels, as well as a commitment to reorganizing society so that self-development of people becomes more important than imperialism, economic expansion and material desires (hooks 1984:25). Radical feminist theory also gives rise to an idea within feminism, pivotal to this study, namely, sisterhood. The overarching idea of the creation of sisterhood and unification of women in general, is due to the patriarchal oppression that women as a group face (Evans 1995:65). Defining feminism as a movement to end sexual oppression and unite women in sisterhood is important for the development of theory as it provides a starting point for analysis and exploration. It also moves away from limiting radical thought of feminism as a radical political movement, but rather, challenges sexism and other forms of group oppression. Feminist theory may also be approached from other stand points.

The category of 'woman' has become a very contentious term in feminism and comes from the early radical feminist notion that women are oppressed, not because of class or race, but simply because of their womanhood (Grant 1993:20). Thus, women are oppressed by virtue of the fact that they are women and female. This notion not only helped in developing the concept of feminism, but it also necessitated the recognition of women as a collective, regardless of race, class, religion or politics. This idea has however been criticized as putting feminists on potentially essentialist terrain, overlooking female difference and simplifying the idea of the basis for the connection (Grant 1993:21). Radical feminism also suggests that women did not need to conform to stereotypes about them, such as passive or emotional and assert that these female traits are rational reactions to oppression (Grant 1993:21). A common trait woman stereotypically is that they are 'bitchy'. However, Grant (1993) argues that so-called bitches are in fact "women who had resisted traditional socialization and were persecuted for not being feminine" (Grant 1993:21). 'Bitches' and 'non-bitches' are explained as two alternative means of coping with male supremacy and compulsory gender roles (Grant 1993:22). Breaking stereotypes is an essential facet of feminism and of this study, which seeks to understand meaning in representation beyond superficial, stereotypical readings.

Psychoanalytical theory is theory born form psychoanalysis, which offers a universal theory of the "psychic construction of gender on the basis of repression" (Weedon 1992:42). Thus, this

theory provides a framework within which femininity can be understood with regards to the representation of women in the media. Psychoanalytical feminists criticize the psychoanalytical theories of Freud, as well as post-structuralist readings of Freud (Fourie 2002:297). Freudian theories, such a "penis envy", which is the notion that woman are inferior because they lack a penis, are rejected by these feminists, as they argue that this depicts an unflattering portrait of woman. (Fourie 2002:297). It may be deduced that it is rejected because women's positions, statuses as well as their lack of power in society has little to do with biology, and all to do with the female construction of femininity in society, primarily through ideas communicated by the media. Post-Structralist Freudian readings, such as the "phallus as a symbol of desire" are also considered redundant in this theory (Fourie 2002:297). The "phallus as a symbol of desire" is seen to be representative of social and cultural power in society, and is again based on conceptions and notions of masculinity perpetuated through the media, as physically possessing a "phallus", does not entitle men to power, in reality. These notions are necessary in Psychoanalytical Feminism, as they aid in analyzing the patriarchal and cultural meanings of media texts.

The main ideas if this theory come from psycho-analysist and philosopher Sigmund Freud, who initiated the idea that sexual desire is basic to human existence (Holloway, Byrne and Titlestad 2001:116). Thus a fundamental part of Psychoanalytical Feminism is the display of woman as "a spectacle to be looked at, subjected to the gaze of the male audience" (Van Zoonen 1994:87). The depiction of women as decorative elements and as objects of desire, such as in advertising, show woman as a spectacle for "voyeuristic pleasure" (Fourie 2002:297). This means that females are constructed in the media to suit the male gaze, and thus, are produced in a manner in which to provide erotic pleasure to the male. This is known as voyeurism. A study of the male gaze importantly adds to the study of female pop stars, who are traditionally positioned to appeal to the male gaze through sexualized and seductive performances. However, this study attempts to read beyond that and take note of whether Lady Gaga uses her appeal in the traditional sense or in a more symbolic way by subverting the traditional heterosexual male gaze in a way that plays to her advantage. Understanding the male gaze thus adds to the study of visual representations communicated by Lady Gaga.

The male gaze operates in the media by positioning the female figure as an erotic spectacle. Voyeurism renders a sense of control to the male over the female, as the female is perceived as a passive object (O' Sullivan 2003:85). This approach is carried to the extreme in pornography, where erotic pleasure is received, simply by looking, and this is its sole motivation or production. It is observed, in addition, that pleasure in looking, is subsequently split between "active/male/subject voyeur" and "passive/female/object/spectacle" (Fourie 2002:397). This construction does not promote woman's agency in society, but rather serves to reinforce dominant male ideologies. This tendency has overflowed in to all kinds of media for example, in advertising and in the "Back Page" of newspapers like the Sunday Times or "Page 3" of The Sun and goes against psychoanalytical feminist perspectives. This is because voyeurism seeks to fulfil the pleasures of male, through the use women. This leads to media audiences, male and female, to all be subjected to and controlled by the masculine gaze, and thus involved in psychoanalytical concepts of voyeurism and fetishism. Psychoanalytical Feminism, through its rejection of Freudian theory, clearly illustrates its objection of woman being subordinated and lessened to men. This is, however, done through perpetually depicting women as providing sexual or erotic pleasure to men in the media, as it constructs woman as passive, as serving male interests and thus limits woman's capacity to hold the same positions and status as men do in society. This is an important part of this theory, as the objectification of women's bodies in the media has been a consistent theme in analysing the representation of woman.

Post-modern feminism is an approach to feminist theory often linked to poststructuralist feminism and is also referred to as French Feminism (Fourie 2002:401). This form of feminism asserts that 'difference' is the most powerful tool that females possess in their struggle against patriarchal domination (Johnston 2004:224). Thus, the fact that woman are woman, is seen as an empowering tool in establishing females in society as being in the same positions as males. This movement however, is against equating males, and females and feminism. Post-modern feminists reject the traditional assumptions of truth, knowledge and power, as they believe that they are centred on an 'absolute' male style (Fourie 2002:401). Thus, this theory emphasizes that traditional assumptions such as truth, knowledge and power are informed and defined from the masculine or patriarchal perspective. This disregards a gender dimension where a transformation is possible. This arm of feminism sees gender as being a fundamental theory, consisting of

individuals and social relations and criticizes other theories for their lack in this notion (Fourie 2002:401).

An imperative of post-modern feminism is subjectivity, where post-modern feminists have challenged both the nature and privileged status of the focus reasoning in the West (Fourie 2002:401). Post-modern feminism is against the notion of Western thought as the primary human faculty, which is objective and provides 'true knowledge' (Fourie 2002:401). This theory thus acknowledges that Western thought, ideas and discourses are not impartial to subjectivity, and thus cannot be seen as providing universally valid ideas of truth and morality, as well as the politics, which follow from them. This perspective also argues that the abstract, individual reasoning of Western philosophy is implicitly male, and thus consist of messages and meanings that convey the patriarchal drive to organize and rationalize the way we see the world (Fourie 2002:401). Thus, woman's thoughts and ideas are marginalized, and they are subsequently positioned as less powerful and less equal to males. Furthermore, post-modern feminism is against Western ideas dominating of the world, in media and all other spheres, as the West is seen as being male-centric, and thus producing sometimes, unfavourable male-centred ideas and values, to the world.

Post-modern feminism lastly, departs from other theories of feminism, largely, in its argument that gender is constructed through language (Butler 1990:89). This comes from common sense views perpetuated by the West, that have tended to repeat assumptions of being human, for example that we are all unique, rational individuals, born with human potential, which, give the right environment, we can fulfil through education and personal development (Fourie 2002:402). It views women as entirely different from one another and it forcefully reminds us that we "are not reducible to the groups to which we belong" (Evan 1995:7). Thus, this focuses on experience as an authentic source of true knowledge, which is expressed in and through language. Language itself, thus acts as a tool for self-expression (Fourie 2002:402). Gender is thus not seen as inherent, but is socially constructed, may be chosen by individuals, and is constructed and chosen through experience.

Since the resurgence of feminism in the 1960s through the media, many theorists have worked to expose the gender specific nature of theatrical and performance representation of women in the media and the theatre (Dolan 1988:1). This concept applies directly to this study, where

discourses of feminist representation in performance are investigated. By denaturalizing the position of the ideal spectator of the dominant culture, allows the critic to point out all aspects of the production, from genre to texts, which reflect and perpetuate the ideal spectator's ideology (Dolan 1988:1). In terms of representation, it is these ideological assumptions that create the ideal spectator. Representation, in visual art, theatre, performance, film and dance, is created from specific ideological base meanings and as such, render specific, material consequences (Dolan 1988:2). Performances also tend to direct their address to a gender specific spectator in order to deliver a specific outcome and thus, performances employ culturally-determined gender codes that reinforce cultural conditioning (Dolan 1988:2). These representations generally and traditionally tend to represent both women performers and female spectators as passive, invisible and unspoken objects (Dolan 1988: 2).

Issues of representations in terms of gender, sexuality and representations of the female are important aspects in the media, as what is communicated, helps define general ideas of certain topics - ideas that may reinforce dominant ideology for the worse or transgress dominant ideology in order to present new, empowering ideas, for example. These representations in performance are possible within the media. Studying the sexual, gender and female representation of Lady Gaga and her performances, provides a way of tapping into the sphere of a particular female pop star and engaging with her ideas and meanings that are perpetuated through her work.

Queer theory is important in understanding gender and sexual identity, and thus plays an important role in this study, where the units of analysis prioritised are gender, sexuality and feminist identity. Queer theory provides a new type of engagement with these topics and allows for a departure in terms of how these are typically viewed. It is unique approach to sexuality and identity, built form the ideas of Foucault and more recently put forward by Judith Butler in her book entitled "Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity" (1990). Although Butler owes much to Foucault and earlier theorists, she is considered as the creator of modern Queer theory (Gauntlett 2002:135). Queer theory will now be explicated and mapped out.

The concept of identity is essential to Queer theory. Identity is marked by similarity and thus, by people like us, as well as by difference - those who are not like us (Woodward 2000:7). Identity can also be described as the total conception of who we are and include the social and cultural

beliefs that make up the individuals conception of self (Yorburg 1974:1). Within Queer theory, identities are viewed as fluid, changing and thus nothing within your identity is considered as fixed (Gauntlet 2002:135). Identity is also understood, within Queer theory, as social and cultural aspects and features that have been previously expressed by the self, which then adds to ones identity (Gauntlet 2002:135). Sexual identity is described as "the image of the self as a male or female and convictions about what membership in that group implies" (Yorburg 1974:1). Sexual identity is the individuals basic sex typed self-image. Ideas of one's sexual identity are traditionally brought up from infancy and include beliefs of how one ought to think and behave, based on ones gender. Thus, gender roles and expectations are inscribed in ones identity, based on the sex of the individual, traditionally. It also inscribes learned ideals of masculine and feminine behaviours as well as proper authority relationships between sexes (Yorburg 1974:1). Queer theory, however alters these concrete and traditional ideas.

As previously mentioned, the main concepts of Queer theory are specific in its views of sexuality and identity. Gender, as an aspect of identity, is also imperative in queer theory in understanding sexuality and identity. Marking identity as fluid indicates that people can choose their sexual and gender identities too. In understanding sex, sexuality and gender more clearly, Butler (1990) asserts the notion of a 'heterosexual matrix', which explicates very important concepts within queer theory. Firstly, sex is seen as a binary biological given meaning that you are born biologically either as a male of a female (Gauntlett 2002:137). 'Gender' is viewed as a cultural component, which is socialised into a person on the basis of ones sex (Gauntlett 2002:137). Thus, traditionally, gender is based on sex. This conception views your sex as fixed, and that sex guides your gender, which is also culturally produced, and this furthermore determines the basis of your sexuality or desire toward the opposite sex (Gauntlett 2002:137). Butler's argument in queer theory, replaces this traditional ways of thinking, with an alternative way of viewing sex, gender and sexuality. Thus, sex determines gender, and gender determines sexuality, with these processes not being fixed on biological definitions. Thus, your body does not determine gender or identity, and accordingly, does not help predict ones sexual desires. Gender and sexual desires are therefore constructed by the individual and not by nature.

In increasing the scope of these ideas, Butler also views gender as a performance (Gauntlett 2002:139). Gender is seen as an attribute that is installed by culture and is fixed in a person's identity and can thus shift and change in different contexts and at different times (Gauntlett

2002:139). This makes gender a performance, and nothing more, as there is no fixed gender identity behind expressions of gender, but rather identity is constituted by the very expressions said to be its results (Gauntlett 2002:139). Thus we do not have gender identities that inform our behaviours, but rather, behaviour is all that our gender is (Gauntlett 2002:139).

In thinking about sex and gender traditionally, we are found to be constrained by existing and dominant discourse, for example, most humanist views of a person see gender as an attribute that is installed by culture and is fixed (Gauntlett 2002:139). Queer theory however rejects this notion and reinforces the idea that gender should be seen as a "fluid variable that can shift and change in different contexts and at different times" (Butler 1990:10). From this, gender can be understood as a 'performance', in that "there is no gender identity behind the expressions of gender...identity is performatively constituted by the very 'expressions' that are said to be its results" (Butler 1990:25). This means that people do not have a gender identity that informs behaviour, rather, behaviour informs gender. This is expressed through the use of gender being 'what you do' rather than 'who you are', thus rather a cultural construction than an inescapable given (Gauntlett 2002:139). Gender is a performance by individuals and within this performance, gender is expressed and communicated. This is a fundamental principle of Queer theory. There is also no 'real' or 'authentic' male or female performance, but rather, there are identity patterns that we have become familiar with through repetition (Gauntlett 2002:140). The mass media in particular are responsible for circulating certain kind of female and male gender performances as preferable, and also make certain gendered behaviours seem more 'natural' than they are constructed (Gauntlett 2002:140).

Gender, as a performance goes on to suggest that gender identities can be performed and expressed in any way and turned into anything in everyday life. This implies that we do not have to wait for some kind of feminist, social or liberal revolution to occur in society to express gender - gender roles are transformed by virtue of the freedom to express them through performativity. Butler (1990) sees normative ideas of sexuality as constructed within the relations of power that exist as limiting and as a place where ideas of sexuality that go beyond or outside the power relations, cannot exist (Butler 1990:30). Rethinking subversive possibilities for sexuality and identity is possible if you consider gender as a performance. Additionally, this gives rise to the possibility of subversive expressions of sexuality, identity and gender within existing power relations (Butler 1990:30). Thus, gender and sexuality can be reinvented in the

here and now, and identity expression is therefore limited to power relations and dominant or normative ideas.

This is apparent, not only in everyday life but in many expressions in pop and popular culture, such as TV shows, movies, music videos and magazines. Mass media TV shows such as *Will and Grace* and *Ugly Betty* have constructed specific characters in these shows that express gender and sexuality identities as going against normative ideas. Homosexual relationships are celebrated and provide insight on how these relationship works. Representations of males with very feminine attributes and a male changing his sex and gender to that of a female, for example, are displayed and promoted in ways that don't 'other' them, but rather shows them as individuals that we can all relate to - irrespective of their gender or sexual identities. Within pop music and pop music videos, these subversive gender and sexuality representations have been scarce throughout history, even though expressed by popular and mainstream artists such as Grace Jones, Freddy Mercury, David Bowie and more recently, Madonna. Madonna in particular seemed to be a living embodiment of Butler's manifesto, particularly through her representation in her music videos. *The Sex Book* (1992), the music videos for *Express Yourself* (1989), *Justify My Love* (1990) and *Erotica* (1992) and the entire *Erotica* album all worked to blur the lines and create confusion of genders, fluidity of sexuality, transgression of masculine and feminine stereotypes (Gauntlett 2002:143). Lady Gaga can be considered as having revived these subversive identity ideas within the arena of pop and music videos - with the meanings behind this being explored in this study.

Gender and sexuality identity as subversion can most commonly be expressed through parody of existing gender forms, for example, through the drag performer that parodies the stereotypical routine of the opposite gender. Butler views parodies as potentially disruptive as parodies 'performs gender' and challenge norms within this performance (Evans 1995:134). The text of drag performances, also make it an 'art of liberation', from the gender trap of expectation and roles (Evans 1995:134). However, parodies and drag shows are usually a construction based in humour and entertainment and may not be challenging enough to normative and traditional ideas. Butler's conception of subversion through identity and of undermining traditional understanding of gender however goes beyond this. Butler welcomes alternative performances of identity. She states:

> "This text continues, then, as an effort to think through the possibility of subverting and displacing those naturalized and reified notions of gender that support masculine hegemony and heterosexist power, to make *gender trouble*, not trough the strategies that figure a utopian beyond, but through the mobilization , subversive confusion, and proliferation of precisely those constitutive categories that seek to keep gender in its place by posturing as the foundational illusions of identity"
> (Butler 1990:33-34).

This statement is very powerful and contains in it what can be considered as the crux of Queer theory, namely, gender trouble. Butler is strongly suggesting that gender trouble be caused in our everyday life through specific expressions of gender. These seek to challenge naturalized and traditional ideas of gender, such as male domination and patriarchy, and sexuality in terms of heterosexuality being regarded as the norm. Butler further proposes that if society were to witness unpredictable, seemingly 'random' performances of identity which challenge our expectations about gender, the ideas of 'subversive confusion' will exist (Gauntlett 2002:141). Through this, our taken-for-granted and assumed gender categories will be shaken and challenged and may eventually dismantle all together (Gauntlett 2002:141). Gender trouble is thus caused by a performance of gender, something that Butler does not see as a choice. This is because Butler sees identity as performance already and thus identity is always being performed (Gauntlett 2002:141). Through repetition within identity performance, a "radical proliferation" of gender is developed and can displace the very gender norms that enable the repetition (Butler 1990:148).

Therefore, by giving a different form to our daily performances of identity, we can work towards changing gender norms and sexuality norms in terms of the binary understanding of masculinity and femininity (Gauntlett 2002:141). Everyday life then becomes a 'political project', by which everyone can transform the way we view aspects of identity, by causing gender trouble. Butler envisions this through everyday life with your average man on the street. However, in turning our attention back to the mass media, where repetition of gender roles and expectations have been perpetuated into norms, it is important to consider the gender trouble being caused through the mass media.

The mass media play a key role in disseminating messages more than any average individual ever could (Gauntlett 2002:143). These representations through the mass media, and particularly pop culture, are more powerful and impactful as they reach a larger audience, though they may be seen as less authentic and serious than that of everyday life. Madonna in her subversive representation of sex and gender as previously mentioned, communicated these ideas through a global media canvas as all pop stars do, and this is on a very different level to everyday interactions (Gauntlett 2002:143). In spreading a variety of non-traditional images and ideas about how people can appear and act, the mass media can serve a valuable role in shattering the unhelpful moulds of 'male' and 'female' roles (Gauntlett 2002:151). These gender expectations apply constrains on people's ability to be expressive in their identity, and if this idea is supported in the mass media, it could call for radical change. These proposed gender challenges would gain much strength if a lead was taken by a popular media figure (Gauntlett 2002:143). In this study, Lady Gaga is hypothesised as being this popular media figure currently that subverts and engages in challenging gender and sex norms. Lady Gaga in her capacity of causing gender trouble, through her visual representation of identities, is investigated in this study in terms of being symbolic and as being a 'pop culture political project', as well as of perhaps using this to attract attention to her.

3.4) Conclusion

This chapter attempts to map out and explain the core, fundamental theories on which analysis many be shaped. The most relevant and specific theories were explicated and add to understanding of this study in a more complete way. It begins with an in-depth discussion of representation in the media, what it means in terms of hegemony and ideology and also explicates the representation theory most important to this study, namely semiotics and myth. What follows is a discussion of feminist theory, where the most relevant theory and its aspects are discussed. Queer theory rounds off the theoretical discussion and highlights issues of gender and sexual representation. A discussion of these specific theories speaks to a way in which resistant and subversive representations of gender, sexuality and feminist identity significations may be explained and understood in this study. It provides the premises on which analysis is carried out, and therefore is a firm and imperative chapter in this study.

Chapter 4:

Methodology

4.1) Introduction

This section explicates, in detail, the research methodology of this project that has been specifically designed in order to address this study's the aims and research questions. Semiotic analysis is the singular research technique that will be employed to analyse linguistic and visual texts of Lady Gaga's songs, music and music videos as well as to render results of their representations of gender, sexuality and feminist identity/s. This chapter explains how the data, namely Lady Gaga music videos and songs, was gathered for analysis and also describes why the songs and music videos selected for analysis in this study were chosen. Semiotics is the primary technique of analysis and the procedures of analysing these texts using semiotics are also presented and discussed thoroughly. The fundamental aims of this chapter are to provide an explanation of how findings and results are developed, through the application of a semiotic analysis on texts. This chapter thus acts as a guide to understanding how texts are analysed in this study.

4.2) Data Gathering and Selection

The prioritised data to be analysed in this research project, are Lady Gaga's songs and music videos. This is because they may be considered as her primary output of work and she essentially produces this as her main work as pop artist. The data to be analysed is thus focused on her music, the sonic features in her songs, the lyrics of her songs, the visual texts and images in her music videos and the performances portrayed in her music videos.

The songs and music video selected as the sites of analysis, are however specifically chosen and do not encompass all songs on Lady Gaga's two albums. The songs and music videos selected for analysis are those that have been released to the general public as singles, and thus have accompanying music videos. This is because these are the main carriers of her most accessible meanings as they reach a larger audience who are able to consume these songs and music videos,

even if they do not own Lady Gaga albums. Thus the messages and ideologies contained in these specific singles and their music videos, reach a large, undifferentiated audience, and communicate messages to this mass audience. Furthermore, the other songs on the albums that have not been released as singles are less likely to be heard by a mass audience, and their messages are thus less likely to reach or have an effect on this audience. Those who have bought the album/s are able to receive the messages of those songs, and by virtue of them buying the album/s, it can be assumed that the buyers are Lady Gaga fans. This study is not specific as to who the songs affects most or least, but is rather focused on the songs that exist in public sphere for all to consume, as well as the songs that may be considered as fully expressed due to their corresponding music videos which may reinforce the single.

The specific released singles and their music videos that are to be analysed are from Lady Gaga's debut album, *The Fame* and off her second album *The Fame Monster*. The singles and their corresponding music videos to be analysed are *Love Game* and *Paparazzi* off *The Fame* album as well as *Bad Romance* from her second album, *The Fame Monster* (Lady Gaga Official site 2010:1). These singles and music videos were selected due to their controversial subject matters, such as highly stylised mass murder scenes, gender-blending and prostitution, that are visually expressed in the music videos as well in the meaning behind the songs. They also represent and speak to issues of gender, sexual and feminist identities, more than her other videos, and thus carry meanings most specific to this study.

These songs are accessed from the albums *The Fame* released on August 19th, 2008 and *The Fame Monster*, released on November 23rd, 2009 (Lady Gaga Official site 2010:1). The lyrics of the songs are included in the album booklets as well as on Lady Gaga's official website and are accessed from there for analysis. The songs are analysed off the actual album, despite regular airplay on radio stations and access to these songs on the Internet, as the albums serve as the original point of access to these songs. Thus the albums provide the original songs, which are a main focus for analysis in this study. Access of the original albums is also easy, reliable and unchangeable and thus serves as a useful way of gathering the data.

The music videos are accessed for analysis off the internet. All of Lady Gaga's officially released videos are accessed for her Official Channel on video website, YouTube. This page or

channel is controlled by Lady Gaga's record company, and is thus lawful, genuine and up to date. It serves to provide Lady Gaga fans with easy access to her music videos online. This form of access has been chosen, as it is reliable and easily available, compared to her videos that are randomly and unpredictably played on television. Her videos may thus be viewed online and may be easily accessed by fans in their own time, more than they could access them on TV.

4.3) Techniques of Analysis:

The technique of analysis in this study is focused on a singular method approach. The technique of analysis that this study is focused on is semiotic analysis. Semiotics was previously discussed as a part of the theoretical constructs of this study, under the theory of representation. Here, it is approached specifically in a more practical manner, in order to illustrate its uses in analysis. Semiotics is the study of the science of signs, as postulated by Swiss linguist Ferdinand De Saussure (Culler 1976:19). The underlying premise of this approach is that all cultural objects convey meaning and are focused on the meaning that signs convey (Hall 1997:36). Thus a semiotic textual analysis attempts to assess how realistically a text represents the world through codes (Bernard and Hughes 2005:185). Texts are however, are not manifest representations of society, but rather through cultural and symbolic codes, reflect the structure of value and relationships behind surface meanings. Non-verbal cues also function as signs within language, as they serve to express and communicate ideas, and are thus part of a system of convention (Hall: 1997: 31). The music of Lady Gaga communicated in the media is made up of linguistic sign systems as well as non-verbal sign systems all of which carry meaning. This research project studies both, as the texts produced by Lady Gaga are represented by linguistic text, through the lyrics and words used in the music videos as well as by non verbal texts, such as images, sounds, movement, performance, dress and gesture- both of which carry meaning.

Saussure analysed the sign as a carrier of meaning, into two important elements. He argued that there was the 'form', which is the actual word or image, and there is the idea or concept in your head with which the form is associated (Hall 1997:31). Thus the sign does not link a thing and a name, but links a material element and an abstract concept (Saussure 1990:66). Saussure called the first element or the form, the 'signifier' and the second element or idea, the' signified', the combination of which forms the 'sign' (Hall 1997:31). Thus, the 'sign' designates the whole,

replaces the signifier and signified, and cannot be separated (Berger 2005:8). The signifier and the signified are both required in producing meaning, but it is the relation between them, fixed by cultural and linguistic codes, which sustains representation (Hall 1997:31). Also, meaning created does not depend on the material quality of its sign, but depends rather on the symbolic function of the sign (Hall 1997:26). This is because a particular sound or word, namely the signifier, stands for, represents and symbolizes a concept, namely the signified, and because of this, the sign can function in language by conveying meaning or 'signifying' (Hall 1997:26).

