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Jojo Siwa: TikTok for Fame

Jojo Siwa came to fame at a very young age through the show “Dance Moms,” a reality television show that starred teacher Abby Lee Miller. During her two seasons on Dance Moms, Jojo started a YouTube channel that gained over ten million subscribers. Since then, Jojo has been very involved on social media and has a TikTok account with almost forty-four million followers. In a recent TikTok, Jojo shared her story on how she knew she was gay. However, the video had a deeper meaning in showing that messages can be used for an alternative motive. Looking at the content through the view of media literacy including the authorship, framing, stereotypes, and media ecosystem, it is clearer that Jojo used her message to gain more attention from the public, not just to share her experience.

Within the media, messages are carefully constructed by specific people for specific reasons. Jojo Siwa developed a message to share her story with others in order for her followers to better relate to her. She also used this message to get more attention for her and the brand that she has created. Messages can also be formatted in various ways to effectively get a point across. Jojo used TikTok as a channel to share her message, which is a platform that allows users to create their own content. Various trends quickly come and go, where users tend to make videos that are very similar to each other but change it slightly to make it personal to the creator. In her video, Jojo used a specific trend where people write their own lyrics to a specific song and tell a story through it. While it wasn't her initial idea, she used her own

experience and created lyrics to make the audio her own. When creating content, users can manipulate the message through framing and the way the message is presented.

Another important part of media literacy is the audience that the message is intended for. In her career, Jojo mainly appeals to younger girls in the way that she dresses, the music that she performs and the various content she puts out. However, as she has gotten older, her messages have gotten more mature while her audience is still younger. In this video, she is discussing a very serious topic that might not be appropriate for the young children that follow her to watch. This hints that the video itself was made for more than just her normal followers, but instead is intended to reach a larger demographic. The message relates more to peers, adults, and those who are also going through this experience. Within the video, Jojo discusses her experience of deciding that she was gay. Various audiences will react and interpret this message differently. Specifically, age might make a difference in how the message is received. Those who are older and did not grow up discussing these topics might have a hard time understanding her decisions and beliefs compared to people closer to Jojo's age. Those who are younger might interpret her message differently if they have not been exposed to the topics discussed in her video. Even if various viewers within the audience perceive the message differently, the main goal of the video is to get attention and reactions from a large number of viewers.

Messages created in the media usually have specific content and stereotypes. Jojo shared hers via TikTok which allows creators to easily share their beliefs and views on a variety of topics. Jojo shows her personal lifestyle in this video as a member of the LGBTQ community.

She includes her point of view as a younger child before she considered herself gay as well as her current perspective. Within her video, Jojo mentions other artists including a song by Demi Lovato as well as a performance by Jenna Dewan, from which she had felt influenced by

at a young age. It is interesting how within her message, Jojo includes her own point of view of others' messages and ties it into the topic at hand. Both examples are from people who have similar opinions and values, and the message omits examples of the opposing point of view.

The way messages are created and received can be affected by what circumstances are in the media. Recently, news such as Hurricane Irma, professional football, general conference, have become popular topics. However, LGBTQ+ in the media has been a common concept that many people have continuously made relevant. Jojo shared her message through TikTok, which is a unique platform in that there is an explore option to view videos that the user does not follow. Due to this, viewers react in various ways. Those who find the topic of LGBTQ+ interesting and receive it in a more positive way, while those who are more interested in current events would have a more negative or lack of reaction.

Jojo Siwa has used the media to share her personal life story in order to gain attention. By creating content based on a topic that is widely talked about, Jojo was able to intrigue others and gained over ten million views. Looking at this message through the use of media literacy analysis shows that creators can use messages for various reasons.

Works Cited

Siwa, J. [@itsjojosiwa]. (2022, October 5). *Enjoy*. TikTok. <https://www.tiktok.com/t/ZTRuAEqac/>