



## Movie Review: *Taylor Swift: American Beauty*

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It can say a lot about a film based on how many notes I jot down while watching it. If I ramble on for three pages of notes, apparently there was more going on in my head than there was on screen. When you consider *Taylor Swift: American Beauty* only has a runtime of 52 minutes that says even more. And so is the case with this supposed “documentary.” While some documentaries manage to get under your skin based on their subject, the only thing that managed to get under my skin here was the ineptitude of the so-called filmmaking. Director Jason Boritz has managed to cobble together what can only be described as a Wikipedia page brought to life. While some may have thought the same thing about *J. Edgar*, at least we got to watch something far more interesting.

All we get in this “Unauthorized Documentary” (as it says on the cover plastered with a giant photo of Taylor Swift), is essentially an hour length PowerPoint presentation sprinkled throughout with interviews of fans and re-enactments of periods from Swift’s life story. The re-enactments would make even the producers of Lifetime movies cringe. Let alone that there’s some interesting bodily inconsistencies between the twelve year old version of Swift (Shannon Prior) and the sixteen year old version (Madi May Tindall).

The film grazes over all the highlights of Swift’s rise to fame. Including but not limited to: everything from her misfortune at RCA Records; being swooped up by Big Machine Records after being discovered at The Bluebird Café in Nashville by Scott Borchetta; to her infamous breakup with Joe Jonas; and Kanye West’s shameful 2009 MTV Music Video Awards interruption. If all you want is a highlight reel of facts from Taylor Swift’s life, that’s all you’ll get.

Unfortunately, you also get to suffer through scenes where random girls are walking down the street supposedly listening to Swift on a set of earphones, but obviously they couldn’t get clearance to use any of her music. The closest thing you get here are static shots of Prior and Tindall sitting around, strumming guitars, and not even so much as humming something that at least *sounds* like a [Taylor Swift](#) song.

The whole film plays like a fan-made love letter gone wrong. Toward the end of the film, it gets discussed how Taylor Swift “took down vendors who were selling counterfeit merchandise with her name and picture on it.” But that’s all this is as well. They then immediately follow this up with one fan saying, “It’s tough to say I gotta sue somebody. But you gotta do what you gotta do.” As such, Taylor Swift should aim her powers that be at this insipid piece of fansploitation and do the exact same thing.

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