Songs and music videos will be analysed using semiotics in order to understand their messages. Semiotics will be applied to texts - specific features in texts, verbal and non-verbal, will be separated into 'signifiers' and 'signifieds', and within the context of pop and a patriarchal music context, meaning from texts analysed will be developed and produce signs. This technique has been chosen because it pays attention to all linguistic and visual texts in the chosen data, and is thus able to yield results that attend to the aims of this research project, i.e., to understand the meanings communicated through Lady Gaga's music. These meanings are easily represented through images, and because of this, semiotic analysis is easy to carry out. Semiotic analysis is also of advantage to this study due to its ability to carry out analysis on linguistic as well as visual texts (Bertrand and Hughes 2005:187). It is also useful in that it is able to focus on the deeper meanings of the message as well as oppositional relations of meaning.

4.4) Procedures of Analysis:

Through the use of a semiotic analysis of texts, the procedure of analysis too needs to be designed in order to yield results that answer the research questions of this project. In order to understand the meanings communicated through Lady Gaga's work and what they represent, analysis needs to be carried out with the specific intention of looking at themes of gender, sexual and feminist representations within the music and music videos, in order to render appropriate results. The meanings and representations within songs and music videos, such as in the case of Lady Gaga, do not always correspond and reinforce each other, although they individually both carry their own strong meanings and representations. As such, meanings and representations behind the song, in terms of lyrics and musical composition and that communicated in music videos, are not necessarily dependent on each other to express their meanings. Therefore the

songs as music pieces and the music videos as the visual representation of the songs are both important in looking at the gender, sexual and feminist identities presented by Lady Gaga. Accordingly, the songs and music videos as well as their consequent relationship with each other will be analysed thoroughly.

4.4.1) Lyric analyses

The music and songs analysed are to be analysed as whole texts, focusing on the narratives and denotative meaning as well as the discourses and connotative meanings established through analysis. The songs are analysed using semiotics and analysis is focused on the music and the lyrics of each song. Firstly, the lyrics will undergo a semiotic analysis, with techniques of semiotic analysis, namely breaking up a message or word into a signifier, signified and the collective of the two and the meaning produced, the sign, being applied. This is applied to each line within each of the songs and then individually to specific words within the line. The lyrical compositions of the songs are analysed focusing on the linguistic features of songs. Thus analysis focuses on the actual and specific words chosen to communicate meaning, within each song line. Thus, each line and the words within the lines of the lyrics suffice as the 'signifiers'. The 'signifieds' indicate a more denotative, descriptive and literal meaning, which adds to understanding the narrative of the song. The signs are established by considering the codes and context within the analysis, which is in the realm of pop music and pop culture as well as in terms of the music produced by a young, female, bisexual pop artist. The signs further reveal the prominent discourses communicated in the songs that are connotative and not as obvious. The meanings produced from the signs are then to be discussed specifically in terms of how they represent gender, sexual and feminist identities, which is the focus of this study.

4.4.2) Musical analysis

In analysing the musical and sound content within each song, semiotic analysis is applied here too. Importantly and as discussed, semiotic analysis does not only apply to language, but to visual and non verbal cues too. Semiotics allows us to move away from a very narrow linguistic level, to a wider, cultural level in which many cultural objects and practises may be analysed (Hall 1997:36). This includes analysing music, within the codes of pop music here. In analysing

the musical features of the song, the music and vocal features that carry meaning will be considered and prioritised. Within this, they will be analysed according to specific features identified by the researcher as carrying meaning and adding to this study. These specific features serve as the 'signifiers', while the 'signifieds' are considered as the practical and literal sounds communicated within these features. The sign is the collective of the two and indicates the meaning behind the different features being analysed, fundamentally, within the genre of pop music. In analysing the musical features, the focus is on the sound of the music. The features to be analysed within the musical composition, in order to add to understanding of the songs meaning are focused on:

- The beat;
- Rhythm and tempo;
- Tone of music; and
- Instruments or exterior sounds/ background effects.

These indicate the type of song it is and add to the relationship with the lyrics as well as to the communicated meanings of the song as a whole. These different elements serve to translate the sounds and effects within the song into meaning that enhances the understanding of the song.

Secondly, the voice features within the song are analysed. This is focused on the sound of the vocals and the type of singing in communicating narrative and meaning. The specific features analysed are:

- The voice movements throughout the song, meaning the different ways of singing and sound of the voice communicated in different parts of the song, for example, the verses, the chorus and the bridge;
- The literal sound of the voice,
- The tone of the singing voice; and the
- Background vocals/voices.

These decode the meanings, emotions and representations communicated through the strong expression of singing and the human voice. These combined features all add to the meaning the song communicates and act as cues for analysis. Investigating the meanings of music and song combined, by means of a semiotic analysis, allows one to understand what the songs represent and how they carry this representation out.

4.4.3) Visual text analysis

Analysing the visual texts in the music videos is also focused on specific features within the videos, in order to understand the meaning communicated in these music videos. The music videos are analysed using semiotic analysis focused on the video and the video's narrative as a whole, and also on specific features within the music video that relate and speak to themes of gender, sexual and feminist identities. These specific features within the visual texts to be semiotically analysed, are focused on the aesthetic expressions and physical representations in the videos. These important elements communicating specific meanings are applied to Lady Gaga, as an essential site of analysis within the video, but are also applied to the other actors/back up dancers/extras that make up the music video. These features also attempt to investigate issues of sexuality, gender and feminist identity.

Carrying out a semiotic analysis on visual texts is different to that of word or linguistics, and requires the analysis to be carried out on the actual visual texts, as the main point of analysis. As such, the semiotic analysis is carried out by identifying certain perimeters or factors to be analysed, that will lead to the results needed for this research. These refer to the signifiers within the text of the music video. The 'signifier' is the word or image and corresponds to a 'signified', the associated concept, the union of which, presents the 'sign' or the meanings carried in the video. Here, the signifiers are made up of the results of certain factors of analysis, identified by the researcher as carrying meaning relating to the aims and research questions of this study. The signifiers are thus established by certain perimeters and factors set up in analysis of the text. These are referred to as the units of analysis and are from the main constituents of the music video. Importantly, they are made up of the following:

- The narrative of the video;
- The physical setting of the music video;
- The props used in the music video;
- The physical and aesthetic appearance of Lady Gaga, her back up dancers and other major actors in terms of clothing, body, hair and make up;
- The relations between Lady Gaga and others in the music video,
- Specific performance scenes or behaviours performed in the music video,
- Specific gestures made to the camera; and

- Intertextual references made.

These units of analysis refer serve as the signifiers. The signified are the associated concepts from the signifiers that are established from the units of analysis, within the context, code and genre of pop music and pop culture and their expectations, tendencies and features. From these the signs and meanings, specifically related to sexuality, gender and feminist identity are established. Thus, the signs established, make up and present the results and findings of this research project.

These features may seem extensive, but they are specific in that their use will render explanations, meanings and ideologies communicated in then of the music video. This is because music videos are complex and layered and offer many opportunities for analysis that are overlooked due to the entertainment value of the music and performance of the artist within the video. They however, carry deeper meanings, as all the videos features and choice are intentional, and are also symbolically representative of the messages/s the video is trying to communicate. Music videos are representative of meaning and Lady Gaga inserts her own ideas and viewpoints into her music videos, through the use of these features. These features add to the narrative and understanding/s of the video as a whole, but may also be representative of other implicit ideas and meanings that are just carried by the music video, and that are not necessarily representative or corresponding to the of the song's ideas.

4.5) Conclusion

The above discussions seek to explain how data was gathered and selected, as well as how texts were analysed and engaged with by the researcher, in order to produce results that answer this study's main research questions. This chapter is pivotal in understanding the results and finding produced in this study. This research design has encountered the ways in which analysis of songs and music videos are to be carried out and this description importantly provides a framework for analysis. It is thus appropriate, logical and valid in this research project, and as such, its application is expected to produce reliable and suitable results.

Chapter 5:

The Songs and Music Videos: Describing the Narrative

5.1) Introduction

This chapter serves to present a description of the Lady Gaga songs and music videos selected for analysis in this video. It attempts to familiarise readers with the specific work to be analysed and offers a basis and starting point for understanding the analysis and findings. This section discusses the main narratives and storylines within the songs and of the music videos for *LoveGame, Paparazzi* and *Bad Romance*. The song lyrics form the narrative meaning of songs and the song lyric of the above mentioned songs are includes in Appendix 1, to show where the narrative meanings come from and provide a complete context for the reader to understand the song. The music videos of the selected songs are available on YouTube, and Appendix 2 contains the URL links from which to access them, in the same way that the researcher has done. Accessing and watching these music videos allows the reader to be familiarised with the main texts that are analysed and also allows the reader to better understand analysis. In an initial discussion of the analysis of lyrics and visual texts, it is important to point out the narrative and surface level meaning and understandings of the song and video content, as these meanings may be considered as a general understanding of the song, without a deeper and more specific analysis. The narrative of the songs and music videos are established partly by considering the 'signifieds' as well as the signifiers themselves, which are the words of the song and the performances in music videos. In so doing, the videos are described and explained on a surface level and this provides readers with a background to the happenings within the songs and music videos, as read and interpreted by the researcher.

5.2) *LoveGame* by Lady Gaga

5.2.1) Playing games of love and sex, in the song *LoveGame*

The narrative of the song *LoveGame* focuses on themes of love, fun, romance and desire. This is reflective of pop tradition, pop culture and pop music act as a means of expression in that meets the instinctive bodily and sexual desires, needs and pleasures of human beings in a practised and customized way - in this way, through music (Danesi 2009:17). In the song, Lady Gaga communicates her sentiments and desire to play a 'love game' or a game of love. Love, usually a not thought of as a game, has more serious and emotional implications. Thus pop songs with the theme of love as their focus, usually celebrate love, express a longing for love or describe the feelings involved when a love story ends. These songs are typically simple and straight forward in their meanings, as they are based in plainly expressing emotions. In playing a *LoveGame* as Lady Gaga proposes, is something not too easily and practically understood, because of the contradictory nature of the words, 'love' and 'game'. A game is an activity carried out with the purpose of having fun and is innocent and enjoyable. Playing a love game indicates a concept that is new and may have many connotations. On the narrative level of the song, a love game, through out the song, tell a story of the sexual desire and lust Lady Gaga has for another person. Pop music is characteristically rooted in romance and *LoveGame* is a strong example of this, due to its narrative (Chambers 1985:207). She sees this desire as encompassing strong feelings and emotions that are based on love, but also sees the proposed encounter as entertainment, amusement and as a temporary satisfaction. This is in essence the nature of the relationship she wants with the person she desires.

Another prominent narrative in the song is that these sexual relations between Lady Gaga and her proposed lover, is not serious and significant, but is rather fun and enjoyable. The lyrical content of the song expresses a desire to have fun and dance, in the lyrics, "Lets have some/This beat is sick" as well as in the title and chorus of the song, namely, *LoveGame*, as described above (Lady Gaga Official website 2010:1). The song also emphasises dancing and a night out in the club, looking for a lover to play a 'love game' with. Also emphasised is the idea that this 'fling' is temporary, with the purpose of satisfying desires for the moment. Thus, there are no real and strong feelings of love and affection involved. This is explicitly expressed throughout the narrative of the song and thus, speaks to a night out in a club, where male and females tend to actively engage in looking to meet new people and possibly spend the night together, expressing their sexual and lustful desires. Through this reading, it can be concluded that *LoveGame* speaks to performance of "kitsch and vulgar spectacles" (Danesi 2009:16).The fun, light-heartedness

and party aspects of the song are another characteristic trait of pop music, where listening to and consuming the song is an enjoyable and excitable process for listeners, because of the narrative communicated.

5.2.2) Searching for satisfaction in secret places in the *LoveGame* music video

Lady Gaga's music video for *LoveGame* is a performance video, focused primarily upon the dance and choreography scenes that are performed by Lady Gaga and her male back-up dancers. The secondary performance scenes in this video are shorter and briefer, and feature Lady Gaga as performing sexual acts with others. It is a video focused on dance scenes and performance scenes, of Lady Gaga. In focusing on dance routines as the main performance by Lady Gaga in this video, indicates that the main narrative of this video is based on fun, celebration and expressions of the physical body. The narrative also communicates ideas of sex, sexuality and sexual expressions, through the dancers as well as through the secondary performance scenes - also primarily expressed through their bodies and movements.

Essentially, the music video narrative of *LoveGame* is about Lady Gaga and her dancers meeting in a secret and private basement underground in New York City, where they party by dancing and drinking, until the cops find and arrest them. Even after the arrests, they still dance and get away from the cops, and between these scenes Lady Gaga is shown kissing and being sexual with a male cop, and a female cop, albeit, not simultaneously. This sexual persuasion and pleasure from Lady Gaga to the police, may be the reason as to why her dancers/friends and herself did not get arrested for partying and trespassing in the New York City subway underground station. Within these performances and this video and apart from the narrative, many other meanings and signs are created and established.

5.3) *Paparazzi* by Lady Gaga

5.3.1) Desperately seeking love and attention, in the song *Paparazzi*

The title of the song, namely 'Paparazzi', is strongly indicative to a relationship of a specific nature that is also described by the song. 'Paparazzi' is a term of Italian origin that refers to

photographers or photojournalists, who specialize in candid photography of famous celebrities or prominent people, such as singers, actors, politicians and sports stars. This is the profession of these paparazzi photographers, with the pictures they take, ending up in tabloid and gossip magazines, publications, websites and blogs. What make paparazzi photographers stand out from other photographers, is their aggressive, insistent and forceful nature in photographing celebrities and prominent people, that often times leaves these famous people as less than obliging to have their pictures taken. The paparazzi can thus be described as the 'chaser' or 'pursuer' while the celebrity being photographed is the passive participant, often times wanting to escape the paparazzi, even though the paparazzi offers the celebrity publicity and promotion through the photos taken. This song tells two prominent stories through the lyrics in which the 'paparazzi' and metaphors from this notion are represented in different ways.

The first narrative works through a metaphor and communicates a story of Lady Gaga's love for another person as well as a desire to have that love returned to her. Secondly and more directly, the song also tells a story of Lady Gaga's love for fame and desire to be made famous. These narratives are expressed throughout the song where lines of the first verse communicate a desire for love and the next lines of the same verse then express a desire of fame. This pattern is carried throughout the song and tells two different stories of what is loved and desired by Lady Gaga in this song. The narrative thus prominently represents Lady Gaga's desire for both love and fame.

Paparazzi is partly themed by a strong metaphor which describes Lady Gaga's love and desire for the person she sings to, as being compared to a paparazzi photographer chasing after a celebrity, star or famous person to attain a photograph. This metaphor is carried throughout parts of the song, with literal descriptions of Lady Gaga assuming the role of the paparazzi photographer or the 'chaser' that is after a prized and invaluable photo of the 'star'. The result of this chase for Lady Gaga, within this metaphor, is not a photograph, but rather for the person she sings to, to love and desire her back. The photo or picture thus represents the goal that Lady Gaga hopes to achieve which is a relationship or encounter with the person she desires, in which her feelings are returned, in the same way that a photograph of a celebrity is the goal of the paparazzi. If achieved, her 'photograph' serves as proof of the relationship or reciprocated love and also as a way for her to indulge, enjoy and remember the encounter as her reaching her goal.

As such, a part of the story of the song carries strong sentiments of the chase of a paparazzi photographer after a celebrity or star. However there is more to the narrative of the song than simply that. This is because Lady Gaga is already an established superstar and consequent celebrity, which implies that in her life, she is most probably stalked by the paparazzi for pictures. From this understanding of Lady Gaga as well as in assuming that she knows how it feels and what it is like to be pursued by the paparazzi, it is clear to see that within the lyrics of the song, there is a role reversal, with Lady Gaga being the pursuing paparazzi photographer who is after someone else for a picture, instead of the paparazzi being after her. This represents Lady Gaga as the chaser and pursuer of another's love. The boy she loves and desires within this song is also described as a 'rock star' at a 'show', depicting that he is a famous musician and not just an ordinary boy. Thus, Lady Gaga as the 'paparazzi' is in fact pursuing a 'star', who is also the one she loves. She uses her understanding of a paparazzi photographer's desire and need to photograph a celebrity, to describe and explain her feelings for someone she loves who is a celebrity, as being the same as this. This metaphor thus strongly suggests a comparison between Lady Gaga and a paparazzi photographer that is not literal.

The second narrative communicated in *Paparazzi* tells the story of Lady Gaga's desire for fame and a celebrity status. This narrative is more directly and straightforwardly communicated in the lyrics of the song. This narrative plainly expresses Lady Gaga's desire to be stalked and photographed by the paparazzi. It expresses her love for the paparazzi of the fame they can give to her by photographing and popularizing her. She desires the paparazzi to "fabricate and exaggerate expectations of her human greatness" and views the Paparazzi as active and powerful (Turner 2004:5). Thus her love for the paparazzi can be better described as her love for fame and to be famous. 'Celebrity' is label that works to differentiate layers of the bourgeoisie and with Lady Gaga longing to be turned into a celebrity by the Paparazzi, further establishes her desire to be made into a star and to be different from others, by virtue of being famous (Marshall 1997:6). The lyrics in certain parts of this song, for example, in the first verse of the chorus, act as an ode or love song to the paparazzi, expressing her love for them and her longing for fame. It is her strong desire to be wanted, photographed and stalked by them, so that she can attain a high profile and celebrity status and thus her goals of fame. She sings directly to the paparazzi and within that plainly expresses her determination and desperation in achieving her aspirations of fame, through them and with their help.

Additionally, her love for the paparazzi is described through this song as the same enthusiastic, passionate, supporting and devoted love that a fan has for a celebrity or artist that they admire. She intensely projects positive feelings onto the paparazzi as the celebrity, seeking reciprocal emotional dependence, as fans project onto celebrities (Rojek 2001:51). The fans within the realm of pop are contextualised as being fanatical and extreme in their love of pop artists. In this song, Lady Gaga describes her love to the paparazzi in the same way and in the same context. Here too, roles are reversed, with Lady Gaga as the star, now taking the stand point of a fan. The paparazzi are turned in to the 'star' with the real star playing the role of the paparazzo's fan. As a 'fan' of the 'paparazzi', Lady Gaga sings about her love for the paparazzi and her determination in not giving up until they love her back. From this, the relationship between Lady Gaga and who she sings to, which is both the paparazzi and the boy she loves, is established as a relationship in which Lady Gaga's love for both is unrequited. Because of this, she sings to them in trying to persuade them both to love her back, because as it stands, neither of them love her back. This single, *Paparazzi,* was the third single to be released off Lady Gaga's debut album and at this point in her career she had not yet reached the stardom and celebrity status that she has now acquired. Thus, a new, young, pop star singing to for the love and attention of the Paparazzi was not a strange and inauthentic gesture for Lady Gaga at the time, and was rather understandable and acceptable. It also a pop love song that is unorthodox because of its unashamed expression and desire for both fame and love, as opposed to just love - typical of love songs in the pop genre.

This song can therefore be described as a love song, in which Lady Gaga expressed her strong and undying love, desire and close obsession for another and for the paparazzi. This song and both its narratives, also expresses a superficial and desperate love for both, specifically within the context of a fantasy, celebrity world. Thus within this song, she draws strong comparisons and parallels between her desires for fame and love, within the world of a celebrity's and within a celebrity context. This celebrity context is established by Lady Gaga's pursuit of the paparazzi and the rock star/boy. Within this song, Lady Gaga's own celebrity status is slightly diminished, with her positioning herself as a fan and a paparazzo. However the fact that she sings and performs this song, also adds another dimension of celebrity to the context. This song depicts the love, idolization and dependence that Lady Gaga feels for the ones she sings to, as being the

same relationship as the paparazzi have with celebrities and as a fan has with a superstar. This is a summation of the two prominent narratives communicated in this song.

5.3.2) A story of love, murder and revenge, in the music video for *Paparazzi*

The *Paparazzi* video is presented in the format of a feature film telling a story with Lady Gaga and other participants in this video playing the roles of characters. Lady Gaga plays the character of a rich and famous female celebrity, and this video tells the story of her character's demise and rise. The music video starts with Lady Gaga's characters, referred to by the name 'Lady Gaga' in this narrative, in her mansion in bed with her boyfriend. They exchange verbal expressions of love and kiss passionately. Still kissing, he carries her out on to the balcony where they continue to kiss. Here, he asks her if she trusts him, to which she replies 'yes', and they continue kissing, with Lady Gaga sitting on the balcony ledge. Unknown to Lady Gaga, paparazzi photographers stalking her mansion, are photographing this intimate moment between her boyfriend and herself. She becomes aware of this and tries to resist him and make him stop kissing her, but he doesn't want to and is pleased to be photographed. He was aware of the photographers and tricked her in order to gain publicity for himself. He continues to kiss her, forcefully this time and in her defence, she hits him in the face. He retaliates by throwing her over the balcony. This scene is visually represented in Images 14, 15, 16, 17 and 18 in Appendix 3, for better understanding.

The paparazzi proceed to take shots of Lady Gaga, lying on the floor in a pool of her own blood, portrayed in Appendix 3, Image 19; and she headlines tabloids newspapers and magazines, who report on the demise and end of Lady Gaga. She survives the fall and returns to her mansion in a neck brace and crutches in order to recover. She eventually does and her boyfriend is back in her life and with her in the mansion. They relax, he reads the newspaper and Lady Gaga serves him a poisoned drink. He consumes the drink and this leads to his death and her gaining revenge over him, for throwing her off the balcony. She admits to the murder purposefully by calling 911 and confessing, "I just killed my boyfriend" and is taken away to jail, albeit, with the press and tabloids now singing her praises. In between these narratives, there is also a performance scene

by Lady Gaga that does not add to the narrative as well as dance scenes in between the attempted murder of Lady Gaga and the murder of her boyfriend.

5.4) *Bad Romance* by Lady Gaga

5.4.1) Indulging in his dark side, in the song *Bad Romance*

The title of the song, *Bad Romance*, sets its basic context, as the song relays a story of a romance between Lady Gaga and another, gone or going wrong. A romance suggests a love story with mutual feelings of adoration, infatuation and affection between two people. A good romance would imply reciprocated feelings of love between two people, in which the pleasure and enjoyment of sharing love and good emotions are emphasised. Lady Gaga however sings of 'bad romance' in this song. This signals a love story or relationship that is unfavourable, sad, not enjoyable and disappointing. This song's narrative tells the story of the romance going bad because Lady Gaga's lover - the one she loves and desires, has a significant other and is cheating on that person with Lady Gaga. Lady Gaga, aware of this, still wants and loves her lover, irrespective of the circumstance. In this song, Lady Gaga describes a bad romance as being made up of love and revenge - love from her lover and the revenge he takes on Lady Gaga –whatever constitutes this. From this, the story of Lady Gaga's bad romance is established.

Lady Gaga throughout the song emphasises her desire to have this bad romance. She sings about her desire for all the bad qualities and features of the one she loves, and these are highlighted throughout the song. She sings about wanting and needing the love of her lover so much, that she is willing to accept all his unattractive, shameful and insincere features - as long as she can have a part of him. These negative features substitute as a kind of love and attract her to him. His love for her however is her ultimate desire. This kind of love, emphasised by negativities, is representative of something of his that is hers alone. The negative features of his love also lend to the idea of revenge - Lady Gaga's other prioritised desire, along with love. Her desire for love and revenge contextualises the relationship and shows that she loves and desires him, but also wants him to take revenge out on her, by hurting her or doing something bad to her. This would seem negative and undesirable, but Lady Gaga welcomes it and desires it in this song. This could indicate that she has done something unfavourable to him, to solicit his revenge on her. She is

aware of the type of relationship she is in and views it as trapping her and holding her back, even though she strongly desires it.

5.4.2) Lady Gaga: Commodity and Murderer, in the *Bad Romance* music video

This music video communicates a strong narrative and storyline, tied in with strong performance and dance scenes. The idea of this video as a dramatic performance and as telling a story is established by the first still of this video, where Lady Gaga sits on a white, throne-like chair surrounded by all the participants in this video. This scene is visually represented in Appendix 3, Image 30 and 31, where she is presented as the star of the show, surrounded by the supporting cast. As the video unfolds, each of the participants that pose with Lady Gaga, perform certain characters. Posing in this way shows that they are all on the same team, whereas their performances in the video do not reflect this notion. This scene serves to introduce the story to the viewers and reinforces the idea that the video carries a strong narrative as performed by all those posing. Thus Lady Gaga plays a character in this music video. She will however still be referred to as 'Lady Gaga' in analysis.

The narrative of this video tells the story of Lady Gaga being forced in to prostitution, as she is made to sell herself through dance and performance, and is then sold to the highest male bidder for his enjoyment. Forced prostitution is an exploitation of the female body and is used to serve the desires of men, places this video in a strongly patriarchal economy, where men are dominant and in control, and women are passive with no power (Green 197:15). This video represents a very extreme case of this - but still represents it. Gaga is forced by other females in this video to dance to a group of male men, who position her, and force her to present herself as the main attraction to these men. Through this, the individual woman's right to freedom and self-determination is removed as she is controlled and forced to act in accordance with the desires of the men (hooks 1984:24).While they all dance, the men bid for Lady Gaga using controllers and computers to reflect their bids. The highest bid is made for Lady Gaga, and she thus becomes sold to the highest male bidder. In claiming his prize, the highest bidder or winner, sits on a bed drinking a drink as Lady Gaga presents herself to him as his prize. As Lady Gaga gets close enough to him she stops and drops her jacket to expose her scantily clad body but as she does this, the bed sets on fire, as if by her planning and as if she tricked him. The bidder as well as the

bed is burnt to a cinder, resulting in the death of the bidder and the destruction of the bed. This can be seen in Appendix 3, Image 45, 46 and 47, where Lady Gaga, not hurt, watches this happen. The video ends with Lady Gaga lying on the burnt bed, next to the charred corpse of the bidder, smoking a cigarette.

Essentially the story communicates the idea of a prostitute or sold woman, killing the one who bought her, as a means to emancipate herself and not be forced into being under her buyer's control. The dance scenes in this video tend to highlight and provide a visual commentary about the themes or ideas of what is being communicated at certain points in the narrative. As such they are reflective of the mood and tone of a particular narrative scene, with some dance performances as part of the narrative scene, and others separate and focusing on Lady Gaga, the artist, rather than the character in the narrative. This video is also made up of separate performance scenes of Lady Gaga that do not contribute to the songs narrative and reflect her as the artist and performer of this song.

5.5) Conclusion

The narrative of the songs and music videos *of LoveGame*, *Bad Romance* and *Paparazzi* are all embody characteristic of pop music, and thus stay true the their genre. Romance, the expression of sexual desires and bodily pleasures are the main expressions in the products of pop culture and more specifically pop music (Danesi 2009:2; Chambers 1985:207). The common thread between all these songs is that they all communicate strong themes of love and desire, with *LoveGame* indicative of desires of a more sexual nature. The narratives of the songs thus firmly reinforce their pop characteristics and allow for audiences to understand these meanings within these contexts. The narratives of the music videos refer to issues of gender, sexuality and feminist identity, more than the songs do. This is because the visual representations that produce the videos narrative are informed by, for example, images of lesbianism, of murder as a means for emancipation and of male domination over females. This chapter describes the narratives of the songs and music videos to be analysed and such, provides the foundation for analysis to take place as well as for readers to understand the backgrounds of these music videos in a general way.

Chapter 6:

Skewed lenses: Gender in Lady Gaga's work

6.1) Introduction

This section presents the analysis of the gender, established by semiotically analysing the songs and music videos under certain features, as described in the methodology section. The semiotic analysis of gender renders results from the music and music videos analysed, namely *LoveGame*, *Paparazzi* and *Bad Romance*. The results of analysis presented below, speak specifically to issues of gender and gender representation by Lady Gaga. Importantly, these results are separated by theme of gender representations predominantly, and not by song or music video, in order to present results that explain the representation of gender adequately. The analysis presents the main findings of the representations of gender in the work of Lady Gaga. These findings have brought up specific representations about the predominant ways in which Lady Gaga represents gender – as affirming patriarchal gender views and as representing the female gender as powerful and defiant to traditional gender roles and patriarchal expectations. This analysis now follows along with visual references contained in Appendix 3, for a clearer understanding of scenes.

6.2) Representations of Patriarchal Gender views

Throughout the three different music videos analysed, many different results have been found. In analysing gender representation in these songs and music videos, a common yet secondary theme that has showed up is that Lady Gaga, through her performances, tends to represent and affirm patriarchal ideology. A patriarchal economy indicates a social structure where economic power, physical power and the discursive power to construct 'truths', but in held by men, rather than by woman (Green 1997:13). The overall balance of power is thus controlled by men. Constructing truths also refers to construction of acceptable gender and sexuality expressions; these mostly refer to expressions that please men, namely, heterosexual relations and tradition identifications of "gendered characteristics", which are generalisations and expectations about each sex (Green 1997: 14). Lady Gaga thus supports these definitions and expectations of gender in some of her

representations, although they are not the dominant representations of her work. These representations will now be discussed and analysed using semiotics.

This analysis begins with a discussion of the prominent prop used in the *LoveGame* music video. In then opening dance scene of *LoveGame*, Lady Gaga predominantly uses a cane or walking stick, decorated with a bright light on the head of the stick, as a prop while dancing and performing encircled around her dancers, as shown in Appendix 3, Image 2, from the music video. This cane or walking stick is closely linked to the idea of a "disco stick", which Lady Gaga sings about in this song. It could represent the physical manifestation of what Lady Gaga wants us to see as the "disco stick". This idea is further established by the cane consisting of lights and lending from the idea of a bright disco ball, and also because it is a stick used for dancing by Lady Gaga in this video and accentuates and draws attention to her performance. Through a semiotic analysis of lyrics, "disco stick" can be interpreted as penis or phallus Lady Gaga dancing with it, signifies that she is dancing with a representation of a penis. The main sign developed here represents heterosexual sex, expressed through dancing. It also inscribes learned ideals of masculine and feminine behaviours as well as proper authority relationships between sexes (Yorburg 1974:1). This representation emphasises gender identity and sexuality placement, by suggesting that women should be attracted to men, and also that your biological sex determines your sexuality. In this way there are no deviant representations of gender, and instead Lady Gaga reinforces ideas of traditional gender roles and a consequent description of traditional ideas of sexuality, namely heterosexuality.

In the *LoveGame* video, Lady Gaga is dressed in four different outfits, which each signify different representations of gender, through out the video. They add to her development of character and role in the video. The first outfit, which can be seen in the attached Appendix 3, Images 1, 5 and 13, Lady Gaga wears is a light purple leotard, cropped light purple leather jacket, shiny white pantyhose, high heels and a medieval-looking headgear made out of small linked chains, wrapped around her head like a scarf. This whole look, mainly due to the colour palette of a blush and soft purple, paint Lady Gaga in a soft, innocent and pleasant manner, and is referent to the dress sense of a ballerina. The colour she wears, are also angelic and child-like. Through this, her femininity is emphasised, associating her with passivity and sweetness. Additionally, this outfit bring up ideas of femininity and the construction of women in a

patriarchal society, i.e., as innocent and undisruptive. Through her appearance, Lady Gaga in this scene affirms the female's discursive position as 'feminine' in appearance, and this works to communicate the same ideas of this 'femininity' as defined by patriarchy to viewers (Green 1997:27). This representation thus offers no challenge to the conception of femininity, even though it is a generalised and restrictive approach in the representation of women, which Lady Gaga perpetuates here (Green 1997:27). Wearing a leotard also emphasises her private parts and legs, and in so doing she is constructed as sexy and as seducing, as so too affirms gender ideas of patriarchy, where women are meant to be attractive and sexy in order to please men.

Her hair in *LoveGame*, is presented in two ways, first as long and blonde with a thick fringe, and subtle, pale purple highlights and secondly in a more styled and stiff up-do. Images of Lady Gaga's hair styles are shown in Appendix 3, Images 3 and 13. The styling of Lady Gaga's hair in this video serves to enhance a representation of traditional femininity too, with long hair and a fringe, constituting a strong description of femininity, mostly because long hair is very opposite to short hair of men. Long hair serves physically to maintain essential differences between men and women and additionally creates a strong binary description of gender. Her up style hair-do also portrays her as glamorous and attractive, with up styles usually worn to black-tie and formal events. Her hair thus communicates ideas of traditional expectations of femininity.

Her make- up, too, is indicative of a change in representation of femininity, where first her make is soft, glittery and purple, painting her as soft and feminine, and then changes to darker lips and eyes, evident in Appendix 3, Image 13, emphasising a change to a stronger and tougher depiction of Lady Gaga. Her make-up in the bejewelled performance scene stands out as it is detailed, flawless and exaggerated, with long eye-lashes, bleached eyebrows and icy, pale silver lips. The make up of this scene adds to the idea of Lady Gaga as a decorated, sexy and glamorous and as a trophy or prize to be won. Her face is beautified with make up in typical ways, enhancing eyelashes and lips in order to make her attractive and seductive to others. This contributes to the notion that Lady Gaga is presented in this way to attract and hold the male gaze on to her. In so doing, representations of her femininity here, reproduces ideas of women as passive and attractive, and men as the active voyeur. Representations of gender-roles within an economy of patriarchy, involve implicit and explicit sexual displays in which the displayer is coded as 'feminine' and the spectator as 'masculine' (Green 1997:25). The female performs to the

pleasure of the male, and through this, ideas of male as dominant and superior to women are maintained and supported. Display and performance is thus predominantly a feminine act.

The main participants in the video for *LoveGame* video are Lady Gaga's all-male back up dancers, two men in a separate scene, carrying out suggested sex acts with Lady Gaga and the male and female cops she kisses, in another scene. The back up dancers are all dressed in blue jeans with black leather jackets or waistcoats or white vests, and are strongly accessorized with chains and heavy jewellery associated with the rock/metal music genre, and wear sneakers or black boots. Their apparel is strongly themed and indicative of a specific kind of male and a specific type of masculinity, as displayed in Appendix 3, Images 1, 6 and 12. The men are depicted as rough, strong and intimidating, through their clothes-typical of this kind of masculinity. It focuses on them presenting themselves as manly men, who are tough, pragmatic and powerful. They are themed as 'bad-boys', rebels, gangsters or thugs, and this serves to very intentionally and strongly highlight their typical and traditionally natural expressions of masculinity and qualities of men. They are very masculine, strong men, who are fighters and who focus on physical strength. Accordingly, their bodies are muscularly toned, slim and fit, indicative of strength. The dancers are made up of all races and presented in the same manner. As such, their expressions of masculinity and as men are prioritised over their specific race. The men are young and healthy and their bodies are looked after, making them attractive and appealing men. This draws focus on their male sexual appeal that is fashioned through a typical and traditional idea of masculinity. The hair of the dancers is short and neat and thus styled in a very average, simple and predictable way. It is not outrageous, different or fashionable, but rather stays true to and emphasises this traditional archetype of masculinity.

The *Paparazzi* music video is presented as a feature film, the opening credits roll out before the performances begin and these state the name of the film as well as the names of the films main stars. The specific gesture to the camera referred to here, is not some kind of performance or action, but refers to the text and imagery that presents the names of the main stars featured in this movie. It can be considered as a gesture, because the camera focuses on the frames depicting the names of these stars for a few seconds, and thus grabs the attention of the viewer. In presenting Lady Gaga as the female lead, the text reads, "Starring Lady Gaga", with a very large pink flower taking up the space of most of the frame. The male lead is presented after this frame, with

the text “and Alexander Skarsgard”, with the ocean in the background and the naked back of a large, white statue in the frame.

These two frames are significant in that the imagery that is presented with the text, communicates certain ideas that refer to the names in the text, and more specifically, that refer to gender identity. Gender roles and expectations are inscribed in ones identity, based on the sex of the individual, traditionally. Gender and sexual identity in the individuals are traditionally brought up from infancy and include beliefs of how one ought to think and behave, based on ones gender (Yorburg 1974:1). This is emphasised in the imagery at the start of the video. The bright pink flower that accompanies Lady Gaga’s name is suggestive of femininity. This is because of its bright pink colour - a colour that is associated with females and the shade of it suggesting youth, vitality and energy. The flower is also very attractive and beautiful as well as elegant and delicate in its look and these qualities are ascribed to Lady Gaga’s name, as the imagery serves to reinforce ideas and provide associations to her name and expectations of the character she will play. So too, the name of the male lead is backed upon the blue background of the ocean and the sky, with the colour blue emphasising the gender of the male. His name is also associated with the strength and brawny-build of the statue. Thus the imagery next to their names, serves as the visual representation of how these characters are depicted in the story as well as what we can expect from their characters. Thus, the male and female leads are constructed very stereotypically, with the woman as attractive, sweet and passive, and the man as strong and masculine. These gender expectations fit into an economy of patriarchy and these character representations are proof of this. From the start of this video, hetero-normative gender roles are thus strongly implied.

Lady Gaga’s physical appearance and aesthetic representation in the *Paparazzi* video is also strongly indicative of gender roles. In the opening scene of the music video for *Paparazzi*, Lady Gaga wears a Chanel white corset, printed pantyhose, Christian Dior gloves, diamond jewellery and high black heels with diamante embellishments. This look overtly expresses her sexiness and wealth with corsets being associated with sexy clothing and diamonds and designer pieces associated with wealth. She is presented as a sexy pin-up- by wearing such glamorous and unpractical clothing to bed, indicates that she is dressed this way for the pleasure of another. In her individual performance scene, she wears a black revealing, patent leather, black dress, black

fishnet stockings and long gloves, and black heels, referred to in Appendix 3, Image 22. In this scene, she is not a character, but rather represents herself as the artist of the song. Her clothes are sexy and rebellious, and represent Lady Gaga as herself, as being sexually attractive and having vixen like quality in her sexual appeal. She is represents as sexually appealing in both scenes - an expected trait of women in patriarchal economies.

Additionally, the murder scene in *Paparazzi*, where Lady Gaga poisons her boyfriend, represents and reinforces certain gender roles. First, her boyfriend sits next to her reading the newspaper. This signifies the idea of a traditional man who is the head of the household and who is concerned with more intellectual and political things, than women, and who thus regularly reads the newspaper. Lady Gaga sits next to him, doing nothing of importance, suggesting her passive nature as the female in a relationship with man who adopts patriarchal beliefs. This is because patriarchy can be explained by the difference between the public and private spheres, where the public sphere is involved with paid work and jobs, and the private sphere is associated with unpaid domestic work, with women associated with the private sphere (Green 1997:13). Lady Gaga serves them drinks-a quality that defines her as a female in a patriarchal system, i.e., to serve men through their unpaid work in the private spheres, through cooking and cleaning for example. These scenes from the music video can be viewed in Appendix 3, Images 23, 24 and 25. She serves him a drink in a glass from a futuristic, rocket-shaped, light red bottle, and she drinks tea in an antique tea cup and saucer. The difference in the drinks indicates differences constructed and communicated by the man and the woman. Her boyfriends drink is modern and contemporary and is also not easily deniable or understood. Because he drinks this, he is depicted as forward-thinking and progressive. Lady Gaga on the other hand drinks tea in a tea cup and saucer, more indicative of tradition and of lady-like behaviour and expectations, visually represented, specifically, in Appendix 3, Image 12. These props serve to represent the genders of the characters in certain ways.

The major participants in the *Paparazzi* video are Lady Gaga's boyfriend, her male and female back up dancers and the three men with her in her individual performance scene. The physical bodies of all additional participants in this music video are depicted as attractive and appealing, as only thin, slender and toned bodies are portrayed in this video. Her boyfriend in this video first wears black slacks, a white vest and black suspenders, and in the next scene that he is in, he

wears a white shirt, black shorts, a loose black bow-tie, blue socks, formal shoes and a silver eye patch. His dressing is traditionally male and masculine, with it being simple, black and white and highlighting key menswear items of clothing, for example, suspenders, a white shirt, a vest and a bow tie. Thus the boyfriends clothing asserts a meaning of masculinity, tradition, and a stereotypical male dress sense, all to emphasise his identity as a typical man and draw attention to his masculinity. His masculinity representations also speak to an idea of him as conforming to male traditional and expected behaviour roles of a patriarchal system, suggested by his strictly classical male attire.

The lyrics for the song *Bad Romance,* which can be viewed in the attached Appendix 1, also refer to affirming ideas of patriarchy. For example, the lyrics *"I want your psycho/ Your vertical stick/ Want you in my room/ When your baby is sick"* indicate the nature of Lady Gaga and her lover's relationship (Lady Gaga Official site 2010:1). Lady Gaga states a condition and or invitation to her lover to spend time in her room when his 'baby' is sick. Here, 'baby' refers to someone that you are romantically involved with, affectionate towards or in a relationship with, and signifies a girlfriend or partner. Time spent in her room highlights a physical and sexual relationship. This shows that Lady Gaga encourages her lover to spend time with her when his actual partner/girlfriend is unable to spend time with him or if she is unavailable or unwell. She also sings "I'm a free bitch baby", highlighting that she is ultimately single and having a love affair, and is thus not seriously committed to anyone. This song represents ideas of patriarchy in the way it positions the songs participants, primarily Lady Gaga and her lover. Her lover, presumably male, has a girlfriend and a lover - this situates him in a position of power, where as a patriarch, he is able to have two lovers and enjoy them both. Lady Gaga as one of the female lovers however, is presented as crazed, desperate and under the control and influence of her lover. This is a weak position as a female, as she is not in control of any decisions or actions, but rather is at the control of her dominant male lover.

The video for *Bad Romance* is set entirely in a big white room, brightly lit by fluorescent lights, with white panel floors and ceilings. There are small, narrow, rectangular windows in the walls and the all the walls are white. The area is lit with harsh, sharp, bright lighting. The video is introduced as the "Bath Haus of Gaga", and suggests the setting to be based on a kind of bathroom. It is a futuristic setting, drawing reference from space ships and confined white

spaces. This associated this space with masculinity, where an extreme form, masculinity is partly defined as "inventive, experimental, as scientific, technological and as creative" (Green 1997:14). This notion of masculinity represented through this space is further enhanced in its clinical atmosphere. The idea of the setting being representative of masculinity is in its portrayal as an experimental situation from reality, as concentrated, expressed and highlighted in this confined, secretive and closed off setting. Thus, this setting tends to strongly represent an alternative reality or fantasy situation. Within this alternative reality, women are captured, controlled and bought, and men are powerful, dominant and rule over women - clear from the narrative of the music video. The setting of this video, encapsulates a place where such an occurrence can freely and openly occur, and is reflective of certain societies and ways of life, in reality. In the video however, this representation is confined, and represented against a blank canvas, that is not representative of any particular place in reality, and reflects the ideological and patriarchal system. This defines the setting of the videos and thus creates expectations of the performances - that men are dominant and in control, and women are weak and passive within these confines, that are also representative of societies in the real world.

In the video for *Bad Romance*, the men are consistently dressed in black. Many of them wear innovative and modern face masks, and the majority of them are heavily tattooed. Their black attire consists of pieces such as black pants, suit jackets, and black vests. Collectively, their black attire presents them as intimidating, strong, bold and treacherous. Their tattoos add to this idea, and present them as rebellious, 'bad boys', who break rules and dominate situations. Their black attire separates them strongly from the women, who, when represented collectively, wear white and red. As a collective group, tattooed and in black, this group of men appear dangerous, strong and powerful, and are strongly referent to a cult of powerful men in society, such as a gang or the mafia.

An important prop used in *Bad Romance* to be discussed, is shown in the second scene of this video. In this scene, Lady Gaga and her back up dancers awaken from long and large white coffins, referenced to in Appendix 3, Image 35. This is associated with death. However these coffins or capsules are white, changing its meaning to refer rather to a place of peace and of resting. These coffins are also high-tech and modern, and are associated with masculine characteristics of technology, science and invention, more than with feminine characteristics

(Green 1997:14). If the coffins stand as a representation of masculinity due to their aesthetic features and their placement in this alternate, male dominated patriarchal world, it is as though representations of masculinity 'hold' females captive or strictly 'contain' them, by defining their experience of living. The female-centric experience and preference is muted through this, and represent women as having to fit into a male dominated economy. Additionally, as Lady Gaga and her female dancers awaken from these coffins, they perform and dance in sharp and frantic ways, similar to the popular image of zombies, in pop culture. They are presented as deaf, blind and physically restricted due to the tight white latex body suits they wear, which covers their entire bodies, except their mouths. This is depicted in Appendix 3, Image 34 and 35, from the *Bad Romance* music video. The zombie-like behaviour by the females in this scene, along with her muted senses, present them as her as primitive, wild, uncultivated, and additionally represents their natural instincts to protect themselves, as heightened. Lady Gaga, here, represents this as the outcome of male domination over females - they are rendered helpless and passive. Drawing on the parallels of zombie-like behaviour, the female dancers are also represented as non-sensical, irrational and not intellectual.

Within the story-line of *Bad Romance*, Lady Gaga is presented to the betting men in the video in a top and bikini bottoms made out of nude-coloured net, encrusted with strategically placed diamonds, as well as a headgear made out of diamonds and long, white stiletto boots. Her outfit, depicted in Appendix 3, Image 40, is see through and revealing, on top of covering small parts of her body. As such, her body is on display and this outfit represents her in a very sexy, seductive and appealing way. The use of diamonds in covering her body, presents her as valuable, special and expensive. She is again likened to the qualities of a diamond, which is traded too. Through wearing them and representing herself in them, she depicts her as selling her body and wanting to be owned, in the same way that diamonds are traded and owned.

The men watching Lady Gaga and who are in control of this setting and situation in *Bad Romance* indulge in "Nemiroff", a liqueur from the Ukraine. This may be slightly implicative of where these men are from, reflected by their taste and preference in for a certain kind of alcohol, a kind they are used to. The alcohol shows that the men view this situation of bidding for women and watching women, as an enjoyable and social experience. Thus they partake in alcohol, shown in Appendix 3, Image 37, to add to their social enjoyment and pleasure The drinking of

alcohol strongly communicates the nature of the situation from the men's perspective - and that is that it is a social, fun, enjoyable and importantly, favourable experience. This further reflects on the attitudes and perspectives of the men, in terms of bidding on a woman. This too is seen as social past time, there for the entertainment of the man. The female is undermined, disrespected and granted no power, in this position.

Lastly, the men bet on the woman that is being presented, using technology such as controllers and laptops to reflect their bids. This represents the men as modern, advanced and educated. These are qualities of men that are emphasised in a patriarchal conception of gender expectations and identities, and is here being reinforced through the use of technology as a prop in this video (Green 1997:14). It further serves to highlight these men as contemporary users of technology. It also shows that they have the power to use technology and systems to their advantage, as here, they use technology to register their bids and establish the man who has made the highest bid for the woman. Thus they use the impartiality and utility of technology to meet their needs. It thus also represents these men as resourceful, practical and in control of the new developments in society.

6.3) Representing the Female Gender as Powerful and Challenging to Patriarchy

The dominant representations of gender within Lady Gaga's songs and music videos stand out and are prominent mainly due to the way they represent the female gender, i.e., as powerful and not passive. This is an idea, circulated by Lady Gaga within pop music that challenges dominant and traditional ideas of gender by presenting alternate ways of gender to be expressed by the female. This gender performitivity allows gender to be created and not defined by nature and biology, because defining gender in this way, renders identity as under the influence of patriarchy, where there is no freedom for alternative gender expressions. The first analysis that presents this idea is found in setting of the music video for *LoveGame.* From physical indications such as Times Square and familiar subway stations represented in artefacts of pop culture, it can be can be concluded that the setting of this music video is in New York city. The video takes place in empty subway terminals and underground basements, depicted in Appendix 3, Images 1, 5 ,6, 7, and 8. This represents a space of freedom and draws parallels with the freedom of expression that is represented in performances of gender and sexuality in this video, in this

setting. The specific setting of New York also carries with it a trendiness and coolness, thus emphasising the pop culture element that Lady Gaga's music embodies.

This specific setting, namely, empty underground subway stations in New York City, indicates that Lady Gaga and her male posse are partying and enjoying themselves in a secret location that is hidden, off limits and not known to others. It represents this group as having the same desires in meeting on this private, secretive, underground and unconventional party or gathering, away from mainstream areas and typical crowds. This depicts Lady Gaga and her dancers as rebels, who are breaking laws and trespassing in places that are forbidden to them. The performances expressed in this setting explains the secretive nature of the setting, with the main sign represented here, communicating that Lady Gaga and her dancers engage in deviant sexual and gender behaviour, through performances in this video, that is not acceptable in public spaces. Occupying this private space serves as a means of ownership of their gender and sexuality representations, and also emphasises that these representations go against the norm and thus are performed in a hidden and private capacity.

Using the 'disco cane' as a prop in *LoveGame* also carries meaning that assigns power to the female. Canes and walking sticks are traditionally associated with men, and are used for practical reasons and also to communicate a sense of style by these men. Well dressed, wealthy men are known to use these canes as accessories, and it assigns a sense of power and authority to them. Lady Gaga dances with a cane, with the cane being central her to performance in this scene. Lady Gaga takes this cane accessory carried by men and assigns a new meaning to its carrier. As a part of her performance and she uses the cane to keep attention focused on her. The additional sign communicated is that she uses this specific prop in this scene and juxtaposes ideas of a blonde, dancing female and masculine power and authority. She uses, controls and owns the prop while dancing, indicating that she subscribes qualities associated with cane as being her own qualities. The use of the cane thus creates a meaning within the video that Lady Gaga is the leader and authority figure who is in control and in command. This represents Lady Gaga as subscribing power and status from a male-centric economy, to herself in this video. She thus lends from male power and assigns it to herself, and so is placed in the same standing and status of a powerful man, but as a woman. This is also indicative of her muting female power as coming from the female, and rather represents power in females as being borrowed from men in

order to exist. This may be considered as maintaining patriarchal structures and gender ideas, as power is not equal between the genders of male and female, when power is appropriated rather than created by the female. However, power is still given and associated to Lady Gaga as the female, and particularly in the context of the music video, she is intentionally represented in this capacity as powerful authoritative and in control, especially over her male dancers.

In the middle parts of the video for *LoveGame,* Lady Gaga wears a black leotard, a shiny silver bikini bottom over that, black pantyhose, a cropped, black leather jacket and black Chanel heels – referenced to in Appendix 3, Images 7 and 8. This look, contains the same item and idea of clothing as the first outfit discussed, but communicates very different ideas through colour and styling of the outfits. It represents her expression of femininity in a more rebellious and strong way, highlighted by parts as her black pantyhose and black leather jacket. This expresses her femininity as mature, serious, in charge and free. Furthermore, the representation of her gender here, is not typical and common, but rather speaks to ideas of toughness and masculinity within femininity. This is further emphasised by the black leather jacket which carries connotations of a 'bad boy' in pop culture. She moves away from traditional ideas of femininity here, by assigning ideas of rebellion, strength and other characteristics of a bad boy, already dissident in itself, to herself.

Her last outfit change in *LoveGame* is displayed in Appendix 3, Images 11 and 12, and here we see Lady Gaga wearing long, wide black pants, suspenders, long black gloves, an interpretation of a police cap, and a nude boob tube bra. This outfit also importantly represents Lady Gaga in a masculine capacity, where her feminine features are muted, thus causing her female gender and its associations to be muted. It is distinct and very manly. She wears men's items of clothing such as loose-fitting pants and suspenders and the nude colour of her top de-emphasises her breasts. Through this manly attire, she is seen as in control and serious, with a hint at male attributes of power and representations of dominant male personas. Thus, she wears clothing associated with men on her female body, and communicates the idea of a woman as owning the same power as a man, through clothing and its associations. This is however not a healthy representation of female power or as moving away from dominant gender positions, in the same way as appropriating male authority from the cane. This is because Lady Gaga grants power to herself through association and thus it is not a power that she owns as a female, but rather, she

can be viewed as just representing male power, leaving her in an even weaker position. It is as if she is playing dress up, and also highlights that the powerful position she portrays is not hers, and will be removed when she removes the clothes.

The dance performances with Lady Gaga and her male back up dancers in *LoveGame* are the predominant scenes in this video. Within these scenes, Lady Gaga is positioned as the centre of attention and is focused on as the main subject of the scene. She dances in front or in the middle of the dancers, and in a scene towards the middle of the music video, where the dancers are scattered, Lady Gaga is in a higher position standing on top of a car and overlooking the dancers. This reinforces her position as the leader of the troupe and as the female that is in control of these rough and strong men-something presented as not typically achievable by a woman. The reason for this may lie in the fact that they are both tough and slightly feminine and it is the latter aspect that allows for Lady Gaga to be in command of them, as they are not typically masculine. This also asserts the idea that females can only have power over males when they have feminine characteristics, as this presents them as weaker than being typically masculine. Lady Gaga and the male dancers' bodies move in the same way and thus express and represent the same ideas. Some of the dancing styles of the male dancers are overtly feminine in the male body's movements, signalled by swinging hips, facial expressions, walking styles and other gestures. This type of dancing by the male back up dancers is specifically and intentionally stylised to be overtly expressive of feminine features, by over-emphasising certain body movements to present a more female expression in the dancing. Thus some of these tough, masculine men, in addition to wearing some make up, also express feminine features through their body movements.

In the last dance scene of *LoveGame*, Lady Gaga and her male dancers thrust their crotches forward in a dance move similar to the dance move made famous by pop star Michael Jackson, in his music videos. This became one of his signature performance gestures. In a shallow analysis of this by Lady Gaga, it may seem as if Lady Gaga is showing respect or associating herself with such a great pop artist by copying his dance moves. However, given the prevalent themes within this music video, this dance move carries more meaning. Grabbing one's crotch is done more commonly by men to signal their power. The crotch is grabbed in order to refer to the penis, which biologically makes one male, and in a patriarchal society it is this gender trait that gives on power. Referring to the penis also refers to the 'maleness' of a man, and reinforces that

men are powerful by virtue of being biologically male. Crotch grabbing is thus typically a male gesture and signals male power and strength. Lady Gaga as a woman, albeit dressed in a manly manner, performs this gesture in a dance move, and in so doing assigns the meaning the gesture it carries, i.e., male power, to herself. Thus she represents herself as being powerful as a woman by having the same power as a man. Her dancers, who are all male, perform the same gesture as males, though the meaning of their gestures in changed due to the fact that they dance behind Lady Gaga. This gesture performed by Lady Gaga and the male dancers together, communicates an idea that the male dancers support Lady Gaga's representation of her female self as powerful. This gesture is performed simultaneously with their fists held high in the air, as seen in Appendix 3, Image 12. This signals a union, and the gestures combined are suggestive of female and male equality. It is also suggestive of the men supporting Lady Gaga as aligning power to herself as a female, and not succumbing to the idea that men are dominant over women. Lady Gaga clearly does not support this notion and rather works to emphasise a changing notion in the representation of women - that they too are powerful and can own the same power as men do.

Lady Gaga's outfit changes in the video for *Paparazzi*, provides commentary on her expressions of femininity and in representing herself as a phoenix rising from the ashes, through this. By paying attention to the ideas that her clothes and physical appearance communicate in this video, we can trace her female identity as well as how it changes from weak to strong in this video. Firstly, she returns home in full black with bejewelled diamond heels shoes and a red bejewelled neck brace. Here she is simple, covered and presents her in a dull way, as sick and sad. As she reaches home, she immediately changes into a more fashion forward and glamorous outfit - a shiny, gold, steel-armoured leotard with a headpiece. This outfit, which can be viewed in Appendix 3, Image 20, is unusual and indicative of a high fashion style. It is also hard, protective, reminiscent of armour and thus, Lady Gaga wearing when first returning to her mansion after her accident, reflects her strength and the protection of herself. It also emphasises her high-fashion sensibility and shows that the appearance of herself as glamorous is very important to her, and she constructs herself this way through exaggerating and drawing attention to her expression of femininity. It creates the meaning that even in sickness, her appearance and specific presentation of herself is prioritised and this indicates a particular female strength.

The next dance scene, Lady Gaga again wears a very dramatic, unusual and theatrical outfit made up of a white, form-fitting cat suit with long and thick black ruffles bulging out and attached to her hip, shoulders and wrapped around her thighs, depicted in Appendix 3, Image 21. Unusual and dramatic as this outfit may be, it signifies Lady Gaga's recovery through the softness, comfort and theatrical nature of this outfit. The white colour is referent to casts for broken bones as well as to a new beginning, and the ballerina-tutu embellishments signify dancing, virtue and celebration. As she is carried away to jail, she wear black and gold leotard, black fishnet stockings and big sunglasses, while in jail, she wears a short, architectural cocktail dress made out of metal. Both these looks draw attention to Lady Gaga's identity that is rooted in this video partly in fashion and glamour. Theses outfits also lay emphasis on her appearance and status as a celebrity and a star, and also on her rebellion and toughness. This in turn articulates her strength, power and influence in this capacity, by consistently representing it through her clothing and style and reminding viewers of it.

The outfit Lady Gaga wears when poisoning her boyfriend is a tight, yellow cat suit with a prominent print of Mickey Mouse in a helmet, a wide black waist belt and black high heels with a subtle yellow design. She also wears thick, black, round-framed sunglasses. This outfit is visually depicted in Appendix 3, Images 23, 24, 25 and 26. This look is cute because of its child-like references and is also fun, whimsical and sweet. It emphasises ideas of innocence, softness and passivity as it is very referential to the clothing that children tend to wear - clothes with their favourite cartoon character on them. As such, these clothes represent Lady Gaga as simple, naive, ignorant and weak- a depiction appealing to men in a patriarchal society, where women are preferred to be seen and not heard. The jewellery she wears with this however, is masculine and hard and consists of a spiked ring and bracket. These are juxtaposed against her clothing, combine the naivety, weakness and ignorance she projects with, a danger and violence. This outfit and look however, is ironic because it depicts her as innocent and sweet, but in actual fact, she carries out a murder in these clothes. This represents Lady Gaga as cunning, manipulative, calculating and above all, intelligent in her representation. This is because she tricks her boyfriend by depicting herself in a way pleasing and satisfying to him, but uses this as a guise, wherein she expresses her female power.

Lady Gaga's make-up in *Paparazzi* stands out and communicates certain gender role associations, specifically in the murder scene. Here, she wears black lipstick in the shape of small painted-on lips, seen in the above mentioned images. The colour of the lipstick is black, and is strongly referent to the theatre and to theatre make-up, emphasising her performance in this scene as dramatic. The painted on lips represents her feelings as un-emotive and cold and renders her passive and mute. The meaning behind this specific make up however, is that it is used as a front or a disguise for Lady Gaga in this scene. With the help of the make up, she presents herself as unconcerned, shut down, dull and absent, when she is actually carrying out a crime of passion. The make up in this scene, thus helps to hide her real feelings and emotions, but also emphasises her power as a woman to control her feelings and not be emotional and sensitive, as women are usually depicted to be. This represents her as a strong woman, who does not embody typical and expected female stereotypes or react in typical ways in certain situations.

Many props within the video for *Paparazzi*, assign specific meaning to the female identity and representation of Lady Gaga in this video. These are the many layered diamond necklaces around her neck as well as the Christian Dior hand glove that she wears that she wears in bed. Around the room, there are also many pieces of female diamond jewellery lying around as well as cupcakes decorated with the letter 'G' in diamonds. Through these is represented as a pampered and privileged rich woman, living a specific lifestyle .The limo used to drop her off at the mansion in the second scene also emphasised this. The representation of this opulent lifestyle through the exaggerated and extravagant symbols, indicates her standards of luxury and emphasises her importance and status in the mansion and consequently in the world.

Adding to this meaning, are the newspaper clippings and tabloid magazines, which headline Lady Gaga and her successes in the front pages. In a separate performance scene, Lady Gaga sings to the camera while sitting on a large, grandeur, antique couch. This couch adds to the themes of wealth and luxury in this video, but also refers to a value, history and an idea of old money, which represents an old form of wealth and wealth belonging to family generations. This wealth, represented in a small way by the symbolism of the couch, is meaningful as it now belongs to Lady Gaga, a young, contemporary, single female. All these props are used as accessories that indicate and assign wealth, power and importance to Lady Gaga as a female. In so doing, these images portray Lady Gaga as powerful as a female in the public sphere and not

limited to gender roles of the private sphere, which is traditional for women to occupy. The representations of ownership of wealth in this video, thus position Lady as seemingly breaking away from expectations of her female gender. However, within the narrative of this video, this power of Lady Gaga as a successful female is still violated by male dominance.

Throughout the *Paparazzi* music video at random times and seemingly nonsensically, the quick image of a dead female's body placed across different locations in the mansion, is gestured to 11 times in this music video. These dead females are all different girls, but carry strong similar attributes as well as the same profile. They are all tall and thin Caucasian girls with small frames and with darker hair and have skinny, tall, thin body builds, referent to that of high-fashion models. They are all wearing heavy make-up and all have characteristically bright red lipstick on. They all also have some kind of covering over their eyes - some have glasses and some have masks, and they all wear high heeled, architectural and fashion forward shoes. Their bodies signify that they are dead and this idea is further emphasised by the blank, still look on their faces, their motionless, staring, open eyes and their lifeless bodies. Some of these women are depicted as the mansions staff, as they are presented as maids in uniform and gardeners working in the garden. This consistent description of these women depicts then as the specific profile for female staff members in the mansion. These gestures or camera shots also strongly create and suggest the theme of death and murder at the mansion.

Importantly, the maid that brings the tray of drinks to Lady Gaga and her boyfriend in the murder scene share all these qualities, descriptions and attributes as the dead girls do, as she is white, thin, tall, in uniform, wears glasses and has bright red lips. Another important gesture noted is that when she walks in to the room, Lady Gaga's boyfriend looks up at her in surprise and shock, but retrains his emotions. This is most emotional expression and reaction we see from him in this scene, where he is predominantly passive and emotionless. This reaction to the maid suggests that he is some how connected to the murders and shocked to see that one of these female staff members are still alive - it is almost as if he is responsible for their deaths and missed killing this one maid that is still working. If this interpretation is correct, it would make Lady Gaga's boyfriend a mass murderer, with all his victims being female. It also accounts for the ease, nonchalance and natural reaction he had when attempting to kill Lady Gaga, as it is a normal behaviour to him if he has killed all those female staff members. Going off on this interpretation,

it would suggest that Lady Gaga's boyfriend assumed a strength and authority in himself to murder women, this allowed him to think of himself as powerful. It also explains why Lady Gaga stayed with him after she recovered, assumingly, out of fear. By Lady Gaga killing him, she thus not only took revenge for herself, but also for all the other women that died at his hand. She is thus the representation of revenge and female power for all those he hurt, she also stand ups for them and represents their lives by murdering him.

His killing of only females would suggest that he saw females as weak and passive. Lady Gaga killing him, represents a deviation from his patriarchal belief system about the behaviours of men and women. It also represents a new conception and definition about female gender expectations and behaviours about female identity, where females are powerful and strong, and can successfully act in the same capacity as their male counterparts can. This is proven by Lady Gaga as she successfully murders her boyfriend. She is proud and happy about her actions and this suggests that she is aware of the new female identity she represents and advocates for it by admitting her guilt. Thus the action of murder and exertion of female power on a patriarch is more important to her than the consequences of being caught.

In the song *Bad Romance* Lady Gaga sings in a climactic, wild, emotional and expressive way, and at parts, Lady Gaga loses control and screams instead of sings. It is powerful, sincere and desperate. The high notes, vigour and melody of the singing in this chorus, combined, create meaning through Lady Gaga's expression, as being intimidating, hostile, threatening and aggressive because she is angry and sad. Verses sung, consists of hard, harsh and loud vocals, communicating the meaning of strength, fierceness and passion. The sound of Lady Gaga's voice and vocal movements in this song are clearly contrasting and inconsistent - adding to the emotional expression and complexities expressed in this song. Mostly, Lady Gaga's voice is loud, strong, gritty, and wild. It communicates, from this, a meaning of demanding, aggression and passion. Her tone of voice throughout the song is mostly deep and dark and is associated with frustration, longing and determination and control. Through the use of her voice, she is constructed as loud and demanding, and sings passionately about what she wants.

In *Bad Romance's* first scene, Lady Gaga wears a short, gold cocktail dress, 3D glasses and high heels, and is represented as smart, modern and fashionable. Those who surround her all wear black and white, and her gold dress represents her as regal and esteemed, and different to those

around her. A visual depiction of this scene can be viewed in Appendix 3, Images 30 and 31, where Lady Gaga sits in a throne-like chair and this outfit adds to the representation of herself as powerful and in command. In the last dance scene and performance scene of this video, Lady Gaga wears bright red lipstick. It is a strong and bold choice and represents a confidence and power in Lady Gaga. Additionally, red lips are a trademark of female sexiness, and Lady Gaga is thus represented as sexually attractive and appealing. This lip colour, in the context of the *Bad Romance* music video, is worn in the celebratory dance scene as well as in the scene where she kills her buyer. The red lips, thus represents triumph, victory, confidence, strength and fearlessness in Lady Gaga, with the red lips hinting at this in these scenes.

The last shot of this music video shows Lady Gaga, lying on the burnt bed, next to the charred body of the man she just killed smoking a cigarette and wearing a bra that shoots out sparks and flames. This gesture to the camera, presented in this specific way, emphasises that she is unharmed, while he is dead; that she has triumphed and he has lost. About the dead, burnt, body lying next to her as well as her act of murder, Lady Gaga appears relaxed, laid back and care free, evident in images from the scene on display in Appendix 3, Images 46 and 47. Her cigarette and bra both refer to fire are objects that may have been used to cause the fire. She proudly displays these objects to the camera, depicting her not being having any regret and as proudly claiming responsibility for his murder. As she lies next to the dead man, her body is the image of female submission and passive sexuality for the male gaze (Gaffney 2010:41).

The bra shooting out fire and sparks, is representative of female power as attacking and strong. She ridicules herself, her presented sexuality and the male gaze by using her breasts as the ultimate representation of femininity as the weapon the kill her buyer (Gaffney 2010:42). It also indirectly makes reference to Lady Gaga's power as a female, represented by the bra, as being the cause of the fire and murder, represented by the sparks. The bed too is burnt to a cinder. The bed as the potential site of sexual oppression and force by the bidder on to Lady Gaga is also destroyed. This scene essentially represents the power of Lady Gaga as a woman, in triumphing and overcoming a dominant man who oppressed her and had the potential and intention to violate her. In so doing, she embodies as powerful sexuality, representing herself as a 'femme fatale' who controls how you view her by being in control of the seduction and the outcome of that seduction.

6.4) Representations of gender-blending

Gender-blending, is a term which describes what happens when women become more masculine or when men become more feminine, and constitutes as important way of performing a particular kind of gender (Abrahamsson 2011:8). Performing gender, as asserted by Butler, refers to expressing a certain kind of gender that is not based in binary biological gender constructs, but rather, is based on a cultural and social identity choice (Gauntlett 2002:137). Importantly gender as a performance communicates no fixed gender identity behind expressions, but rather constitutes identity as neither male nor female. Drag queens are an example of this. Gender-blending is also an expression of gender that does not fit into patriarchal ideas of gender, and this expression is thus trangressive in a patriarchal society, as it represents an identity not recognized within this economy. As such, representations of gender blending in Lady Gaga's music videos too go against ideas of hetero-normative gender and additionally blur the sexuality of those performing this identity.

In the *LoveGame* music video, the male dancers overall appearances deviates from the traditional ideas of masculinity that their body, clothing and other aesthetic features seek to represent in this video. This is because some of the dancers have prominent and dark eye make up. Wearing make up is the very opposite of masculinity and is strongly associated with femininity and typical female behaviour. In his video, the masculinity of the males is juxtaposed against the make up on some of their faces. This is representation of gender-blending, where males are given female characteristics, thus blurring and mixing their gender identities.

Importantly this is a performance expression that does not conform to hetero-normative ideas of identity, but rather represents freedom of gender expression, not limited to binary identification. This asserts a new conception to masculinity that is neither masculine or not, but that is a definition of what masculinity may be. Through their specific physical representation, the dancers perform their genders in a certain way that is determined by aesthetic expression and not biology. This representation and gender performance breaks the rules of traditional ideas of the strict rules of masculinity, and presents a new and alternative approach to masculinity that is not determined only by nature but by culture as well, and that is situated outside a patriarchal economy. This represents these men as tough and strong, with feminine features. In so doing

these dancers represent a new take of masculinity that is more liberal and open-minded and that is defined by the man himself, rather than expectation, tradition or nature.

The female back up dancers in this *Bad Romance* are dressed, in different scenes, in outfits that stem from Lady Gaga's main outfit of the scene, and are thus themed according to Lady Gaga's outfit. Their outfits are very similar to Lady Gaga's outfits, and tend to reinforce a strong connection between Lady Gaga and the dancers. These scenes are depicted in Appendix 3, Images 35, 40 and 44. Their appearance thus serves to emphasise Lady Gaga as the star and as the focus and centre of attention. Importantly, they are presented as androgynous, as compared to Lady Gaga as their bodies are covered and their feminine feature are muted. Their hair is pulled back and short, de-emphasising their sexual appeal by depicting them as boyish characteristics. Androgynous representations of femininity challenge male dominated ideas, as they are a form of gender blending, mixing gender traits and performing as specifically designed identity. In challenging dominant ideology, the androgynous female is granted power through her rebellion, in that she owns her construction of identity and is not confined to traditional expectations. She creates her identity and deconstructs the dictatorship of gender by doing this. The androgynous females in *Bad Romance* and the male, make-up wearing dancers in *LoveGame*, are represented as rebellious and destabilizing to patriarchal gender conceptions. These constructions also highlight artificiality of the concepts of masculinity and femininity in society, as anyone can perform these genders.

6.5) Conclusion

This chapter presents the results of a semiotic analysis on texts, focusing on the representations of gender. Thus, it describes and explains the meanings and significations found, in how gender is represented in Lady Gaga's work. The main themes within the findings of gender representation in the work of Lady Gaga serve to separate ideas and cohesively discuss analysis. The main findings presented in this chapter dealing with the representations of gender by Lady Gaga, are predominantly made up of two diametrically opposing arguments, namely, that her representations in the chosen songs and music videos affirm and support patriarchal conceptions of gender, and also that they represent the female as powerful and challenging to traditional ideas of hetero-normativity, patriarchy and gender. A strong argument is made about the

representations of gender within these songs and music videos that affirm ideas of patriarchy and tradition. These gender findings primarily represent hetero-normative sexual relations, where the pleasure of the man is prioritised; traditional gender roles of male and females, where women work to be sexually pleasing to the male voyeur; as well as men as dominant and in control, women as secondary and passive. These findings are considered as secondary however as their analyses based on narrative information as well as props and dress predominantly, as opposed to action and performance which carry a much stronger and more purposeful meaning. This forms the premise to the main argument of this section – that in terms of gender, Lady Gaga represents the female as powerful, strong and as presenting a challenge to patriarchal ideals about gender roles. This is clear from scenes of performance such as the murder scenes in *Paparazzi* and *Bad Romance*, in the manner Lady Gaga leads her male counterparts in *LoveGame* as well in the consistent representations of gender-blending, which mocks at the norms of traditional gender roles in the videos for *LoveGame* and *Bad Romance*. These findings are valuable because they carry intentional and purposeful meaning that go against traditional gender behaviour and expectation, represented through physical performance. Thus, this section presents the dominant findings of gender representation, i.e., representing female power through Lady Gaga's work; as well as the secondary findings where gender representations are patriarchally conceived. This chapter thus provides results of analysis in terms of how gender is represented in Lady Gaga's work, and this is in contradictory and different ways.

Chapter 7:

Girl Power and Sexuality in Lady Gaga's work

7.1) Introduction

The results of a semiotic analysis of sexuality in Lady Gaga's songs and music videos for *LoveGame, Paparazzi* and *Bad Romance* are presented in this chapter. This chapter is further framed by the ways that the representations of sexuality works to affirm and support patriarchal views of gender and sexuality, as well as how sexuality is used as tool for female empowerment and for the expressions and prioritisation of female sexual pleasure in pop music. The relevant findings from the analysis of the songs and music videos are presented, discussed and analysed. As in the previous chapter, references will be made to the images contained in Appendix 3, to provide the reader with easier understanding of analysis, by complimenting the analysis with a visual image representing the scene being discussed in the particular the music video.

7.2) Representing Patriarchal views of Sexuality

Patriarchal views on sexuality stem from the ideological belief that men, overall, have more power than women (Green 197:15). A patriarchal society is thus dominated by male ownership of power, and this power is articulated through the public sphere and the construction of gender characteristics. It views the construction of gender through the binary disposition of male and female, where gender is determined by biological factors. Patriarchy also holds the dominant view point that the biological sex of a person determines their sexuality. As discussed in the literature review and theoretical framework chapters of this study, Queer theory is a theory about sexual and gender identity that diverges from understanding sexuality and gender as based in sex. Rather, gender refers to ones cultural and societal construction of identity, and this determines ones sexuality (Gauntlett 2002:137). Lady Gaga represents two main patriarchal views of sexuality and sexual identity in her work – that of hetero-normative sexuality and that of female sexual submissiveness, with these importantly shaped by structures of male dominance.

Beginning this discussion is the analysis of the music composition of the song *LoveGame*. Musically, the sound of *LoveGame* is up-tempo with a fast paced rhythm. The sound can further be described as a dance song, inspired by dancing in a club and encouraging dancing and partying. The song is also layered with fast paced beats and different sounds that create a bigger sound which in turn excites and interests people. It promotes fun and enjoyment and this is highlighted by the overall tone of the music, which is light-hearted and sexual. Additionally this song's lyrics strongly reflect Lady Gaga's desire for a heterosexual love game, with reference to the lyrics *"I wanna take a ride on your disco stick"*, where, through a semiotic analysis, disco stick represents the male penis and thus a man. The notion of expressing sexual desires is carried throughout the song by the background yells of Lady Gaga, where she constantly cheers the word 'huh'. This is significant to the song because within the lyrics, the 'huh' carries an undefined but sexual connotation, with this assertion developed through a semiotic analysis. The literal sound of the 'huh' throughout the song is also very strong, excited, powerful and decisive. The fun and energetic music, along with the content of the song indicates that is a pop song that functions in a pop culture. The sexualised content of this song through lyrics and sound also, define this song in the economy of pop, prioritising sexual and bodily desires in its expressions.

Lady Gaga in the *LoveGame* video is depicted in a staged and dramatic scene, where she is naked, with her body strategically bejewelled in diamonds and gems. The diamonds and gems depict Lady Gaga's body as valuable, luxurious and classy, due to the fact that such pricey stones are used in such a large quality and so unconventionally to adorn her body. She is not only sexy, enticing and attractive in these scenes, but she also depicted as glamorous and feminine. This scene is represented in Appendix 3, Images 3 and 4. Theoretically, female performers are traditionally considered as enacting overtly sexual displays in their music performances, making this a characterising component of the female performance (Green 1997:25). The symbolic meanings of sexual display in turn, connote femininity and it is through this representation, that female music performers affirm constructions of patriarchal femininity according to Green (Green: 1997: 25). The depiction of Lady Gaga in this performance scene, plays to the male gaze and invites the sexual objectification of herself, specifically due to her naked bejewelled body and the position she lays. She lies on her back, relaxed and seductive, and is so doing depicts herself as passive, vulnerable, and also intriguing. In this way, the viewer is positioned as powerful because the viewer is watching Lady Gaga and taking pleasure from it, while Lady

Gaga performs and works to seduce the viewer. She is depicted as vulnerable and as needing a man. She stereotypically attracts the voyeuristic gaze on to herself, and in turn, performs to the pleasure of the male, and through this, ideas of male as dominant and superior to women are maintained and supported (Green 1997:25).

Lady Gaga's body in this music video is focused on in two major ways in this video. Firstly, her legs are predominantly bare in this video, and this brings attention not only to her legs as sexually attractive, but it also accentuates her private parts, due to the v-shape created by the leotards worn by Lady Gaga in this video. Her legs as well as her private parts are both points of sexual appeal and enticement. Drawing attention to these throughout the song puts emphasis on the sexual nature of this music video. Green (1997) asserts that the image of the paid, female singer who puts body and voice on public display in a patriarchal society has inevitably become associated with that of a "sexual temptress" or "prostitute" (Green 1997:29). Within these patriarchal boundaries, it can be argued that Lady Gaga enhances herself as sexually tempting and appealing, through her attire, for example, in order to operate successfully within a patriarchal society. There is typically no place for any other kind of representation, without going against dominant views of femininity. In this example, she doesn't do this, but rather affirms patriarchy and its expectations of performed sexuality by female artists. Women thus have to work within these boundaries where their representations as performers are predetermined for them. To be successful in this patriarchal culture, they have to succumb to these expectations and work within them. Lady Gaga however, in her dominant representations of sexuality, does not represent this.

Lady Gaga's attire in *Bad Romance* depicts her dominantly as sexy and attractive to men. Throughout the *Bad Romance* video, Lady Gaga's clothes tend to be made up of underwear, tight body suits, and transparent items of clothing. Wearing a face mask and underwear in one scene, also implies that the focus on her in this scene is not on her beauty, but on her body. This further represents her body as emphasised as the site of sexual pleasure and as the focus for these men. The body of Lady Gaga as a female body is used to be attractive and pleasing to the male gaze, and as such the desires of men are prioritised, with Lady Gaga being used to be physically attractive to men. Representing women as "a spectacle to be looked at, subjected to the gaze of the male audience" depicts women as decorative elements used for voyeuristic pleasure (Van

Zoonen 1994:87; Fourie 2002:297). As sexually appealing to male desires, Lady Gaga furthermore works to affirm power positions in patriarchy, emphasising the importance of women in patriarchy as providing erotic pleasure to the male.

Lady Gaga in this scene is forced to expose her body and dance to display and sell herself to the highest bidding man. She is forced to show her body to the men by her back up dancers, who pull her protective coat off and carry her toward the men. As such she is forced by the dancers to dance and show her body, evident in an image from this scene in Appendix 3, Image 38. She is shown as resistant to exposing her body, because the coat is pulled from her, she immediately places her hand over her private parts to protect them from being looked at. She is resistant to displaying her body and performing to the men, as she tries to fight the back up dancers, who are too strong for her and this leads to her submitting to their will. She dances for the men and in so doing, works to convince them to bid highly for her, and essentially sells herself through her body and appearance to these men. But, this is an action that she is forced into.

It represents her as being forced and oppressed by a male dominated and controlled world, to do things she doesn't want to, but eventually has to fall in line and do things she doesn't agree with. She becomes a victim of a controlling system, in which she is positioned as insignificant, and only important in her sexual appeal. This scene is significant because of all these signs and meanings communicated. When translated into a real world situation, this scene represents a sexual oppression by men on women, in terms of how a patriarchal society determines sexual expectations of women, in terms of appearance and sexual appeal. It also represents a patriarchal society, where women are forced to sell their bodies to men, physically and symbolically, and this essentially represents prostitution.

7.3) Representing Sexuality as an Agent of Female Power

In the song *LoveGame,* the concept of a 'love game', when semiotically analysed, carries a deeper meaning by representing Lady Gaga as being in control of her female sexual desire. This is because 'love game' not only refers to a short-lived romance, but more specifically is indicative of a one-night stand with someone. It is thus a relationship or a romance based on sex and fun, and not on feelings and significance. Lady Gaga, singing about playing a love game, is

about her searching for a lover for the night. The concept of fun and sex is further emphasised in the lyrics of the bridge of the song – the lyrics contained in Appendix 1. They are *"Lets have some fun/This beat is sick/I wanna take a ride/On your disco stick"* (Lady Gaga Official Website 2010:1). Here, the 'beat' refers to loud music most probably in a club setting and 'disco stick', though it adds to ideas of a dance club, is rather a euphemism that refers to a man's penis. The lyrics *"I wanna take a ride"* enhance this idea, with 'taking a ride' indicating the actual act and motion of sex in colloquial terms. In the second verse, she also sings *"You've indicated your interest/I'm educated in sex, yes/And now I want it bad/Want it bad/ A Love Game/ A Love Game"* (Lady Gaga Official Website: 2010: 1). Here, towards the middle part of the song, she confirms and highlights her desire for sex, as associated with playing a love game. In looking beyond the narrative and superficial readings of this song, it is clear that Lady Gaga is communicating an unbridled and unashamed desire and lust, as a women, to sexually satisfy herself, by proposing that someone participate in playing a 'love game' with her. She is thus expressing her want for a lover and in so doing, defines sex according to herself, prioritising her female sexual desire. It also emphasises he female agency in satisfying her needs by looking for a lover, as opposed to being looked for by a man - a gender role expectation in a patriarchal society.

Towards the middle of the *LoveGame* music video, after the cops bust Lady Gaga and her dancers, there are shorts scenes of Lady Gaga and a male and Lady Gaga and a female cop in the same booth, kissing although not at the same time. The scenes alternate, with Lady Gaga and the male cop and Lady Gaga, and the female cop, though the same actions are carried out between them. There is a clear indication that Lady Gaga is sexually involved with both of them, as they perform suggested sexual acts. Lady Gaga and the male and female cop respectively, please and enjoy each other in the booth. Thus, she represents herself as being part of a heterosexual relationship as well as a homosexual relationship, evident from her kissing the female cop in a sexual way, referenced to in Appendix 3, Image 10, particularly. She shows that both of these are apart of her and enjoyed by her, and has been quoted as saying she is bisexual in real life. This may thus be an expression of who she is through her music video. This is a representation of Lady Gaga, not only representing her sexual freedom but also bringing attention to bi-sexuality and homosexuality as natural, glamorous and accepted, instead of taboo, wrong and unfavourable as has been its representation in society. Her sexual freedom is highlighted as she

uses her power and freedom to choose her sexual partners and she chooses both male and female explicitly. In so doing she breaks away from expected sexual behaviours and represents this in her work in pop culture.

A scene in the *LoveGame* video that is carried in short snips throughout, shows Lady Gaga naked and strategically bejewelled and covering her breasts, while seated between two men, in an empty room on a bench – with this scene represented in Appendix 3, Image 9. Lady Gaga sits in between them, facing one of them with other sitting with his legs open behind her. The men are both scantily clad and Lady Gaga too is not clothed, with most of her naked body exposed, though her private parts are strategically covered. This scene is highly suggestive of a sexual act from the way they are dressed, positioned and the movements they express. Lady Gaga kisses them both, has very close bodily contact with them as she is closely positioned in between them, touches and leans into them and seductively stretches her legs vertically as to display them and also separates them. Her being naked, means that essentially she is showing her vagina to the man in front of her, as if they were about to have sex. Interestingly, this scene, suggestive of sex shows not just two people engaging in sexual pleasure, but three, two men and one woman. A threesome with two males and a female is not usually represented in the mass media or in pop culture. Threesomes are typically known to involve two females and one male, and are the prioritised sexual notion of a threesome. In this is scenario, the male's sexual desires and needs are prioritised and the females work to achieve this. The females being together are also sexually pleasing to the male. This, essentially, pleases and prioritises the male participant, as he receives most of the attention and pleasure, and because satisfying his sexual desires, as the only man with two women, is central.

In Lady Gaga's representation of a threesome however, she as the female participant, is prioritised and accordingly her sexual needs and desires are on the forefront of this experience. She as the female is in control and is in control and is pleasured by the two men. This ascribes a sense of power to Lady Gaga as her sexual needs and desires are focused on and met, over the sexual desires of the men. As such, Lady Gaga shines a light on the sexual needs and desires of women, in this representation. This important because in traditionally in products of pop culture and mass media, it the sexual desires and needs of men that are primarily emphasised, with the female subjects positioned just as serving the man and satisfying his desires. Female sexual

enjoyment is not always emphasised and represented. This stems form a patriarchal notion of the roles and expectations of men and women. Lady Gaga's representation of a threesome is important in this video, as it turns this notion upside down, representing an alternative and empowering sexual position for women, where their needs and desires, and the satisfaction of these, are highlighted. This scene re-assigns power positions and expresses a different and challenging notion of expressing the freedom of sexual desire of women. It is highlights the sexual needs and desires of women as well as the freedom of women to express their sexuality in non-conformist ways, such as through a threesome with two men.

The specific gestures directed to the camera that stands out in the *LoveGame* video, strongly relate to sex and sexuality. Firstly, in two different scenes, Lady Gaga slides her hand smoothly across and down her vagina. This is first seen in the 34th second of the music video where Lady Gaga in the bejewelled individual performance scene takes her hand and touches her vagina, while lying down and looking straight into the camera. Two minutes and three seconds in to the video, in the third dance performance scene, Lady Gaga stands dancing on the bonnet of a car and pauses while dancing to slowly slides her hand down her crotch and caresses her vagina. This performance is captured in Image 8 of Appendix 3. Both of these are carried out as intentional and explicit performance gestures made to the camera.

These scenes are clearly performed by Lady Gaga in order to draw attention to her vagina. In so doing, communicates ideas that refer directly to women. The vagina as the female sexual organ is highlighted and focused on by Lady Gaga and as she caresses her vagina while directly looking into the camera. She is also emphasising the idea of female sexuality and female sexual pleasure. Her hand touches her vagina signals the idea of sexual pleasure experienced by female through female masturbation, using the hand. Through these gestures, her female sexuality is expressed as something she enjoys and thus, she celebrates sex, her sexual desires and her sexual pleasure. These gestures thus focus on sex and female sexual pleasure and are highlighted by Lady Gaga through these gestures.

In a scene separate from the narrative in the *Paparazzi* music video, Lady Gaga represents herself as the singer of the songs and sings and performs directly to the camera. Initially in this scene, Lady Gaga frolics around alone on a large antique couch, referent to the mansion, and perform this song directly to the camera. She rolls around on the couch and lays back in a

sexually seductive way, as if she waits for a lover or fantasises about a lover. Through her body movements, she expresses a sexual desire. In another shot of this scene, three men depicted as musicians or heavy metal rock stars, sit on the couch. In the scene following this, Lady Gaga sits in between them and is very sexual with all of them at the same time, touching them simultaneously, licking them and kissing them in turns. These three men in turn enjoy this and keep the focus on Lady Gaga by pleasing her and by taking part in this sexual activity. This scene represents sense of promiscuity with multiple male partners at the same time. It is also indicative of a female sexual fantasy where she is desired by many different men at the same time, who all seek to give her attention and affection. This scene represents Lady Gaga outside the songs narrative as possessing a sexual freedom, where she can take on multiple sexual partners simultaneously, who are all focused on serving her. It is a provocative scene in which the focus is placed on the female and the sexual desires of the female are emphasised over the male participants.

In the lasts scene of *Paparazzi*, Lady Gaga appears in a short, architectural, cocktail dress made out of silver metal, at a police station. She also has smudged bright purple eye make on, referent to lyrics within this song which state "My lashes are dry/Purple tear drops I cry/It don't have a price" (Lady Gaga Official website: 2010:1). At the police station, she is being processed and prepared for jail, and is taking her mug shot as per instruction of the male voice in the background giving her orders, and she follows them, while holding up a small board with words "Police, 064, Paparzzi" on them. This board is meant to classify her by stating her name, but instead holds the title of this song. In this short scene, Lady Gaga gestures to the camera many times in overtly sexual ways. In taking her mug shot she poses with her mouth open while groping her own breast, sucks her finger in her mouth as a reference to male oral sex and poses with a pouted and open mouth. These actions are evident in Images 28 and 29 of Appendix 3. This overtly sexual behaviour at a police station depicts Lady Gaga as expressing rebellion to authority, by condescendingly constructing herself as sexual and seducing to the male police officers taking her mug shot.

This behaviour represents her as rebellious, superior and defiant. She uses her sexual expressions in an inappropriate situation, and does this intentionally to express the liberty and freedom that she does have over herself in a jail setting, and this is her body and expressions. She uses these

sexual expressions of her body to express a certain kind of individual freedom, to communicate that even though she is in jail, she still posses a power and control within herself, that institutions such as prison, cannot take away. In a parallel way, it also communicates that institutions in society that are not as restricting and harsh as jail is, should also have no hold or influence over an the sexual and boy expressions of an individual. These sexually-charged bodily expressions thus signify a power that Lady Gaga innately owns and possesses and this power is the freedom to express herself. What's more is that she expresses this power of freedom of expression in a very female sense, as she uses her expressions as a female to be sexually tempting to a man, for example, by sucking on her finger, implying oral sex to man. She uses expressions that are specific to her as a female to illustrate her freedom of expression as a powerful characteristic and as emancipating to her, even in a confined and limiting circumstance such as jail. Her freedom to express herself, as she does through her body while being photographed for her mug shots, bring satisfaction and fulfilment to her as this renders her free and powerful within herself.

In a performance scene that is separate from the narrative of the video for *Bad Romance*, Lady Gaga is represented as herself - the artist. She wears a gold outfit, made of a thick and shiny material, which consists of a long sleeve top, long pants, a ballerina skirt and high heeled shoes; all covered and joined in the material. This specific outfit is depicted in Image 43 of Appendix 3. This outfit is futuristic, modern, bold and glamorous. From all the previous looks in this video, this outfit presents a different and contrasting representation of Lady Gaga. She is not represented as sexy and exposed, but rather as strong, innovative and modern through her outfit. This outfit does not attract the male gaze, or present Lady Gaga as sexually seductive. Rather, she presented as owning whether or not she wants to be sexy, and emphasises glamour over sexiness here.

In the *Bad Romance* video, Lady Gaga's short hair serves as a representation of independence and power. Importantly, in this video, Lady Gaga's hair is styled in a short bob, particularly in scenes where she is not being presented to the men for auction, portrayed in Appendix 3, Images 32 and 44. Shorter hair is an antithesis to longer hair and as such, is not seen as a representation of femininity. This is also because short hair is referent to boys, tomboys or children, and is not the ideal appearance and construction of a female in a patriarchal, male dominated society. Within a society like this, women are expected to enhance their female qualities and attributes,

so as to look appealing to men and to fit into these men's standards of female appearances. The short hair on Lady Gaga depicts her as rebellious to the standards and expectations of a patriarchal society. This is depicted in the last dance scene of this video, where her hair is short and where her dance performance represents victory, triumph and strength, in accordance with her murder of the highest bidder. After murdering him, she is free and her short hair represents freedom to express herself, her identity and her expression of femininity, in ways that does not correspond to dominant female gender roles. With the short hair, she represents herself as free from male expectations and has being in control of her own body and appearance. In the bath tub scene, shown in Appendix 3, Images 32 and 33, her hair is short, curly and a light orange colour. This represents Lady Gaga as wild and dirty, and represents a look that is not aligned with the expectations of men on female appearance. This is clear from the fact that her hair is changed from this to being straight and blonde. Her hair is tamed into a way that is appealing to the bidders, i.e., feminine, neat and standard.

In the closing scene of *Bad Romance*, Lady Gaga is depicted as presenting herself as a prize to highest bidder. She wears the fur coat discussed as a prop previously, as well as a transparent, white, lace g-string and bra set, and high-heeled, elaborate, white shoes. She wears this same heeled shoes multiple times, in different colours throughout this video, representing the male preference in terms of her shoes. She is openly wearing just her underwear and this shows her as seemingly ready to engage in sexual acts with her buyer. The underwear highlights her appearance as sexually seductive and appealing. By exposing her body in this way, depicts her as showing her body in this way for the pleasure of her male buyer. In the final dance scene of the video, Lady Gaga and her back up dancers wear bright red variations of cat suits and leotards, made out of lace, along with black stiletto boots. These clothes, predominantly though their red colour, represent a change in atmosphere in the video, from female oppression and male dominance, to a celebratory feeling of freedom and triumph. In the next scene, Lady Gaga sets her buyer on fire, and these red outfits thus serve to represent strength, victory and celebration, as Lady Gaga is liberated and defeats male force and power. Lastly, she lies next to the charred body of her buyer, in black underwear, with a metal bra, shooting out sparks. Her clothes change to represent how she wants to look, rather than how her buyer wants her to look. The sparks shooting form her bra, represents her bra as a weapon for defence, and even more highlights her

female attributes as powerful. Additionally, through the murder of her buyer, she has freed herself from being sexually trapped and in so doing, gains power over herself and is not a passive participant of patriarchy.

7.4) Conclusion

This chapter discusses and analyses the primary ways in which Lady Gaga represents sexuality through her performances in songs and music videos, using semiotics and Queer and Feminist theory, to produce the appropriate results. These representations and their analysis provide the two main findings of this section. Firstly, Lady Gaga's songs and music videos represent sexuality as working to affirm patriarchy in two ways - by focusing on hetero-normative sexuality, i.e., heterosexuality and by representing the female as sexually submissive to the man. These are both patriarchal ideas that prioritises male sexual desire and pleasure over that of the female and maintain the patriarchal position of women, as passive and controlled. The main argument of this section however is that sexuality is represented as tool of empowerment for females, in Lady Gaga's work. Thus, Lady Gaga's representations of sexuality deviate and resist patriarchal ideology and rather present alternative expressions of sexuality that liberate women from traditional and patriarchal expectations. Lady Gaga's representations present a new position for female identity, where female sexual desire and pleasure are priority as well as where females have control over their looks and behaviour. Furthermore, Lady Gaga's representations importantly highlight the freedom of females to express their sexuality and desires through performances such as the lesbian scene in *LoveGame* as well as the individual performance scene in *Paparazzi*, in a way that eliminates male sexual pleasure as primary – as is conceived in patriarchy. These meanings are more powerful than the expected roles of female sexual submissiveness as well as the representation of heterosexuality, and therefore form the main argument of this section.

Chapter 8:

The Empowered Female versus the Meek Sex-kitten, and other Feminist identities in Lady Gaga's work

8.1) Introduction

In this chapter, the analyses of Lady Gaga's representation of feminist identity are explored. This section deals with overlapping issues from the previous sections on gender and sexuality, but differs fundamentally from these sections. This is because specific representations of women within the field of feminism are prioritised. As such, this section specifically uses feminist theories as a prioritised foundation that strongly relates to how women are represented against men. The main representations of these analyses show Lady Gaga presenting feminist identity in two different ways. Feminist identity is represented by Lady Gaga as strong and as possessing agency and independence, a notion that does not necessarily conform to patriarchal gender traditions. Representing women as weak, vulnerable and passive is the other dominant way Lady Gaga presents feminist identity in her work. As such, discussions of the analyses are presented within these parameters and encompass representations and messages communicated in the songs and music videos for *LoveGame, Paparazzi*, and Bad *Romance*. References are also made to the images contained in Appendix 3 where relevant, to provide an easier understanding of analysis and discussion.

8.2) Representations of Female Identity as weak and passive

As discussed, the representation of feminist identity in Lady Gaga's work, speaks to ideas and representations in which women do not act in accordance with patriarchal expectations of gender. Conversely, women who do adopt a patriarchal ideology as forming their dominant belief system about the world are typically considered as weak with no power, independence or feminist goals, as they maintain the male supremacy in society as well as the lack of equal rights and opportunities between men and women (Gordon 1986:29; (Evans 1995:3). Furthermore, they see this patriarchal world as unchangeable and succumb to the conditions of it. This is because this patriarchal system creates social conditions that place women outside male dominance

(Dolan 1988:3). This section analyses certain features within texts as representing this description of women, as weak, passive and controlled. Gender and power form the main constituents of feminist thought, and here the gender group of females are represented as having no power and rather are submissive to male dominance (Van Zoonen 1994:4). The manifestation of these representations of the female gender within Lady Gaga's work is discussed in the analysis of texts below.

Lady Gaga's vocal performance of the song *LoveGame* is not sung consistently and presents different changes in voice, in order to convey certain feelings and emotions through the song. The prominent way in which she sings the song relates back to the representation of herself in pop culture, and here more specifically in her representation of female identity. Lady Gaga sings different parts of the song in certain ways, to indicate the different moods and tones of the song. The bridge, which also introduces the song, in sung in a tuneful, spoken, voice which translates as innocent and sweet. It provokes the idea that Lady Gaga, singing in her sweet voice, is not to be held responsible for the message communicated, which is a proposition for a sexual encounter. The sweetness of her voice is also suggestive and playful as she calmly and sweetly expresses her sexual desires, in a way that is enticing, yet still guiltless and childlike. This removes ideas of her as powerful and independent, and this singing style portrays her as passive. She sings in a way that represents her as less powerful to males, by positioning her as passive and obedient to patriarchal female expectations (Fourie 2002:401). Adding to this notion, some parts of the song, for instance, in the bridge and chorus, where singing is subdued and innocent, is also suggestive of the female agency of Lady Gaga being minimized. This is because in the delivery of the song in those parts, her voice is not powerful and decisive but is used rather to seduce, entice and convince in a way where she may get what she wants, but does not claim responsibility and control over it. This type of singing is typical in pop music where female vocalists attempt to allure listeners, in a very passive way.

The overall sound of Lady Gaga's singing voice in the song *Paparazzi* similarly, can be described as strong, detached and composed in parts as well as emotional and desperate in other parts. This is suggestive of the complexity and dichotomy contained within this song, expressed through Lady Gaga's vocal performance. The tone of Lady Gaga's voice also changes

throughout the song from strong and harsh to soft and pleading. This can be considered as representative of the craze, desperation, longing and determination she expresses in this song, to attain her desires, which are reflected in the lyrics and the vocals combined. The background vocal which are made up of female voices are sung softly and weakly, adding to the vulnerability, innocence and pleading expressions of the chorus specifically. In contrasting the background vocals particularly in the chorus, to the rest of the song, they seem more controlled and calculated. Thus, in adding and emphasising the female quality of the song, this sound and singing can also come off as insincere and manipulative, further adding to the representation of Lady Gaga, as the singer of the song.

The type of love described in *Paparazzi*, also shows a vulnerable side of Lady Gaga's, in that she depicts herself as emotionally dependent on the paparazzi and the rock star she loves, in desiring to be loved by them. She needs them both to return her love and accept her, to achieve the goals of love and fame that are favourable to her life. She is depicted as vulnerable because she is a devoted lover of the paparazzi and the rock star, clear from the lyrics referring to her love for the paparazzi, namely, *"I'm your biggest , I'll follow you until you love me/Papa-Paparazzi" and "Baby/you'll be famous/Chase you down until you love me/Papa-Paparazzi",* and her love for the rock star sung in the lyrics, "*Promise I'll be kind/But I wont stop until that boy is mine" and "Got my flash on its true, need that picture of you/ It's so magical/ We'd be so fantastico"*. (Lady Gaga Official Site 2010:1).

Within this vulnerability and emotional dependence however, she is unashamedly admitting and showing that she is not loved by the rock star and the paparazzi, even though she strongly desires his love. This in turn signifies that she is not embarrassed to admit her weaknesses, in the pursuit of her goals. She also sacrifices her feelings and emotions, in order to reach these goals, clear from the lyrics, *"My lashes are bright/Purple teardrops I cry/It don't have a price/Loving you is cherry pie"* (Lady Gaga Official Site 2010:1). These lyrics communicates that Lady Gaga's tears and sadness caused by her pursuit of love and fame are worthless, useless and unimportant, because loving the rock star and paparazzi makes up for it in being is satisfying, enjoyable and indulgent to her. Thus, even though her vulnerability and emotional dependence may be considered as depicting her as weak, it is this vulnerability and emotional dependence that

signifies her strength and power because they are not hindrances in her pursuit of achieving her goals. Rather, she sees past them and is intent on focusing on achieving her goals and doesn't let her emotions and negative feelings stand in the way.

The 'fall' of Lady Gaga in *Paparazzi*, shown in Image 18 of Appendix 3, literally and figuratively describes the opening scene of the music video. Lady Gaga and her boyfriend are in bed. They passionately kiss each other and she asks him if he loves he or to which he replies 'yes'. It is this cue that allows viewers to understand this male as her boyfriend, instead of a random lover. They are thus in a relationship and love each other. They continue kissing and her boyfriend lifts her up from the bed and carries her to the balcony ledge. He asks her if she trusts him, to which she replies in the affirmative and they continue to kiss. Paparazzi photographers photograph them and he forces himself on Lady Gaga as she resists. She then hits him in the face and angered by this action, he picks her up and throws her over the balcony. She falls to the floor, and is photographed, bleeding and injured. This shows that he tricked Lady Gaga into trusting him, when his goal was to be photographed with such a famous and rich celebrity such as Lady Gaga, in order to increase his fame. He uses Lady Gaga in order to exploit her fame. Thus he uses her and even though he may have gained fame from his actions, in the process he physically and violently hurt and injured Lady Gaga, with no regret and no remorse.

The signs communicated from the actions and behaviours performed in this scene, firstly, indicate that Lady Gaga and her boyfriend are involved in a seemingly trusting and loving relationship, which is typical and to be expected from two people in a relationship. As previously analysed and discussed, Lady Gaga is strongly established as the celebrity in this music video as well as the resident and assumed owner of the mansion. This places her boyfriend in a less dominant and influential position as he, assumed to be an average Joe, is in her world of fame, excess and wealth. In terms of wealth and celebrity status, she is seemingly powerful, but as a woman in bed with her boyfriend, she is depicted as naive, needy and as requiring reassurance of his love. He is the dominant sexual partner in the relationship, as he is on top of her while kissing, he undresses her and he carries her out on to the balcony. All these actions signify that control is given to the boyfriend by Lady Gaga, who comes off as submissive and passive. In so doing, Lady Gaga's character highlights and succumbs to the patriarchal force that seeks to

organize and rationalize the way we see the world - that the male as more powerful than the female (Fourie 2002:401). She proves to be too trust worthy of him, because in the end of this scene, he throws he over the balcony in rage and anger, and this positions him as him as having gained power over her. He as a man and as her boyfriend, is depicted as a liar, as manipulative and misleading and as using Lady Gaga to his advantage and for his own benefit.

He carries her to the balcony, forces himself on her and then throws her over and this action represents him as overpowering over Lady Gaga and also represents his strength and physical advantage over her, as he is able to easily lift her up and throw her over. Lady Gaga's physical strength is represented as she hits him in the face as her defence, but comes off as second to his strength and additionally shows Lady Gaga as not strong enough to defend herself adequately in this situation. In him throwing her over the balcony in a rage and retaliation he feels after she hits him, shows that he as a man does not tolerate the behaviour of a woman defending herself physically and through violent means. Lady Gaga's defending herself was unexpected to him, and this indicates that he has certain beliefs about the expectations and behaviours of women, that do not include a female defending herself physically against a man. His beliefs are seemingly rooted in a patriarchal conception of male and female behaviours, where woman are meant to submit to the desires and the exertion of force by a man on to them - something Lady Gaga does not do as she forcefully attempts to defend herself and physically hurt her boyfriend. This scene thus renders Lady Gaga as a victim, taken advantage of by the male participant, who by throwing her over the balcony, places himself in a powerful and controlling position.

The narrative of the song *Bad Romance,* also communicates a representation of Lady Gaga in terms of her feminist identity. Desiring his negative and 'bad' parts refers to his negative qualities and dark side, described by Lady Gaga as *"his ugly, his disease, his drama, his horror, his design, and his psycho"*. (Lady Gaga Official Site: 2010:1). These can be translated as his negative characteristics and his dark, troubled side. These include his worst and most unattractive qualities, physically and emotionally; his bad and temperamental side; his sicknesses and anxieties; his addictions; what plagues and bother him; his problems; his true self behind his pretence; what he is ashamed and afraid of; his deviances and peculiarities; and the parts of himself he hides. Lady Gaga not only accepts this dark, negative side or negative love, she

celebrates these negative characteristics of her lover's. She strongly desires and loves them, because it is a part of the lover that she can own and indulge in, for herself. This would fulfil and satisfy her as it is part of the bad romance they share. All that is left for Lady Gaga to have are his negative features, which she is aware of. So, instead of refusing them she invites them in, desires them and they are appealing to her, because it is a part of him that only she shares in. They thus share specific understandings of themselves and their love, and this makes it a romance unique to them. This represents Lady Gaga's blatant desperation for love. Within this tragic situation Lady Gaga is presented as desperate and crazed, and this presents her as weak, melancholic and unhappy.

The bath tub scene in *Bad Romance*, is an important scene to consider in the representation of female identities, given that all the participants in this scene are female. The bath tub is large, deep and white, and typically found in a bathroom, but in this video, stands alone in the centre of a big white room. It has a utility function used for to bathe oneself and clean ones body, and is also associated with relaxation by taking a bubble bath. The experience of having a bath is a particularly private one, mainly because ones body is in the nude. In the bath tub in this video, Lady Gaga is forcefully undressed by two, young, thin, attractive women, who are very similar in appearance to fashion models. They forcefully remove her clothes and make her bath in the bath tub. They also hold her down and force her to drink a clear liquid in a cocktail glass. The bathtub in this music video is thus represented as a site of oppression for Lady Gaga, where her freedom is minimized and she in under the control and force of the two models, who physically force her to do things. The private experience of having a bath is now turned into a public and open experience, with the models present and not only witnessing Lady Gaga bathing, but stripping her from her clothes and viewing her naked body. Lady Gaga thus has no privacy and her body is on show for the models to see. The bath tub also represents a trap for Lady Gaga, where she is forced and trapped to do what the models want her to do, i.e., bath and get clean. It is a trap to her as any resistance to them or expression of liberty on her part, is diminished by the force and might they have over her. Thus, she is bullied, forced, and physically assaulted in the bath tub - all to serve the power of male domination, under which the models are influenced.

In the bath tub scene, Lady Gaga sits in a bath tub, waiting and bewildered. Her eyes in this scene are big, bulging dark and animated and through this, she is depicted as innocent, bewildered, confused and out of sorts. The women in this scene represent authority, with Lady Gaga forced by their authority to do things against her will. They forcefully make her drink something, as if to drug her and make her more submissive, controlled and less resistant to them. This scene is important as it represents Lady Gaga as being dominated and controlled by females and this depicts them as disunited as a gender group. This strongly goes against ideals of Radical feminism, where sisterhood and the unification of females in general is seen as central to feminism (Evans 1995:65). The models are thus placed outside the economy of feminism and in the economy of patriarchy, as the explicitly support patriarchal oppression on their own gender. The females oppress and bully Lady Gaga, as an extension of make control, and this shows their commitment and loyalty to the men in control. As such, the female oppressors work towards presenting Lady Gaga as attractive and acceptable to the men in this bath scene, and Lady Gaga is defiant to this idea. She is additionally being aesthetically and physically prepared to be sold to one of the men. The authoritative females in this video in an indirect way, support the sale of a woman to a man, and prepare Lady Gaga for this sale. Her resistance and fighting against these women in this scene is useless eventually, as they over power her and gain control over her. Collective female power is thus muted in this video, and sisterhood as a representation of strength and power is, abandoned.

Lady Gaga is presented to the men in Bad Romance for the first time wearing a large coat that covers her body. Coats are usually worn in cold weather and in the winter time to protect the body form the cold. Lady Gaga in this scene uses her scantily clad body form being exposed to the men who are watch her and as such the coat serves to represent Lady Gaga's strong resistance to protect and cover her body up. Here, is represented as a "a spectacle to be looked at, subjected to the gaze of the male audience" and is additionally positioned as passive against the active male subject (Van Zoonen 1994:87). She hides her body behind the coat and fights the back up dancers who try and pry it a way from her. This represents Lady Gaga as resisting the male gaze and shows that she strongly does not want be desired by these men, who, through the presentation of her body, will bid to win her. She wants to stay covered, as not staying covered and exposing her slightly covered body to the men, means that she becomes a commodity or an

object to be had and consumed, and as a women, is cheapened in value and significance. Here too, however, Lady Gaga's will and resistance is overridden by the back up dancers, who forcefully remove the jacket from her and compel her to perform for the men. She has no power or protection in this situation. She is left very vulnerable and weak, and accordingly forced to carry out the will, orders and desires of the back up dancers - extended to them by the men in charge.

The animal coat she wears to adorn her body after she is sold to a particular man, is a made out of the body of a white wolf or white bear, with the entire body of fur, including the head of the animal, making up this coat. The coat is an obvious outcome of a hunt, and wearing the coat is to gloat about the kill as well as the luxury and specialness of the fur being worn. Lady Gaga is dressed in this coat as a way to be attractive to the man. The coat represents her as regal, expensive and unique, as the qualities and associations of the coat are inferred on to her identity through wearing the coat and what is represents. The identity and qualities of Lady Gaga being expressed through this coat, is the identity they try to create, to be appealing to the man, and is not how she really sees herself. As mentioned, the coat was most probably attained through the hunting and killing of the animal, where the animal's fur was sued to produce a coat. The hunt and consequent death of an animal is seen as a prize or trophy for the hunter. In the same way, Lady Gaga is represented as the prize or trophy to the bidder, in the same way that the fur coat she wears is represented.

In a scene in *Bad Romance*, Lady Gaga stands in a still pose, adorned by hanging diamonds, and is surrounded in a circle by the bidding men. This scene can be described by Images 41 and 42 in Appendix 3. The hanging diamonds around her are indicative of wealth, splendour and luxury and are used to decorate the appearance of Lady Gaga. In this way, Lady Gaga is represented as decorative and as an object of desire that satisfies the voyeuristic pleasure of the men (Fourie 2002:297). The diamonds also serve to imply associations of it on to Lady Gaga, such as that she is valuable and precious, but as a commodity, too. It presents her as more attractive and 'expensive', and makes her an appealing purchase.

She thus presents her body as commodity to be auctioned on, to the men, and is forced to do this. At this point, she has already been sold, and this scene is representative of her body being put on display, for the pleasure of the men, as well as to emphasise her as purchased by a particular man. Lady Gaga is decorated and put in display, with an emphasis on her scantily clad body. As such, her identity as a female is emphasised in this scene. She is depicted rather as an object on display and is equated to this object as well as presented as a commodity to be traded in. She is obedient and controlled in this scene, with her body being used for male pleasure and enjoyment. She is passive, weak, inactive and easily controlled and this is represented as the ideal state of a woman to these men, represented as patriarchs. A fearful, weak, disempowered, helpless and vulnerable woman, as depicted by Lady Gaga in this scene, is submissive to male domination and offers no trouble or challenge to male control. This renders a sense of control to the males over Lady Gaga, the female, as the she is perceived as a passive object in this way (O' Sullivan 2003:85). This representation of women as controlled and oppressed by men, can easily fit in to a world designed and controlled by men, and this position of women allows for and enhances the dominant and ruling position of men. Women, who offer no challenge to the power and control of men, thus serve to reinforce the status quo, and maintain the disempowered positions they are in.

8.3) Representations of Female Agency and Strength

Analysing representations of feminist identity refers to analysing the way the female gender is represented in the work of Lady Gaga as well as how these representations relate the important theories of feminism. It further describes the way these representation work to enhance different strands of feminism and feminist thought. Different Feminism strands are all based on the awareness that women are excluded from male cultural, social, sexual, political and intellectual discourse (Dolan 1988:3). This reveals the social conditions that place women outside male dominance. Women are emphasised as a disadvantaged minority group that needs equal opportunity, rights and power in society (Evans 1995:16). It is important to note that this study of Lady Gaga seeks to establish if representations enhance or destabilize ideas of patriarchy. This influences the representation of women in this study, because being women speaks to identity constructs of gender and sexuality. Suggesting that female identity is represented as having a powerful agency with Lady Gaga's work generally refers to representations in which women do

not act in accordance with patriarchal expectations of gender, because patriarchy ascribes certain traditional and behavioural roles on to women. In so doing, the representation of women may be considered as challenging patriarchy and creating a new sphere for the representation of powerful and free women outside the patriarchal economy. These representations within the work of Lady Gaga will now be discussed.

The lyrical analysis of Lady Gaga's song *LoveGame*, provides certain representations of her female identity. In the first verse of *LoveGame,* Lady Gaga sings, *"I wanna kiss you/But if I do then I might miss you babe"* (Lady Gaga Official Website 2010: 1). In considering the signifiers and signifieds within these lines, the signs point to a deeper meaning, and not just to the literal meaning. They identify Lady Gaga's weaknesses, fear and vulnerability in terms of falling in love and having a serious relationship with another. She expresses her physical and sexual desires plainly as human nature, but shows that she may resist satisfying those desires in order to not risk really loving or falling in love with someone. She understands that being sexually involved with someone means there is a chance that they may start having deeper feelings for each other - something that Lady Gaga, from her side, does not want. Thus, she does not want to 'miss' her 'babe', or be dependent on a man to satisfy her emotional needs. However, her resistance towards a real and relationship also suggests that she is actively in control of making decisions regarding the relationships she has, where her needs are favoured and prioritised. In so doing, Lady Gaga's representations of a female here, up holds feminist ideals of the individual woman's right to freedom, self-determination, self-government as well as to determine her own destiny outside of sex-determined roles (hooks 1984:24). This female agency, regardless of the type of relationship it invokes, represents female independence and strength in general and specifically with regards to Lady Gaga. Through this standpoint, the relationship is defined and controlled by a female, as opposed to the desires of the male being on the forefront. In wanting to play a love game, Lady Gaga through out the song celebrates this concept and is happy and willing to satisfy her desires in this context.

The bridge of the song *LoveGame* further enhances struggle and opposition that Lady Gaga has with a relationship that is not a 'love game'. She admits and expresses that she wants to be loved and have affection shown towards her, but with condition. The lyrics of the start the start of the

bridge are as follows: "*Hold me and love me/ Just wanna touch you for a minute/ Maybe three seconds is enough for my heart to quit it*" (Lady Gaga Official Website 2010:1). Within these lyrics, she identifies her struggle between being loved and returning that love and satisfying her sexual urges. Importantly, Lady Gaga is not confused, contemplating or considering what she wants - she knows what she wants and this decision guides and defines her relationship with sexual or romantic partners. She wants to enjoy the love and intimacy in her encounters only for a brief time and does not want to make it last longer. She wants to be intimate with her lover for 'just a minute' and goes on to describe that 'three seconds' is enough for her heart, emotions and desires to give up the feelings, satisfaction and enjoyment that came from the intimate relationship. In comparing three seconds to a minute, it is obvious to see three seconds is significantly less than a minute, being one twentieth of a minute. This highlights the strength, ease and confidence Lady Gaga has in ending a relationship with a lover. It depicts Lady Gaga as independent, self-sufficient and lends to ideals of feminism.

The song, *LoveGame's* verses are sung strongly, forcefully and with a lot of decisiveness. The start of the bridge is sung in the highest notes throughout the song and refers to strong emotion and feelings, namely desire, being expressed. The chorus is sung in a lower range of notes and in a way that is straight forward, un-emotive and robotic. It is repetitive with the purpose of being convincing and direct to the listener or the person she is singing to, in terms of the message she is communicating. In doing it presents direct suggestions, without any cover-ups or pretences. This indicates her female and sexual strength and power, in that she is in control of the nature of the relationship and sets the rules according to what she wants. The vocal climax of the song is reached in the last verse of the song, where her singing becomes louder and deeper. It is emotional and positive and expresses seriousness and strong feeling or emotion, but is also the shortest part of the song, sung in this way. Thus, this is not the main message of the song, but is rather sung at then of the song as a climactic moment. The vocal performance of the song thus highlights the fact that she is direct in expressing her own needs in a direct and non emotional way, and also that she puts her sexual desires over romance. The un-emotive sound of her voice in certain parts of the song also show that she is bold, in control and unashamed of expressing her desires and in not wanting a romance or serious relationship with another person.

The song *Paparazzi*, and all its sentiments that are expressed, indicates a love song or about a longing for certain things, namely a desire for love and fame. The lyrics to this song can be read in Appendix 1. These concepts are in no way contradictory, but rather the combination of them and explicit desire for both of them is something that is not typical of pop love songs. To the paparazzi, Lady Gaga sings, *"I'm your biggest fan/I'll follow you until you love me/Papa-Paparazzi"; and to boy she sings, "Baby, there's no other superstar-/You know that I'll be/Your Papa-Paparazzi"* (Lady Gaga Official site 2010:10). Singing equally about love and fame, shows that Lady Gaga hold both goals equally, wants to attain both goals, and thus sees them both as important to her. This is indicative of a kind of modernity of the times that Lady Gaga embodies - where love and fame as attainable goals are both prioritised by her and she can be descried as 'wanting it all' and going after both. Lady Gaga's desire for love and to be loved back by the rock star/boy she loves typical is characteristic and distinctive of a love song, where the singer usually expresses his/her love and desire for another or celebrates his/her feelings for another. However, desire and love expressed for fame and celebrity status in a love song is not a very common sentiment. Aspects of this song thus indicate that it is an anti-traditional love song that expresses love and desire towards a subject that is uncommon, i.e., fame. This is also emphasised in descriptions about the kind of love Lady Gaga feels towards the boy as well as towards the paparazzi. This kind of love is the kind that the paparazzi and fans feel towards a star and can be described as desperate, obsessed and devoted. It is thus anti-traditional is in its approach and expression of love, and represents a certain, crazed strand of love and feeling, which Lady Gaga legitimizes and makes acceptable, through this song.

A prominent sign ascertained by a semiotic analysis of this song *Paparazzi*, is in the strength and power of Lady Gaga in fighting for and committing to her dreams of both love and fame, as communicated in the songs narrative and lyrics. This song and its content shows that Lady Gaga, as a woman, has fortitude, confidence and determination to achieve the goals that she sets for herself, no matter how unattainable they may seem. Her goals of love and fame are pursued unashamedly and with strong determination, and this song provides commentary of the difficulties of her quest. It indicates the power and drive of Lady Gaga in stating her goals and attempting to achieve them, as she fearlessly expresses her desires and admits that she wants the love and fame to be reciprocated. In a patriarchal economy, women are placed in the roles of the

private sphere. Here Lady Gaga desires fame, and this essentially puts her desires inline with the public sphere ambition. In expressing the unconventional female goals, she essentially challenges male intellectual hegemony, by pursuing goals that fall outside of female patriarchal gender roles (Evans 1983:18). This then represents her power as a woman in determining her own life and being in control of her own life, on her terms and in accordance with her own beliefs.

Her strength and power as woman, is also indicated by the fact that she defines her own standards for what she want to achieve out of life and for what her dreams are. Fame and love, together, are not dreams typical of any woman - women traditionally are conditioned by societal norm and expectations about what to dream within a patriarchal economy. Thus, their dreams are determined for them and many women live within these restrictions. They may have their own personal and private dreams and aspirations for themselves but are not in the positions to achieve them. This is because traditionally, women were meant to aspire towards motherhood, nurturing children, looking after their husbands needs and running a household. Lady Gaga through this song is a representation of the freedom and liberation of a woman and as a human being, to transcend restrictions that are placed on a female. She represents this by establishing goals that she would like to achieve for herself, and then by going after them with determination, commitment and a strong resolve. This is reflective and affirmative of liberal feminist ideology, where females are encouraged to seek equality of opportunity with men in a hierarchical society, and in so doing, reach the same ambition and achieve the same goals as men do (Evans 1995:15). This levels the playing field between men and women and furthermore, not only highlights that the status and power held by men in patriarchal economy is attainable for women too, but initiates a change in the conditions within which this is possible. This representation in the *Paparazzi* music video supports this idea. With love and fame as her goals, Lady Gaga breaks free from traditional female expectations and emphasises the freedom that women particularly have and should use in determining their lives and pursuing their dreams.

The music video for *Paparazzi* communicates a strong imagery of a celebrity lifestyle and a fantasy world, which enhances the idea that fame is a goal Lady Gaga is after. Both Lady Gaga's pursuits specifically exist within the realm of celebrity and fame, and this indicates the lifestyle

in which her goals are situated. This idea also directly relates back to the title of Lady Gaga's debut album *The Fame*, on which the song *Paparazzi* was released. This album is centred on the theme of fame, with songs speaking directly to the theme (Lady Gaga official site 2010:1). According to Lady Gaga, the concept of the album and its title, *The Fame* is about "how anyone can feel famous". She goes on to explain "I want to invite you all to the party, I want people to feel apart of this lifestyle" (Lady Gaga official site 2010:1). Additionally, the focus on fame and celebrity as a goal within this song, may serve as a metaphor to fans and other listeners, but in fact is a true reflection of Lady Gaga as a pop star and the goals she has within this economy. It thus enhances Lady Gaga's celebrity by bringing attention to herself through this song about fame and celebrity. The content of a celebrity lifestyle and living in this fantasy world of fame which she depicts in the song, thus is directly reflective of her lifestyle, and not one foreign to her. The song thus emphasises her fame as well as her goals of reaching and attaining even more fame.

This music video for *Paparazzi*, is set in very lavish and beautiful mansion, by the sea. This mansion is huge with beautifully manicured, lush green gardens and bright flowers, ornate statues, huge glass chandeliers embellished with gold and crystal fixtures, elaborate roman architecture, grandeur balconies and a magnificent pool area. The coupled 'signifieds' to this communicate strong ideas of wealth, luxury, money, class, affluence, material comfort and a privileged lifestyle. Many signs within this music video, which will be later discussed in more detail, refer to the mansion as belonging to Lady Gaga. This visually engaging and strong setting communicate ideas about the owner and inhabitant of this mansion. In combining the signifiers of the mansion and the signified discussed above, signs are developed about Lady Gaga in this specific setting. Strong meanings are communicated about Lady Gaga as successful, powerful and rich. This is because living in and owning such a luxurious mansion would mean she is an important, influential and wealthy individual who has acquired success, with the mansion and its luxuries as proof of this. It also signals a specific lifestyle of luxury and splendour, being lived by Lady Gaga. Peripherally, it defines her as someone significant, independent and very successful at what she does.

The prominent props used and displayed in the *Paparazzi* video, as well as their purposes, carry strong meanings that add to the overall themes communicated in this video, and are thus significant to the videos meaning. Some of the important props of this video are focused on in the opening scene. These specific props used are the hundred dollar bills, the diamond jewellery, the diamond encrusted Christian Dior hand glove she wears, the newspaper and tabloid magazine clipping of herself and the limo she returns home in. The hundred dollar bills are stacked in thick bundles on the bed side table and also scattered generously across the bedroom floor. These notes replaces the central image of ex-US president, Benjamin Franklin's face, with an image of Lady Gaga's face from her *Poker Face* music video-the video preceding the *Paparazzi* video. Additionally the text on the bill reads "The United States of Lady Gaga", instead of "The United States of America". This is clearly carries the meaning of Lady Gaga as powerful and influential, by ascribing a strong currency in its largest bill, to her identity. It represents Lady Gaga as taking ownership of the power that the money represents and reflecting this power back onto herself, through her money. It additionally depicts Lady Gaga, a female, as having equal opportunity of income, status, power and career, as that of men in a patriarchal world (Evans 1995:15). This representation thus confirms a positive feminist representation of Lady Gaga, as successful and powerful, rather than disadvantaged. Here, she is depicted as having the same opportunities and privileges that society gives to men, representing a key goal of feminism ideology and achieving it (Young 1990:85). Money is also found in the room in abundance, indicating an opulent lifestyle where Lady Gaga has so much money, she can leave profuse amounts of it lying around without a use. The money prop also strongly and literally reflects wealth of the character Lady Gaga depicts.

In the second scene of *Paparazzi*, Lady Gaga returns home in a bejewelled neck brace and in a wheel chair. She rises from the wheelchair and attempts to walk using crutches. The neck brace, wheelchair and crutches, all provide the meaning that her body has been hurt and injured by something, and also indicates that she is struggling to walk and that she is in the process of recovering. Most significantly, these show that Lady Gaga, with help, has survived, triumphed over her trauma and over her boyfriends attempt to kill her, and will make a full recovery. Here her strength and resilience is emphasised.

In the second dance scene, Lady Gaga wears a theatrical, white cat suit with elaborate ruffling details on her shoulders, hips and around her thighs, displayed in Image 21 of Appendix 3. In this scene, her back up dancers are all female, and dance behind her. Their outfits are all identical and are a less dramatic interpretation of her look. The back up dancers wear tight white cat suits, with black and silver elaborate ruffling around their necks and shoulders and around their ankles, and with their heads covered. The clothes thus refer to Lady Gaga's outfit in a strong way. This scene, as representing Lady Gaga's recovery and celebration of this, depicts the back up dancers as supportive, compassionate and as helping Lady Gaga in this process. Because the dancers in this scene are all female, the idea of female support, friendships and partnerships and sisterhood as strength is strongly accentuated in this scene. This is an idea championed by Radical feminists, where the creation of sisterhood and unification of women in general, is seen to develop out of patriarchal oppression that women as a group face (Evans 1995:65). This scene is evident of this – Lady Gaga has been physically hurt by a man; and the female back up dancers here are represented as nurturers and caretakers of Lady Gaga, who support her and help her in her recovery. This scene reinforces the ideas of Radical feminism by portraying the feminist identity of uniting women in sisterhood, as a movement to end oppression, sexual and otherwise, by male power.

The murder scene in *Paparazzi* is imperative in terms of the main meanings created in this music video and the representations communicated. In this scene, Lady Gaga is presented as having made a full recovery and is back in a relationship with the same man who caused harm to her by tossing her over a balcony. This represents Lady Gaga as weak and naive for taking back a man who had tried to kill her, and in turn reinforces his position as in control and dominant. They sit closely together on a couch where he reads a newspaper and she reads tabloid magazines with herself on the cover. This paints a picture of calm and normal setting, where everything is ok. He is oblivious to his surroundings and sits there assuming he is safe. The title of the magazine's headline that Lady Gaga reads, states, "The It-Girl: No more Lady Gaga", and this communicates that Lady Gaga's title as the 'It-girl' in the press has been taken over by another female celebrity. Being the 'It-girl' depicts a female celebrity as the most special and unique from all the other female celebrities. It also expresses a cultural power within pop culture. She is no longer the 'It-girl', a title she wanted, because of her accident that was intentionally caused by

her boyfriend as well as her consequent recovery, which meant she was not photographed, publicized and reported on enough to maintain the title. Lady Gaga reads this and in frustration and anger, throws the newspaper down on the table and proceeds to pour herself a cup of tea and pour her boyfriend a drink, at the table near by.

Here, Lady Gaga pours her boyfriend a drink in a glass. While doing this, she secretly adds poison in the form of a white powder, from a hidden chamber in her ring, into her boyfriends drink. This represents Lady Gaga as intentionally and purposefully carrying out a pre-meditated plan to murder her boyfriend by drugging his drink with poison. By purposefully killing him, she is taking her revenge on him for hurting her physically and emotionally and most importantly for trying to kill her. She survived the throw over the balcony, and by poisoning him with toxins, she ensures that he will die and does not leave his death to chance, as he left hers. Killing him is represented as the ultimate way of gaining revenge over him and of expressing the anger and rage she feels towards him. The murder further entails a self-conscious, self-determination to regain her power back as a female. She does not only equalise the social and physical power between her murdered boyfriend, a man; and herself, a female; women - a strong feminist ideal, but also gains total power over him through killing him (Evans 1983:18). Killing him is also a defence for herself and positions her as active and strong, rather than as a weak victim. In killing him, she acknowledges her self-worth and value as a person, and this action signifies that she is not accepting, tolerant or forgiving of the way he treated her.

Important gestures are made directly to the camera in this scene, and stand-out as emphasised moments in this scene. Lady Gaga firstly licks the spoon in a very seductive manner, with emphasis in her tongue slowly licking the spoon. Her reaction to the taste of the spoon is animated and she seemingly enjoys the taste, evident in Appendix 3, Image 26, from the music video. This gesture also signifies her anticipation and excitement in serving him the drink and ultimately killing him. After he dies, she calmly stands up and neatly places her sunglasses on his dead face. This gesture communicates the meaning that she is taking responsibility of his murder by purposefully leaving a trace of herself on him. This action further communicates that she is proud and happy to have killed him as she has gained her revenge over him. She boldly leaves places her sunglasses on his face and makes no attempt to hide her culpability. The sunglasses

are also symbolic of Lady Gaga exerting self-importance by allowing everyone to know that she killed him. This reflects a female power and strength back on to her. After her boyfriend drops dead, Lady Gaga smiles, and this is the first sign of explicit emotion that we see from her in the scene. This smile represents her satisfaction and joy in achieving her goal of murder. Murder to her is thus not something sinister or negative. Rather she uses it as an outlet and means for gaining her fulfilment and revenge. This smile is indicative of these meanings and also represents Lady Gaga and unregretful. This additionally means that Lady Gaga the artist reinforces her character's actions of murder and revenge over a man that over-exerted his power on her, by strongly and intentionally communicating these gestures to the camera.

After her boyfriend drinks the poisonous drink and dies, Lady Gaga sits sipping her tea, starring straight ahead. She smiles and then gestures sarcastically with her hand in front of her open mouth, signalling shock. This is a sarcastic and condescending gesture that illustrates Lady Gaga's surprise and horror at her boyfriend's sudden death, even though she caused it. She is actually not shocked or horrified, but rather satisfied and this sarcastic gesture highlights the satisfaction and fulfilment of his death. This unemotional, unfrantic reaction is an important representation of the feminist identity Lady Gaga portrays here, fundamentally because she does not conform to stereotypes of women that developed out of a patriarchal society, for example, that women are passive and emotional (Grant 1993:21). These stereotypical traits are considered to be "rational reactions to oppression" and may account for the depiction of Lady Gaga's calm emotional state – having murdered her oppressive boyfriend she is now free (Grant 1993:21). She calls a 911 operator and confesses to the death, saying, "I just killed my boyfriend" and admission of guilt so soon after the murder, represents Lady Gaga as having no feelings of guilt or regret. She does not attempt to cover up the murder or present herself as innocent, and this shows that she wants everyone to know that she is responsible for his death. She wants to show everyone her power in killing him, by proudly and with no caution, confessing to his murder. This shows that she holds her identity and power as a women as priority, over being caught and sent to jail for murder.

When arrested after the murder scene in *Paparazzi*, Lady Gaga is escorted out of the doors of her mansion into a police car, very glamorously dressed, in a black and gold leotard, a high cone-

shaped hairstyle, sunglasses, fishnet stocking and heels, as seen in Image 27 of Appendix 3. This look suggests her glamour as a celebrity, even when going to jail. She is arrested for the murder of her boyfriend and is swamped with paparazzi photographers who encircle her as she gets into the police car. She is lead to the car and smiles and looks very happy and pleased to be arrested and to be photographed and important, because of the arrest. She enjoys being photographed and the attention the paparazzi give her, and she basks in this while being lead to the car. She celebrates while being arrested as she is proud, not only of killing her boyfriend and gaining her revenge, but of the publicity and attention her actions have brought her. In killing him and being arrested for the murder, she regained her strength as a celebrity by being loved and sought after all over again. Her celebrity status was returned to her, and she used killing him to gain publicity, just as he had attempted to do in throwing her off the balcony.

In Lady Gaga's performance scene separate from the narrative in *Paparazzi,* she uses her hands on four different occasions to communicate and signal notions of death. She does this by choking her own neck and by making hand signals of a gun and pointing it directly to the camera. In this scene, Lady Gaga's capacity as a character is limited and instead she represents herself and narrates the song to viewers, separate from the narrative. These gestures however are strongly tied in to the theme of death and murder in this music video as they are symbolic and physical representations of ways of killing another. Lady Gaga representing them in her solo performance provides a commentary on performances in the music video that show that she supports and encourages the murder in the context of this music video.

There is also a very prominent part of the song *Bad Romance* that stands out, due to its lyrics and execution, which communicate strong signs regarding Lady Gaga as pop artist. Because of the fact that it are so repeated so often in the song, it makes up a main part of the song, and also provides a signature verse to this song that is unique in many ways as compared to the prominent verses in her other songs. The verse being referred to, starts the song, and introduces the theme and mood of the song as well as reinforces this in the end of the song, where the verse concludes this song too. This verse is also consistently repeated in the song, directly after the chorus and in conjunction with it. This verse is sung 6 times in this song, singly and repeated.

The lyrics of this verse are *"Rah-Rah-ah-ah-ah/ Roma,Roma-ma/ Gaga,Ooh la la/ Want your bad romance"* (Lady Gaga Official Site: 2010:1).

For the most part, these words are made up and have no real meaning except that they play on the word 'romance', which is part of the song's title, '*Bad Romance*'. They are thus a seemingly insignificant pairing of sounds, sung out by Lady Gaga. However, this verse with it's made up words, shows Lady Gaga's capacity, freedom and power as a musical artist to create new words and lines within the lyrics of her songs and assign her own original and intentional meaning to it. It indicates power and a unique expression that communicates emotion, strength, unconventionality and a sort of craze. This expression created and sung by Lady Gaga is so specific and relevant to this song, and represents the agency and freedom of a female pop artist to use the tools of lyrics and her own voice to create an expression that embodies the exact emotions and feelings she wishes to portray. Thus, she is not succumbing to conventional and expected ways of feeling, but rather highlights emotional complexity through this song and this verse and also brings attention to her ability and agency to create as a female pop female artist.

The lyrics *"Gaga, Ooh lala",* sung by Lady Gaga, refer to herself and highlight her qualities of being astonishing, fancy and impressive, and in essence she sings these lyrics as being in awe of herself. Through this, she expresses her uniqueness and specialness and is open about the love and pride that she feels for herself. In so doing, she ascribes an importance or exceptionality to herself, which can be translated as highlighting her power as a female pop artist in this song.

Lady Gaga, in the lyrical narrative of the song *Bad Romance,* is positioned as 'the other woman', in the relationship she has with her lover. Her position as a mistress in this song is signified through many lyrical expressions throughout the song. The lyrics, "*I want you love and all your lover's revenge/You and me can write a bad romance"* clearly shows that Lady Gaga's lover is seeing someone else (Lady Gaga Official site: 2010:1). She directly refer to this person her lover's ' lover' and as a person who could possibly take revenge on Lady Gaga for being with their shared lover - revenge which Lady Gaga welcomes. This indicates that the lover has something to be angry about, further positioning her as 'the other woman'. Next, the lyrics, "*I want your horror/ I want your design/ Cuz your a criminal as long as your mine"* shows the

nature of the relationship between Lady Gaga and her lover (Lady Gaga Official site 2010:1). He is a 'criminal' when he is with Lady Gaga, implying that guilty of doing something wrong. Thus, when he is with Lady Gaga he is guilty of cheating and breaking the laws of love, with Lady Gaga as a willing participant.

Lady Gaga is positioned and described as a mistress in the lyrics of *Bad Romance*. This is a title given to women who have affairs with men who are already seriously involved with other woman. The title of a mistress carries many negative connotations, such as that the mistress is slutty, cheap, easy and immoral. This understanding is also attributed to the way that gender and gender roles are constructed through language (Butler 1990:89). This is because female identity is largely dependant on gender/female/feminine expressions, and these are socially constructed and influenced by a male dominated society. The way Lady Gaga represents herself as the mistress in this song however minimizes all these connotations that are perpetuated from a male-centric disposition. She redefines and changes the meaning and association of a mistress that don't carry such negative connotations. As a mistress, she isn't losing out on anything and celebrates the specific kind of love that she shares with her lover. She doesn't lose out on his love or a love affair with him because she doesn't give up on the relationship just because she isn't getting the best of him. Rather she celebrates and holds on to his dark side as her own, as it is a side he wouldn't be sharing in a 'good romance'. Thus, she changes the common perceptions and associations of a mistress to something that highlights personal satisfaction, power and gain, instead of vulnerability, shame and wrongfulness.

The fact that she wants the revenge of her lover's lover which is directed at her, also shows that she sees the affair she is having in an unconventional and unorthodox way, thus in a way that is different to common and dominant beliefs. This is representative and reflective of post-modern feminist thought in that it illustrates that women are entirely different from one another, in terms of their reactions and perceptions, whether they share the same ideologies or not. Thus, females cannot forcefully be deduced to one entity and this reminds us that we "are not reducible to the groups to which we belong" (Evan 1995:7). This is an important goal of feminism. Welcoming the revenge of her lover's lover, shows that she is not ashamed of the affair or her participation in it. She does not fear the revenge or shy away from it, indicating that it is not significant to her.

Thus, she most likely doesn't see the revenge as validated or reasonable, even she knows it is a probability. She also sings of wanting her lover's revenge. Her lover's revenge and the revenge of her lover's lover combined, refers to the happiness, joy and love of their relationship and them being together as being vengeful and revengeful on Lady Gaga, who loves her lover too and could thus unfavourable to her. She however does not desire this kind of relationship with her lover, but rather desires a bad romance. This shows her lover's relationship does not affect her or bother her, but rather she is focused on receiving a certain kind of love from him, from his dark side, that will satisfy her. She doesn't see their affair a wrong. She is also proud that he is a criminal with her and happy that they can spend time when his lover is unavailable. Thus sneaking around, lying and committing adultery is not a major issue or problem to her.

This is an unconventional female standpoint, and emphasizes Lady Gaga's untypical approach to her love affair. Instead of focusing on her lover's relationship and what is lacking in theirs, she approaches the relationship from a stance that will allow her to focus on achieving her personal desires and on gaining something from her lover that is hers alone, i.e., love from his tainted, dark side. She thus is powerful as a woman and uses her agency as a woman to decide and make up her own mind about expectations and behaviour that society conditions women with. She is powerful and independent in her deviating from dominant ideas about women and their expected behaviour and rather creates a positive experience that is governed by herself. In so doing, Lady Gaga represents and affirms the core ideals of liberal feminism here. She defines life for herself and lives according to her own rules, emphasising her independence, freedom and deviant female identity. Representing herself in this manner, creates a new space for women to reconsider and think about their expectations in society and if they are satisfied with them or not.

In the verses of the song *Bad Romance*, her voice leans very strongly towards lower notes that are dark and hard. Her diction and pronunciation of words in these verses are gritty and fierce. She sings in a lower-key range and also tends to sing deeply and roughly from her throat, in grunting sounds. The verses are sung in a strong, fearless, convinced, yet frantic and crazed voice. This shows that her voice, combined with the words she sings are demanding and aggressive. She is also proud of what she sings and the message she gets across with this is that she is empowered, determined and not fearful, as she sings wildly and insistently. The chorus is

sung with force and emotion. The emotion communicated suggests frustration, anger, disappointment, but also determination and purpose. Lady Gaga's voice is strong and emotional and she sings with full and direct force in the chorus.

The murder scene in *Bad Romance*, very similarly to the murder scene in the music video for *Paparazzi*, communicates strong ideas of female strength and power, as assigned to the murderer, Lady Gaga. As discussed, she presents herself as the prize to the highest bidder, who watches her while sitting on the bed. As she drops her fur coat to reveal the prize, her body, to the man, the bed catches alight, by Lady Gaga's planning. The man, who had bought Lady Gaga, is killed by Lady Gaga. He is defeated and looses control over Lady Gaga. Instead, Lady Gaga gains ownership and control over herself, by murdering him and freeing herself from his dominant control. She now assumes the power and control he had over her, for herself. His murder is represented as a punishment to him for forcing her to sexually satisfy him, by buying her. This murder represents a victory of a women victim in a male dominated environment and a defeat of male patriarchy, by killing him. Killing him in this music video ends his male dominance and control of women, and frees Lady Gaga from male oppression and power.

8.4) Conclusion

This section discusses one of the main research units of this study, namely feminist identity. It presents the results of a semiotic analysis applied to certain features within Lady Gaga's songs and music videos. The construction of Feminist identity in Lady Gaga's work comes out mainly in two binary and complex ways – women are represented as weak and passive, and also as strong, independent and powerful in Lady Gaga's songs and music videos. The identity of females in the chosen texts strongly corresponds to patriarchal ideals, where female agency is minimized and where female behaviours are predicted according to traditional gender norms of male dominance over females. In many of the analysed texts, the female is represented as emotional, dependent, desperate, submissive and weak – all traits that are disempowering women and muting her agency. In many depictions of the chosen music videos, the body of the female is represented as the site of oppression for male sexual pleasure as well as for expectations of physical appearance.

Fundamentally however, these representations form part of the developing narrative and although they strongly add to the story line and to the foundation of understanding the music videos, they are not necessarily considered as the central, over-arching and final meaning that the video communicates. The representations of the female identity as strong, powerful and independent, lend to ideas of the ultimate meaning of the songs and music videos. This is communicated primarily through the strong narratives and performances of murder, particularly in the videos for *Paparazzi* and *Bad Romance*. The representation of the murder of a patriarchal man by a women, seeks to portray the female as divorced from the rules and expectations of a patriarchal economy as well as of traditional expectations of being a female. It represents the ultimate female strength and power over the male, and explicitly rejects traditional female expectations of behaving passively and as disempowered. Additionally, the female identity throughout Lady Gaga's work is also represented as ambitious, sexual, and not very emotional, as she goes after dreams of fame and love, prioritises her sexual pleasure that doesn't come from a loving relationship and chooses sex over romance. The Female identity of a woman is effectively represented as self-centric and self-governing. This is an unorthodox manner for women to behave in a patriarchal economy and as such, this representation transgresses societal norms and expectations as well as redefines the potential of women who reject patriarchal ideals. This concludes the summary of the diverging representations of feminist identities are thoroughly discussed in this section.

Chapter 9:

Representations of Gender, Sexuality and Feminist Identity: A Conclusion

9.1) Introduction

This section presents the findings and conclusions from then analysis of Lady Gaga's work, regarding the representations of gender, sexuality and feminist identity/s. These conclusions are presented under the main themes or categories of findings in this study. The conclusions rendered from the analysis of the representations in LoveGame, Paparazzi and Bad Romance are thus presented and categorised according to this. These collective conclusionS aims to answer the main research questions of this study, which are, firstly, what meanings and ideas are generated in the representation of gender, sexuality and feminist identity/s in Lady Gaga's music, performances and music videos, and secondly, how are the constructions of hegemonic discourse, dominant ideologies and traditional ideas of gender, sexuality and feminist identity/s, challenged through their representations in Lady Gaga's music, performances and music videos? These results, encompassing all three songs and music videos, under the themes of gender, sexuality and feminist identity/s representations, will now be presented. This section also discusses limitations and benefits of this study and serves to conclude this study as a whole.

9.2) A spotlight on Patriarchy and Male Power and Control

Throughout analysis, the themes of patriarchy and male dominance have consistently emerged in Lady Gaga's representational work. This theme, in its materialization throughout Lady Gaga's songs and music videos, strongly affirms and maintains the ideological system of patriarchy, by highlighting the male as dominant, active and in control, and is so doing, positions the female as weak, passive and submissive. This is confirmed throughout the many representations that have been discussed throughout the analyses chapters. Importantly, patriarchal constructions have been found in gender, sexuality and feminist identity representations. Thus, these representations illustrate how these specific topics are ideally conceived within a patriarchal economy. This type of constructed meanings that affirm patriarchy through their representations, provide the

audience of Lady Gaga's music and music videos with a generally accepted, easily understood and traditional world view. The more deviant and challenging representations of gender, sexuality and feminist identities found in this research project are able to be effectively contrasted against these representations of patriarchal ideology. Through this, these subversive meanings may be enhanced.

Understanding the world through patriarchy is the dominant hegemony in society and this trickles down into pop culture and pop music. The genre of pop music conventionally maintains this ideology through songs and visual images, by upholding and disseminating values of such as heterosexuality, male dominance, the male as the pursuer of the female, the female used as sexually pleasing to the man and the female always defined in relation the dominant man, for example. This is a reason why Madonna's musical and representational work stood out and was different from her pop music peers – she used her work in pop music to encode and present new identities in pop culture by challenging accepted assumptions of gender, self-empowerment, female relations and female culture, and in so doing, rejected patriarchal ideology (Hawkins 1997:1). Lady Gaga in the same way is a subversive pop star, and shares the same issues of contention that Madonna does. Based on studies of Madonna and this study itself, it can be deduced that both these artists threaten patriarchal institutions by creating strong and unconventional images of expressions of gender, sexuality and female empowerment that also goes against the ruling hegemony in society and the dominant ideology of pop music. The representations of patriarchal affirmation and male dominance in Lady Gaga's work is not the main argument put forward by this research because these representations are made up of expected and non-disruptive images that conform to convention and dominant ideology. These patriarchal representations, rather, act as background information and as a means through which alternative representations may be contrasted against and challenged against these mainstream representations. However, they still remain a way in which Lady Gaga represents gender, sexuality and feminist identities, and as such, they add to the answers of the primary research questions of this project. Thus, the main findings of how patriarchy is affirmed and represented through gender, sexuality and feminist identity in the songs and music videos of *LoveGame*, *Paparazzi* and *Bad Romance*, will now be concluded.

The ideology of patriarchy strongly corresponds to meanings found within the representation of gender and constructs in the chosen texts of analysis. The maintenance of patriarchal ideology is predominantly expressed in Lady Gaga's musical and performance work through the representation of sexuality, where hetero-normative relationships are highlighted. The mass media, in which pop culture and pop music reside, is responsible for circulating particular kinds of gendered behaviours and expectations of sexuality, as preferable, and this patriarchal representation of sexuality in Lady Gaga's work in the same way (Gauntlett 2002:140). Heterosexuality as a dominant representation, further supports the idea that gender and sexuality are based in biology and are concrete constructions of identity, that are not influenced by environment, culture or preference – a notion that goes against the foundations of Queer theory (Gauntlett 2002:137). Hetero-normative love and sex relationships in Lady Gaga's work is presented as natural, rather than constructed. This further prescribes that relationships involving a male and a female is normal and expected, and relationships involving same sex partners are deviant and disapproved of. Hetero-sexual relationships are predominantly represented in the lyrical content and narratives of Lady Gaga's songs. In *LoveGame,* Lady Gaga expresses her desire to "take a ride on a disco stick", which through analysis, is established as expressing a desire to have sex with a man. In the same song, she explicitly sings of her desire as a women, for a man, in the lyrics "The story of us/ It always starts the same/ With a boy and a girl/ And a hook and a game" (Lady Gaga Official Site 2010:1). In the song *Paparazzi*, she also highlights a hetero-sexual relationship, where she sings of her desire for "a boy". The narrative of the three analysed songs all indicate heterosexual relationships as being represented where Lady Gaga is the female, and the male is her desired partner. Visually and the music video narratives, the same meanings are established. The videos for *Paparazzi* and *Bad Romance* represent heterosexual relations between Lady Gaga and the male lead. Thus hetero-normative and heterosexual representations in Lady Gaga's work, sustain a patriarchal view point n the world.

Patriarchal ideology is also maintained through the representation of gender constructs and behaviours in Lady Gaga's work. Patriarchally constructed gendered meanings are mainly represented and highlighted through the physical appearance and aesthetic expression of Lady Gaga and the other participants in her sic videos, namely the dancers and other actors. Thus, gender expectations that maintain patriarchy are found in the attire, hair styles, make up and body constructions of Lady Gaga and others in her music videos. These gender constructions

refer to patriarchy, as they represent identity in a way that is approved and promoted by patriarchy, i.e., that ones biological sex determines ones gender. As such, men should appear as masculine and females, as feminine so as to reinforce the binary divide between the two genders. This is represented many times in Lady Gaga's music videos by the dress and styling of those in the music video. The video for *Paparazzi*, for example, depicts Lady Gaga as very feminine, not only be her dressing, but by the idea communicates throughout the *Paparazzi* video, that glamour, fashion and attractiveness is key to her identity. She embodies the idea of a feminine women who likes and makes use of things defined as 'feminine' and as enhancing femaleness, such as corsets, diamond jewellery, sunglasses and high heels. The male dancers/participants/leads in the videos for *LoveGame, Paparazzi* and *Bad Romance* also exemplify patriarchal gender expressions. In *LoveGame,* the back up dancers are dressed in blue jeans, boots and leather jackets; in *Paparazzi,* the male lead wears formal suit pants and shoes, a white vest, a bow tie and an eye patch; and in *Bad Romance,* the men all wear black three-piece suits. These items of clothing, carry strong connotations of masculinity and by coding the men through these clothes, they are presented as strong, powerful, intimidatory, as rebels and as 'bad boys'. These enhance their male attributes and represent patriarchal ideals of a male. This clothing not only reinforces their male attributes but also provides an expectation of their gender – that they are dominant and in control, and is a way that patriarchy views men. The gender representations here are thus not disruptive or rebellious, but rather, neatly fit into the dominant, patriarchal ideas of acceptable expressions of gender for males and female.

The representation and positioning of female subjects and of Lady Gaga, in music videos particularly, is consistent with the positioning of females in patriarchy. Females in patriarchy are conceived as weak, passive and as having no ownership of power, with their primary roles being caretakers and nurturers in the private sphere (Green 1997:15). Additionally, this is perpetuated through focus being placed on male dominance and in turn, on male needs. The female thus works to fulfil male needs, in the public and private spheres. A way in which this is manifested in Lady Gaga's music videos is through the representation of females as sexually submissive to men and as constructing themselves to satisfy the male gaze. In this way, male needs and desires are prioritised, with females working to achieve this. Lady Gaga is represented as sexually submissive and as working to please male desire in different images and scenes in her music videos. In the *Paparazzi* music video, the first scene represents Lady Gaga as allowing the male

to sexually dominate her, clear from the way her kisses her and carries her on to the balcony. In *Bad Romance*, Lady Gaga too is viewed as commodity to be sold to a man and then used for his sexual pleasure, and this too, constructs her as sexually submissive to the male, even through she is forced to be. The male gaze is also held by Lady Gaga in her music videos, and is so doing she positions herself as an erotic spectacle (Fourie 2002:397). This is represented in many different scenes, for example, in *LoveGame*, where she lays naked and bejewelled, singing seductively to the camera, as well as in the scenes of *Bad Romance* where she is mostly scantily clad, in underwear and transparent clothing. Through these images, she is represented as passive, and renders a sense of control to the active, male voyeur who gains erotic pleasure simply by looking at her in this way. Again, male desire and needs are reinforced and prioritised in this setting. These constructions reflect ideal notions of females in the patriarchal system – where females work to satisfy males, and where female desires and needs are overlooked.

Lastly, patriarchy and male dominance is emphasised in the narrative of the music videos for *Paparazzi* and *Bad Romance*. As discussed in detail, Lady Gaga's boyfriend forces himself on her and when she retaliates, he throws her over a balcony in an attempt to kill her. This explicitly positions the male as a patriarch, who tries to exert his dominance on Lady Gaga. Additionally, he is angered by her retaliation in self-defence, further depicting him as affirming patriarchy, where in an extreme form, women should be passive and controlled by men. The actions of the male participant, position the female as wrongful in her retaliation and transgressing her position in the patriarchal system. The main narrative in *Bad Romance* communicates a story of prostitution, where the males bid on Lady Gaga and the highest bid wins a night with her. This too positions the male participants as powerful and as having control over Lady Gaga, the female, who is forced by male extension of power, to sell herself to them. The men here thus have ownership and control over the females, in a sexual economy Through these specific parts of the music video narratives, The male participants, here, are represented as holding beliefs and gender expectations are based in that of a patriarchal system, where woman are secondary and inferior to their male counterparts. The position of women as powerful, strong and as defined by themselves and not by men, is a notion that neglects the power of men, and is thus a belief that is muted, particularly in the representation of a patriarchal man and his relations to females in these music videos.

9.3) The Female Triumph over Male Power and Control

This section presents a conclusion of the main and most prominent findings in the representational study of gender, sexuality, feminist identity and patriarchy, in the chosen songs and music videos of Lady Gaga. These established conclusions carry the most constructed meanings that are representative of deviant and challenging conceptions of how Lady Gaga chooses to present her meanings on gender, sexuality and feminist identities against a stark background of patriarchy. This section importantly documents the main ways in which the representational work of Lady Gaga consistently and determinedly works to construct meanings of how the female gender and identity, triumph over the patriarchal and male controlled economy that is represented in Lady Gaga's work. In so doing, patriarchy is strongly challenged and female identity becomes redefined from an oppressive and disempowering description, to an emancipation of female identity and expectations. These representations work to overcome disempowered, traditional expectations of female relationships with gender, sexuality, womanhood and identity, and as such present a new and liberating understanding of women, that is self-defined, self-governed, in control, active and strong. The former section in this final chapter seeks to provide a foundation and basis from which to contrast these representations, specifically as being subversive and transgressive to traditional and mainstream notions, which are based mainly on hegemonic constructions of patriarchy. The meanings and representations that draw these important conclusions are developed out of a detailed semiotic analysis, where performance, camera gestures and physical actions are on the forefront of expressing these representations. Thus, findings do not come from passive, background findings, such props or dress sense, which too are important factors in understanding representation. These conclusions however are built from these, as well as out rightly more active and intentional constructed, meanings, that are analysed within the contexts of pop culture, pop music, subversive pop stars and gender studies.

To understand the foremost ways in which Lady Gaga's representations are victorious over male domination in her songs and music videos, the main themes found through analysis that explicitly carry this meaning, will now be presented. These representations triumph over male power, domination and oppression in four identifiable ways, in the songs and music videos for *LoveGame*, *Paparazzi* and *Bad Romance*. These are through the all-encompassing themes

rejecting gender traditions, applying male power to females, representing 'invisible' and female sexual ownership and lastly, through the themes of murder as a means for female strength. These findings develop to the main argument of this research, because they consistently appear in the representational work of Lady Gaga, more powerfully and intentionally than the themes of patriarchy. Furthermore, specific and major findings from analysis are presented within these themes, in order to provide explanation of how these themes were developed. This discussion now follows.

9.3.1) Rejecting Gender Expectations and a Passive Female Identity

Lady Gaga produces meanings in her representations that not only challenge traditional, hegemonic gender constructions, but outright reject it, by presenting a female gender and identity that is strong and active as opposed to weak, passive and controlled. Examples and explanations of how these occur will now be presented.

Firstly, the representations and identity of Lady Gaga's gender as a heterosexual female, in the music video for *Paparazzi*, tends to be challenging to patriarchal and traditional expectations and conceptions of gender. This is because, through Lady Gaga's performance and character development throughout the video, she is represented as powerful and triumphant against male power as well as strong, independent and influential as a woman. This occurs in many ways throughout this video. Firstly, Lady Gaga's character is depicted very vividly and to large as not only very wealthy, but very influential too. This representation also emphasises the fact that she is a famous celebrity with a certain cultural power and influence that operates in and conquers the male dominated public sphere (Green 1887:14). This inference disrupts the conventional expectations of women and power, and this is because Lady Gaga is strongly represented as a highly successful, wealthy woman living her dreams and owning power and influence. She is strongly representative of equalizing the balance of power between male and females as well as having achieved equality of opportunity in the hierarchical male structure, through her material wealth, success and status in this video (Green 1887:14). What's more, is that the wealth and success of Lady Gaga's as depicted in this video is achieved without a male partner such as a husband or long-term boyfriend who has aided her in her success. As such, her success as a female celebrity is presented as self-made and self-owned. Her success was thus gained by her self and she represents successful, independent women living her dreams. This success and status

that she has achieved for herself in this video is seen as literally challenged by her boyfriend, when he tries to kill her. He is seen as intimidated and jealous of her success and wanting fame and power for himself.

These ideas challenges the patriarchal gender expectations of a female, where males are highlighted as successful, powerful and wealthy in their capacity and women are expected to be nurtures and caretakers and never reach the levels and statuses of success, as men do (Green 1997:14). Additionally her boyfriend is represented as not as powerful or wealthy or influential to the world as Lady Gaga is, and is seen as her 'boy-toy' and as representation of her as a powerful woman taking on a lover. In this way, the traditional ideas of male dominance are diminished, as the female is presented as having harnessed more patriarchal power than the male. The representation of Lady Gaga in this video clearly goes depicts this by representing a young, unmarried female, in a position of high power, influence and success-a position usually occupied by men over women. This representation challenges the notion of a passive female by showing the females are capable of achieving the liberal feminist goal of being self-governing and living their dreams, as opposed to filling roles determined fro them by men and society (Evans 1995:15). By placing a female in this status, shows that this representation for a woman is possible, and Lady Gaga in this video therefore represents liberation for females from expected gender roles and shows females women that they are capable and able to dream and reach these dreams, outside of their traditional roles.

9.3.2) On Making Male Power, Female

Assigning representations of male power on to Lady Gaga is predominantly expressed in the *LoveGame* music video. It is an out rightly rebellious and explicit representation of Lady Gaga rejecting traditional female identities and gender role, but rather represents the potential for power of this new conceived woman. Lady Gaga's representation of herself and the growth of her character in the video for *LoveGame,* is based on visual signs such as on her performances, movements and appearance. Through these and particularly through her physical representations, Lady Gaga works to represent herself as having the same power and dominance as a man stereotypically has, in this music video. This is done most prominently in the representation of herself through clothing. Her clothing serves to represent her in different ways. She is first presented as sweet, innocent and passive, and then as rebellious and wild and finally as powerful

and intimidating. All these represent different sides of a woman and throughout these representations, Lady Gaga is consistently presented as in charge and maintains a sense of power in all these capacities. Power, is however communicated in a more specific way in this video, particularly in last scene of this video, where Lady Gaga dresses in very masculine way, wearing loose fitting black pants, suspenders and a hat. It also in this scene where she makes gestures to the camera, that signals male power, as earlier discussed. Within the entire video however, all of Lady Gaga's clothes make reference to menswear, for example, through her leather jackets, suspenders and gloves.

A semiotic reading of Lady Gaga's menswear in the *LoveGame* video indicates that Lady Gaga is emulating a man in order to attain the status of man in a patriarchal society, based on power, strength and authority. It is suggestive of Lady Gaga finding strength for herself as a woman through copying and attaining the appearance of man. This would also imply that Lady Gaga acknowledges that men are more dominant than women are. She also understands and accepts the cues that signal this dominance, such as a suit, a cane or a leather jacket - all representations of male power that she uses in this video. In doing this, Lady Gaga assigns male power to herself throughout the video, by using these representations of male power as part of her performance and as representations of herself. Using these to represent herself, Lady Gaga seeks to empower herself as a female by representing herself on the same level as a man. She seeks the powerful and dominant status of a patriarchal male, in a female capacity by positioning herself aesthetically and visually as a man, and ascribes powerful male indications to herself. Thus by imitating a man and ascribing references of male power to herself, Lady Gaga actively seeks power and status, as men have, for herself as a female. This communicates that Lady Gaga is aware of the unequal statuses and positions between men and women, and through her representations, is trying to elevate the status of females and assign power to them, the same as men have in society. Thus representations depict Lady Gaga as seeking equality and an equal playing field between men and women. This shows that she does not agree with the ideologies of a patriarchal, male dominated society and the positioning of women as passive. Instead she seeks to attain and highlight the power and capacity of females in society - which can be seen as an invisible female identity in society. Through the representation of herself in the *LoveGame* video, she shows women that they can have the same power and dominance as a patriarchal man. It communicates that women are thus not inferior to men, as they can enjoy the same ownership

of power, strength and status as a man does, in a patriarchal world. This representation, thus, rejects the ideas of women ascribing to traditional and expected behaviours in a patriarchal economy, and strongly promotes the emancipation and liberation of women from these.

This representation is however also dangerous in the ways it represents females having male power and status. This is because Lady Gaga represents the idea that female strength and power can only be achieved for women if they take on stereotypical male qualities and if they are more like men. This is a dangerous representation of female power as it undermines and overlooks the power and strength that women possess on their own, away from that of men. Instead of defining female power by virtue of being female, Lady Gaga represents female power as having to be borrowed or shared from the male ideas and definitions of power. This representation can alternatively be interpreted as women power still being credited to men as more powerful, with women having to define themselves and gain power from within these male defined perimeters of power. By defining female power within the economy of male power, maintains the idea that males in society are more powerful than women. This representation may be considered as limiting to women, as their power and influence is defined, shaped and owned by a male conception of power Thus in order to be liberated, women need to define themselves and represent themselves out of this patriarchal society, where men dominate and women are always inferior.

9.3.3) Representing 'Invisibles' and Female Sexual ownership

Representing what this study calls 'invisibles', refers to gender performances and expressions of sexuality that deviate from patriarchal ideology and thus hold no place for representation within a this system. Here, the *LoveGame* music video is key in representing these deviant identities as well as showing Lady Gaga's commitment to represent diversities of sexuality, specifically highlighting female sexual ownership. In the *LoveGame* video, significant representations regarding gender issues come from the male back up dancers as the main site of analysis. This is because their depiction and presentation on this music video raises important gender issues. As discussed extensively in the analysis section, the male dancers in this video provide the impression that they are 'bad boys' and rebels. As such they are focused on being strong, intimidating and powerful, through their clothing and bodies. Some of them however wear dark eye make up and this combined with their feminine body and dance movements, provides a

contrary and complex representation of their masculinity. Although a part of them is presented as very manly and masculine men, we can see from the analysis of their body movements and make up, that this is not entirely the case.

The appearance, movements and expressions of some of the back up dancers are very indicative of feminine qualities. The dancers are overtly dressed to be presented as tough, rebellious, bad boys, but with subtle hints throughout the video, these men don't always authentically come across as what they try to present themselves as. This research asserts that in this music video, the backup dancers perform a certain kind of gender and in so doing, are gender-bending. Implicitly, they are suggestive of feminine-like qualities, movements and behaviour. For example, some of them appear to wear make up and some of them move their bodies in a very feminine manner while dancing. Thus, with all the cues and signals representing masculinity and strength in these men, there is also evidence of feminine traits. Because of this, these men are representative of a new form and expression of gender identity, through there performing of a complex identity, not determined by nature but determined strongly by culture. They represent a certain expression of identity and open up ideas of choosing ones identity, specifically in terms of gender and sexuality that is based on culture, sexual desires and innate feelings, instead of expected roles in society. It blurs the line between masculinity and femininity, making the gender represented, not a clear cut one as we have to expect in society. Thus in this case, it presents this freedom in choosing ones identity and the expression of this by illustrating visually that a man can be masculine, strong and tough and also and express elements of the female nature in his identity. This video supports this notion, makes it acceptable and celebrates it by encourages an expression of freedom of identity in people. Through gender-bending in this visual manner, this Lady Gaga video challenges gender categories and shows that gender is not always a specific and expected trait in people, but can be complex and different to the norms of gender. She presents a space and freedom for this expression and in so doing stands behind it as a representation of invisible identities that gender-blend and challenge dominant ideologies through their performances of gender.

The *LoveGame* music video strongly represents sexuality in specific ways, most prominently in highlighting female sexuality. Many different aspects, as discussed in parts of the analysis of this music video, is indicative of Lady Gaga as a representation of sexual freedom, female

enjoyment and pleasure from sex and the expression of female sexualities. It represents an emancipation of females from limiting ideas of expected behaviour and traditional roles of sex and sexuality, to owing ones sexuality, expressing it and proudly enjoying it. The number of sexual partners Lady Gaga has in this video is also indicative of this. Importantly she represents the uncommon and mostly invisible identity of a woman that is sexually liberated. These ideas that are represented in the video in terms of females and their freedom to express themselves sexually, is not the dominant belief system in society. Rather society is taught to focus on the sexual pleasures and satisfaction of men, with women's experiences and desires, in terms of sex, being minimized. Lady Gaga, in her performances in this video, catapults women's sexual freedom and expression of sexual desires on to the forefront and challenges viewers to reconsider these ideas, through the representations of herself and her own performances which communicate specific meanings of sexual freedom.

In this video, Lady Gaga represents a woman who explores her sexuality and is open to the sexual desire of males and females, a woman who celebrates the experience and pleasure of sex and who prioritises her own sexual enjoyment and a women who is free to perform express herself sexually in terms of how she has sex and who she has sex with. All these representations of Lady Gaga, sex and sexuality, work essentially to position Lady Gaga as an empowered female who does not define herself in the domain of a male dominant, patriarchal society. A definition of a female who is sexually expressive and free does not have a place in a patriarchal society, where women are positioned sexually to meet the sexual desires and needs of men, rather than themselves. Instead, through this position, Lady Gaga removes herself from ideas of a patriarchy to ideas of liberalism, within which she can define herself as an individual, and not as a woman in a male dominated world. Through her representations, she thus offers an alternative for way for women define and represent themselves, distinctively in terms of their sexuality. She presents and maintains the idea that sexuality and its expression is owned by an individual and is not defined according to law or dominant thought and expectation.

The idea of the sexual freedom of expression by a female in *LoveGame* is represented by Lady Gaga in certain performance scenes. Yet other features of this music video also shape how this idea is represented. As discussed, the setting of this music video is in a secret, off limits, empty subway station in New York, which Lady Gaga and her dancers trespass in order to carry out

their performances and freely express their desires. This indicates that these expressions and performances need to be carried somewhere private, as they probably won't be understood or acceptable anywhere else, like in a public domain or space. This sets the context of the ideas communicated in this music video. Thus, Lady Gaga's representations of being sexually expressive and sexually free as a woman can also be considered as dissident and rebellious, as this are the context in which this idea is communicated. Sexual freedom and open sexual expressions of a woman can thus be considered as rebellious and insubordinate in a patriarchal society. Additionally this sexual freedom of women cannot be freely expressed in public and open places, or in certain, dominant societies, and rather can be freely expressed and celebrated only in secret, private places. These ideas are representative of the oppression of women and their freedom of expression particularly in terms of sex and sexuality and present the limited ways in which they can express their sexuality within a patriarchal or male dominated. Through pop music, Lady Gaga presents these ideas and also challenges them through her representations that tend to also be rebellious, destructive and alternative to these ideologies.

In the *Paparazzi* music video Lady Gaga additionally represents the idea of female sexual freedom in terms of expression herself sexually, sexual promiscuity as well as placing an emphasis on the female sexual experience as priority over the males. This notion in expressed in the aside performance scene of Lady Gaga not involved in the narrative of the story, where she interacts with three males on the couch. This interaction may be deemed as sexual due to the behaviours depicted, such as French kissing, licking and stroking faces, happening simultaneously between Lady Gaga and the three men. These men are also depicted as heterosexual, although they are all three involved in a sexual encounter with Lady Gaga, the only female. Within this sexual encounter all sexual behaviour expressed by these men are directed at Lady Gaga and not at each other. This scene represents the sexual satisfaction of woman as the highlighted, emphasised by the three men who all seek to pleasure one woman. Lady Gaga strongly highlights female sexual pleasure in this scene and depicts it as something women should aspire to and expect, instead of focusing on pleasing their male counterparts. She emphasises the sexual experience of a woman as significant and illustrates a particular way to achieve it. She also positions women as the centre of the sexual experience and in so doing, communicates that the satisfaction of women's sexual needs are essential.

9.3.4) Killing Rage: Murder as a means for Female Power and Strength

The patriarchal idea of female gender roles is defied consistently throughout the music videos narrative and performances of *Paparazzi* and *Bad Romance,* where Lady Gaga murders her oppressing, male counterparts. In *Paparazzi,* she murders her boyfriend - a representation of her as a woman, exerting power over him. It draws on an inference that this action allows Lady Gaga to overcome male dominance and power, particularly through exerting her own power over her boyfriend and actively working to carry out the act of murder on him, after he had hurt and betrayed her. In taking action against her boyfriend in this video successfully, Lady Gaga eliminates all ideas of women as passive and weak and rather represents and communicates the idea of a more powerful, fearless, smart and capable woman, who will go as far as murder for her revenge and justice over a man.

Lady Gaga's identity as a feminist woman is constructed in different ways throughout the narrative and performances in this *Paparazzi* video. Her character development throughout the video as well as the conclusion of what she represents herself as, is most telling in terms of her representations of feminist identity. Firstly, Lady Gaga's feminist identity is represented in her strength as a woman to overcome an adversity such as attempted murder and physical bodily harm. From this she expresses strength in herself, not only to overcome her boyfriend's attempt to kill her and his betrayal, but also to physically nurse herself back to health and strengthen her body. Her recovery and survival represents a major triumph over her boyfriend who had intended to kill her. This triumph not only represents this, but also represents the power of a woman to overcome being held down and limited by the power and domination of a man. It pits their gender identities and power, against each other, with the representations in this music video communicating the achievements and triumph of the female over the male.

Secondly, a major identity of Lady Gaga as a female and as a feminist advocating for women power in this video is represented in the construction of herself as a murderer. As a murderer, Lady Gaga regains her power and status, in two important ways in this music video- as a woman and as celebrity. Importantly, she acts in the capacity of a murderer to gain revenge over her boyfriend's betrayal, as well as to regain her freedom and strength as a women- a freedom and strength that was undermined by her boyfriend. In killing her boyfriend she assumes revenge on him, and changes her position of power and status in relation to him. Through the murder, she

positions herself as stronger, more powerful, and more dominant, relative to him. Relative to herself, she enhances her power and strength as a woman who values herself and her life and who works to protect it against anything. Here, murder is presented as the ultimate revenge on her boyfriend for Lady Gaga and murder is also represented as the ultimate means for a woman to gain power and triumph a man. It is a drastic approach and reflects the drastic situation of oppression and undermining that Lady Gaga was in. Through the murder and defeat of her boyfriend, Lady Gaga represents the act of murder specifically in terms of a girlfriend murdering her oppressive boyfriend, as an outlet for reprisal and as an achievement, for the wronged girlfriend. The power over him and freedom for herself that she has gained from this represents her as reaching her goals and achieving her independence from his abusive actions. It highlights her identity as new, un-oppressed and free woman. Through the murder of her boyfriend, she as women, is not only represented as her boyfriends equal, but is also represented as owning a power and dominance greater than his in terms of her female identity, because she succeeded in killing him, where his attempt at killing her, failed.

Lady Gaga's character in this music video is depicted as an already established celebrity. After she was hurt by the actions of her boyfriend, her fame dwindled and diminished and she was reported on negatively in the press - as per representations communicated in this music video. Her star power was thus reduced because she had to recover from the injuries her boyfriend inflicted on her. As such, she was out of the public eye, her influence diminished and her title as the 'it-girl' was replaced by another star. This clearly weakened her star power and influence. After the murder of her boyfriend and her confession to this, the media immediately draw their attention back to celebrating and adoring Lady Gaga, as represented in the video and established through analysis. Her fame and influence as a celebrity is again emphasised. This results in her power as a celebrity being regained. By admitting to being a murderer, she attracted all the press to herself and again became a media darling, which to her in her profession, is an extreme success. Thus, through the murder she is repositioned as an influential and powerful celebrity, with her star quality being emphasised. The murder of her boyfriend thus emancipated her from his domination and control, as well as granted her a professional victory, by being intensely famous and loved again. The representation of herself as a murderer in this music video is thus has positive meanings for her identity as a feminist.

Lady Gaga killing the patriarch in the *Bad Romance* video emphasises her view on women and her view on herself as being one of importance, significance, worth, independence and as equal to men. In committing the murder she strongly expresses her rejection against male domination and control. This strong feminist identity is established by Lady Gaga form the start of the video, where she from then and throughout the video, expresses resistance to male force, expectations and domination. This notion is expressed most fully and strongly by the murder that Lady Gaga commits, as being the ultimate defeat of male power. She is representative of the only person in this video to not only challenge, but overcome and defeat the exertion of male power over females. She also importantly stands up against the viewing of females as objects or commodities of value to be traded and sold, as this undermines the power and identity of women.

9.4) Conclusion

This section essentially, presents the collective finding and results regarding the representation of gender, sexuality and feminist identity/s in the three selected songs and music videos of Lady Gaga. Prominently, the findings and results of this research shows how Lady Gaga's representations of gender, sexuality and feminist identities are subversive and trangressive to patriarchal ideology and to traditional expectations about identity. In so doing, Lady Gaga has represented deviant ideas of gender, such as masculine females, gender-blending males as well as identified emancipating ways to reject traditional gender roles placed on females through the oppressive system of patriarchy. She symbolically emancipates female through the mass media, by rejecting their roles in society such as as caretakers, wives, mothers and housewives, and rather illustrates that women too can achieve and be successful in male dominated, public sphere capacities. This emancipation is further emphasized through Lady Gaga's representations of sexuality, where relationships outside heterosexuality are granted a space to be depicted within pop culture, pop music and the mass media. Representing females as sexually free, in control of their sexuality as well as owning their expressions of sexuality, further the symbolic freedom if women through Lady Gaga in pop music. Additionally, instead of supporting the patriarchal system that the mass media and society are submerged in, Lady Gaga in her songs and music videos, annihilates the limitations of the female identity as well as of homosexual identity. In so doing, Lady Gaga fundamentally seeks to present empowering images of these groups, as a way in which to liberate them from patriarchal and male domination.

Lady Gaga's representational work on gender, sexuality and feminist identities depicts her as powerful in the positioning of herself as the 'other' and in celebrating otherness. She underlines her representation of herself as a freak or a misfit – a way she has always seen herself, and this helps her create her art, performances and the meanings behind them. This otherness is a way she defines her celebrity, by expressing her individuality, that in turns grants her her celebrity power because she is able to captures the imagination and support of her audience, through this. Her aggressive and heavily constructed representations of gender, sexuality, feminist identities and performances threaten mainstream ideology and as such, she consistently locates herself within discourses of resistance and empowerment. Pop music, pop culture and celebrity culture are vital in the symbolic work of Lady Gaga, as these provide her, not only with a mass audience, but with a specific context that allows her to express her subversive ideas. This is because this context holds a strong emancipatory potential, which Lady Gaga uses to her advantage. Through her cultural power as a pop star and a celebrity who has power and influence in society through the media, Lady Gaga's representations are rendered powerful and meaningful. They too are deviant and challenging to mainstream ideology, and this presents Lady Gaga as a critical commentator on identity issues, in pop music. This has champion her as a modern-day advocate and activist for gender and sexually oppressed groups, as she provides them with a place and form in which to be represented.

Thus these sections discuss the prominent conclusions about how gender, sexuality and feminist identity/s are represented in Lady Gaga's work. The research technique of semiotic allows for these findings to be made. Essentially, the conclusions of this section attempt to directly and specifically refer to answering the research questions of this study. It thus serves to present the finals findings and conclusions of the aims of the aims of this project and furthermore provide a conclusion and ending to this study. The literature reviewed as a well as the theories that frames this study, provided a logical and comprehensive description that defined this study specifically. Additionally the research design chosen and analysis carried out, allowed for relevant results and findings to be made. The use of a singular research technique has allowed for specific and consistent results to be developed. This is however limiting too, as other research techniques may provide different results or deeper analysis. However, using semiotics met the requirements of

this study and allowed for results and conclusions to speak specifically to the research question that frame this study.

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APPENDIX 1

Lady Gaga Song Lyrics

Lady Gaga Official Site (2010)

Love Game

Lyrics:

Let's have some fun, this beat is sick
I wanna take a ride on your disco stick
Let's have some fun, this beat is sick
I wanna take a ride on your disco stick

I wanna kiss you
But if I do then I might miss you, babe
It's complicated and stupid
Got my ass squeezed by sexy Cupid
Guess he wants to play, wants to play
A love game, a love game

Hold me and love me
Just wanna touch you for a minute
Maybe three seconds is enough
For my heart to quit it

Let's have some fun, this beat is sick
I wanna take a ride on your disco stick
Don't think too much just bust that kick
I wanna take a ride on your disco stick

Let's play a love game, play a love game
Do you want love or you want fame?
Are you in the game? Doin' the love game

Let's play a love game, play a love game
Do you want love or you want fame?
Are you in the game? Doin' the love game

I'm on a mission
And it involves some heavy touching, yeah
You've indicated your interest, I'm educated in sex, yes
And now I want it bad, want it bad
A love game, a love game

Hold me and love me
Just want touch you for a minute
Maybe three seconds is enough
For my heart to quit it

Let's have some fun, this beat is sick
I wanna take a ride on your disco stick

Don't think too much just bust that kick
I wanna take a ride on your disco stick

Let's play a love game, play a love game
Do you want love or you want fame?
Are you in the game? Doin' the love game

Let's play a love game, play a love game
Do you want love or you want fame?
Are you in the game? Doin' the love game

I can see you staring there from across the block
With a smile on your mouth and your hand on your huh!
The story of us, it always starts the same
With a boy and a girl and a huh and a game
And a game, and a game, and a game, a love game

Let's play a love game, play a love game
Do you want love or you want fame?
Are you in the game? Doin' the love game

Let's play a love game, play a love game
Do you want love or you want fame?
Are you in the game? Doin' the love game

Let's play a love game, play a love game
Do you want love or you want fame?
Are you in the game?
(Let's have some fun, this beat is sick)
Doin' the love game
(I wanna take a ride on your disco stick)

Let's play a love game, play a love game
Do you want love or you want fame?
Are you in the game?
(Don't think too much just bust that kick)
Doin' the love game
(I wanna take a ride on your disco stick)
Doin' the love game

Writers: Khayat, Nadir and Germanotta, Stefani

Performance Contributor: Lady Gaga

Sony ATV Music Publishing

Paparazzi

Lyrics:

We are the crowd, we're c-coming out
Got my flash on it's true, need that picture of you
It's so magical,
We'd be so fantastical
Leather and jeans,
Garage glamorous
not sure what it means but this photo of us
It don't have a price, ready for those flashing lights
'Cause you know that baby, I

I'm your biggest fan
I'll follow you until you love me, Papa-paparazzi
Baby, there's no other superstar
you know that I'll be your
Papa-paparazzi
Promise I'll be kind, but I won't stop until that boy is mine
Baby you'll be famous, chase you down until you love me
Papa-paparazzi

I'll be your girl backstage at your show
Velvet ropes and guitars, yeah 'Cause you're my rockstar
in between the sets,
Eyeliner and cigarettes
Shadow is burnt, yellow dance and we turn
My lashes are dry, purple teardrops I cry
It don't have a price, loving you is cherry pie
'Cause you know that baby, I

I'm your biggest fan
I'll follow you until you love me, Papa-paparazzi
Baby there's no other superstar
you know that I'll be your
Papa-paparazzi
Promise I'll be kind but I won't stop until that boy is mine
Baby you'll be famous, chase you down until you love me
Papa-paparazzi

Real good, we dance in the studio
Snap snap, to that shit on the radio
Don't stop for anyone
We're plastic but we still have fun!

I'm your biggest fan

I'll follow you until you love me, Papa-paparazzi
Baby there's no other superstar
you know that I'll be your
Papa-paparazzi
Promise I'll be kind but I won't stop until that boy is mine
Baby you'll be famous, chase you down until you love me
Papa-paparazzi

Writers: Fusari, Rob and Germanotta, Stefani

Performance Contributor: Lady Gaga

Sony ATV Music Publishing

Bad Romance

Lyrics:

Oh-oh-oh-oh-oh
Oh-oh-oh-oh
Oh-oh-oh
Caught in a bad romance
(2x)

Ra-ra-ah-ah-ah-ah
Roma-roma-ma-a
Gaga
Oo-la-la-a
Want your bad romance
(2x)

I want your ugly
I want your disease
I want your everything
As long as it's free
I want your love
Love love love
I want your love

I want your drama
The touch of your hand (hey)
I want your leather-studded kiss in the sand
I want your love
Love love love
I want your love
(Love love love I want your love)

You know that I want you
And you know that I need you
I want a bad, bad romance

I want your love and
I want your revenge
You and me could write a bad romance
(Oh-oh-oh-oh-oh)
I want your love and
All your lovers' revenge
You and me could write a bad romance

Oh-oh-oh-oh-oh
Oh-oh-oh-oh

Oh-oh-oh
Caught in a bad romance
(2x)

Ra-ra-ah-ah-ah-ah
Roma-roma-ma-a
Gaga
Oo-la-la-a
Want your bad romance

I want your horror
I want your design
'Cause you're a criminal
As long as you're mine
I want your love
(Love love love I want your love....uuhh)

I want your psycho
Your vertigo shtick
Want you in my room when
Your Baby is sick
I want your love
Love love love
I want your love
(Love love love I want your love)

You know that I want you
('Cause I'm a free bitch, baby!)
And you know that I need you
I want a bad, bad romance

I want your love and
I want your revenge
You and me could write a bad romance
(Oh-oh-oh-oh-oh)
I want your love and
All your lovers' revenge
You and me could write a bad romance

Oh-oh-oh-oh-oh
Oh-oh-oh-oh
Oh-oh-oh
Caught in a bad romance
(2x)

Ra-ra-ah-ah-ah-ah

Roma-roma-ma-a
Gaga
Oo-la-la-a
Want your bad romance

Walk, walk fashion baby
Work it, move that bitch crazy
Walk, walk fashion baby
Work it, move that bitch crazy
Walk, walk fashion baby
Work it, move that bitch crazy
Walk, walk passion baby
Work it,
I'm a free bitch, baby

I want your love and
I want your revenge
I want your love
I don't wanna be friends

J'veux ton amour
et je veux ta revanche
J'adore l'amour
I don't wanna be friends (Oh-oh-oh-oh-oh
Oh-oh-oh-oh-oh-oh-oh) I don't wanna be friends
(Caught in a bad romance)
I don't wanna be friends (Oh-oh-oh-oh-oh
Oh-oh-oh-oh-oh-oh-oh) Want your bad romance!
(Caught in a bad romance)

Want your bad romance!

I want your love and
I want your revenge
You and me could write a bad romance
(Oh-oh-oh-oh-oh)
I want your love and
All your lovers' revenge
You and me could write a bad romance

(Oh-oh-oh-oh-oh-oh-oh-oh-oh
Oh-oh-oh) Want your bad romance!
(Caught in a bad romance)
Want your bad romance!

(Oh-oh-oh-oh-oh-oh-oh-oh-oh

Oh-oh-oh) Want your bad romance!
(Caught in a bad romance)

Ra-ra-ah-ah-ah-ah
Roma-roma-ma-a
Gaga
Oo-la-la-a
Want your bad romance

Writers: Khayat, Nadir and Germanotta, Stefani

Performance Contributor: Lady Gaga

Sony ATV Music Publishing

APPENDIX 2

URL links to Lady Gaga YouTube music videos

YouTube (2011)

LoveGame:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1mB0tP1I-14&ob=av2e

Duration: 3:38

Paparazzi:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d2smz_1L2_0&ob=av2n

Duration: 7:11

Bad Romance:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qrO4YZeyl0I&ob=av2e

Duration: 5:08

APPENDIX 3

A Visual Description: Images from Music Videos

Images from *LoveGame*:

Image 1:



Image 2:



Image 3:



Image 4:



Image 5:



Image 6:



Image 7:



Image 8:



Image 9:



Image 10:



Image 11:



Image 12:



Image 13:



Images from *Paparazzi*:

Image 14:



Image 15:



Image 16:



Image 17:



Image 18:



Image 19:



Image 20:



Image 21:



Image 22:



Image 23:



Image 24:



Image 25:



Image 26:



Image 27:



Image 28:



Image 29:



Images from *Bad Romance*:

Image 30:



Image 31:



Image 32:



Image 33:



Image 34:



Image 35:



Image 36:



Image 37:



Image 38:



Image 39:



Image 40:



Image 41:



Image 42:



Image 43:



Image 44:



Image 45:



Image 46:



Image 47:

