

# Let's Talk Dusty!

The Ultimate Forum for Dusty Springfield Fans  
<http://www.dustyspringfield.org.uk/forum/>

## R&B charts?

<http://www.dustyspringfield.org.uk/forum/viewtopic.php?f=8&t=1365>

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## R&B charts?

by **Clive** Posted: **Sun Aug 22, 2010 10:51 am**

Does anyone know if any of Dusty's singles ever made the US Billboard R&B charts?  
(I'm referring to the rhythm & blues charts not the pop singles charts)  
I would have guessed her Atlantic records period would have been the most likely but I never heard if she did.

## Re: R&B charts?

by **paula** Posted: **Sun Aug 22, 2010 6:47 pm**

Hi Clive,  
I don't think Dusty ever had a presence in the R&B charts...unfortunately. For most of us ..she never had a high enough presence in any of the charts. 🙄  
....though maybe someone else knows different?  
paula x

## Re: R&B charts?

by **Clive** Posted: **Mon Aug 23, 2010 6:21 pm**

Thanks Paula, pity as it would have been nice for Dusty to have had an R&B hit to her name.

I watched a documentary on Elton John and one of the participants commenting on *Bennie & The Jets*' unexpected success on the R&B charts in 1974, said the only other English artist he remembered who gained acceptance on black radio prior to that was Dusty. It didn't translate to a hit but I was pleased that she got that mention.

## Re: R&B charts?

by **mnmcv1** Posted: **Mon Aug 23, 2010 6:27 pm**

great question Clive! I had wondered it myself.

the answer is no, Dusty did not, which boggles my mind.

It should be mentioned that, in the year Dusty made her first big splash in the US (1964), *Billboard* did not publish an R&B chart- the chart was suspended in late 1963 and did not resume until 1965. (the typical answer for this is that it was so closely mirroring the pop chart- don't know how true that is). I've always wondered if "I Only Want to Be With You" or "Wishin' & Hopin'" would've made some type of impact on R&B radio.

I doubt Phillips ever promoted her to black radio stations (of course, I think they did a lousy job with her in the US overall, so I may not be the person to answer that). It *really* surprises me that Atlantic did not more aggressively pursue an R&B chart presence for Dusty, but maybe they just felt she was already an established pop singer. Maybe they felt the songs wouldn't fare well on R&B radio. Or maybe Aretha wasn't having it. Who knows? 🤔

it should be pointed out that, little over a year before "Son of a Preacher Man" was released, Bobbie Gentry (who is white) had a HUGE hit with "Ode to Billie Joe", which reached #1 on the pop chart...and #8 on the R&B chart.

PS- Clive, I should mention that, while Dusty never actually charted R&B, the perception of her here in the states is still overwhelmingly that of a white R&B singer... 🤔

## Re: R&B charts?

by **Clive**

Posted: **Mon Aug 23, 2010 6:33 pm**

Thanks Markus, good comparison with Bobbie Gentry, I didn't know Billy Joe was a big R&B hit, surely Billy Ray should have been one too.

## Re: R&B charts?

by **Sweetbaby**

Posted: **Mon Aug 23, 2010 11:42 pm**

😊 I actually wouldn't expect IOWTBWY or W&H to have charted R&B even if **Billboard** had maintained an R&B chart at the time. It's funny but in the first phase of rock 'n' roll many pure Pop records did well on the R&B charts - Connie Francis' *Everybody's Somebody's Fool* was a #2 R&B hit! - then in the early '60s the focus of the R&B charts shifted to records with a true R&B sound: certainly that was true during the '63-'65 period when **Billboard's** R&B chart was suspended - apparently the rationale was that every single that might be considered an R&B hit was showing up somewhere on the Hot 100.

In terms of sound it's not impossible that some of Dusty's Atlantic singles might have found R&B support as did not only Bobbie Gentry's *Ode to Billie Joe* but also Lulu's *To Sir With Love* which reached #9 R&B. However to reach the R&B Top Ten these records had to not only become sizable Pop hits but phenomenal successes - a tier none of Dusty's US hits ever quite attained.

## Re: R&B charts?

by **jeffery**

Posted: **Tue Aug 24, 2010 4:53 am**

😬 In perspective R&B during the late 50's was called "race music". And in the 60's 70's and 80's the people calling the shots on the Billboard charts were still *white*, and they were still *men*. 😬

## Re: R&B charts?

by **mnmcv1**

Posted: **Tue Aug 24, 2010 3:32 pm**

*Sweetbaby wrote:*

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I completely forgot that "To Sir With Love" was an R&B hit as well.

Honestly though, it's not so far-fetched that those early Dusty songs would've impacted the chart.

Although the chart was moving toward a more accurate representation of black music, white artists were *still* penetrating that chart up until the time Billboard suspended it,.

Think of the timing- the chart was suspended in November of 1963.

"I Only Want to Be With You" entered the Hot 100 less than 4 MONTHS later.

and really, "Wishin' & Hopin'" sounds just as "R&B" as anything Dionne Warwick put out that year. 😬

## Re: R&B charts?

by **Sweetbaby**

Posted: **Wed Aug 25, 2010 1:32 am**

😊 It's true that as late as June 1963 Lesley Gore was able to top the R&B charts with *It's My Party* - in fact that track spent three weeks at #1 R&B one more than it did on the Pop charts! And the last hit to reach #1 R&B before **Billboard** suspended the chart in November 1963 was *Sugar Shack* by Jimmy Gilmer & the Fireballs.

However both Lesley & the Fireballs' hits spilled over on to the R&B charts by virtue of attaining massive popularity in the Pop field: *Sugar Shack* was #1 Pop for five weeks. As I previously mentioned, during the first phase of rock 'n' roll many Pop hits enjoyed R&B cross-over success but I do think these Pop hits' crossing-over was generally dependent on their scoring especially strong Pop chart impact: for example *Everybody's Somebody's Fool* was launched toward #2 R&B by virtue of a two week stint at #1 Pop. And neither IOWTBWY at #12 or W&H at #6 was a first magnitude Pop smash.

I agree in terms of its sound W&H would have been as valid an R&B chart item as any of Dionne W's 1964 singles & for me W&H trumps Nancy Wilson's *How Glad I Am* - 1964's Grammy winner for R&B single - in the Soul department. Not to be derogatory to either Dionne or Nancy - I'm a mega-fan of both - but I'd attribute the primary reason for both ladies having an R&B chart presence to their ethnic background rather than their vocal stylings.

If Philips had been moved to be musical innovators & try to work a blue-eyed Soul singer at R&B radio certainly they had the ideal artist in Dusty. But despite the historical scenario of R&B radio stations adding smash Pop hits to their playlists I think the idea of labels aggressively courting R&B favor for Pop artists was a concept that would remain outlandish for a considerable period after 1964.

While it might seem surprising that Atlantic apparently never thought of working Dusty at R&B radio, given the R&B direction of her Atlantic recordings, I think by virtue of Atlantic's having been built on R&B the label had an acute awareness of Dusty's recordings being R&B influenced rather than pure R&B. Jerry Wexler has stated outright that he didn't consider Dusty to "sound black". Although Lulu had had a Top Ten R&B hit with *To Sir With Love* while with Epic I doubt if Atlantic courted R&B favor for her label debut *Oh Me Oh My* which IMO has much more R&B cred than TSWL.

## Re: R&B charts?

by **Kyles Beguiles**

Posted: **Thu Mar 10, 2011 9:45 pm**

I recall reading online somewhere that "Silly, Silly Fool" was a top 25 R&B hit. I know it was included on an R&B compilation set some years ago. Wish I had more information to offer!

## Re: R&B charts?

by **Sweetbaby**

Posted: **Fri Mar 11, 2011 1:12 am**

😊 There's a very thorough multi-chart listing for Dusty at <http://tsort.info/music/p4hxrk.htm> with no R&B chartings evident: *Silly, Silly Fool* has the **Billboard** Hot 100 #76 showing as its one chart ranking. Perhaps the Top 25 R&B charting was for a similarly titled song, for example Valerie Simpson's 1972 single *Silly Wasn't I* which hit #24 R&B.

## Re: R&B charts?

by **Kyles Beguiles**

Posted: **Fri Mar 11, 2011 6:11 pm**

I had my charts mixed up - "Silly, Silly Fool" reached #25 on the Adult Contemporary charts 😞

I agree that Dusty the R&B songstress was a missed opportunity as clearly she had the goods to make her mark on the R&B charts.

## Re: R&B charts?

by **Kyles Beguiles**

Posted: **Fri Mar 11, 2011 6:13 pm**

Also, the compilation that includes "Silly, Silly Fool" is The Philly Sound - Kenny Gamble, Leon Huff, and the Story of Brotherly Love 1966 - 1976 😊

## Re: R&B charts?

by **IWannaBeABluesSinger**

Posted: **Mon Apr 25, 2011 5:20 am**

Hello everyone - I'm new here but I grew up in the Sixties so maybe I can offer some insight. By the mid-sixties Black militancy was at it's peak and they were demanding more respect from the media - especially radio. The order of the day was that "blue-eyed soul" was just another form of white people appropriating Black culture and therefore if you wanted to play R&B play only Black artists. This is what Dusty faced when she went to Memphis and later moved to America - her dreams of pursuing soul and R&B were futile at that point because she couldn't get radio play. It was just one of the things that mitigated against her at that point in her career (the others being the overall change in music from pop to heavy rock, the emergence of singer-songwriters which resulted in a dearth of material available to singers, and the fact that anyone associated with the Sixties were relegated to the "Oldies Hour" on radio). It was not "cool" for Blacks to admit they listened to anyone White so Dusty was steered more to the middle of the road, and the nightclub circuit - not a comfortable place for a Soul Sister like Dusty.

Maggie

## Re: R&B charts?

by **Cas19**

Posted: **Mon Apr 25, 2011 6:20 pm**

I Googled the question and they are saying that Dusty had a RnB hit ....top 10 with Take Another Little Piece Of My Heart in America in 1968.

Casx

## Re: R&B charts?

by **hedydust**

Posted: **Tue Apr 26, 2011 2:26 am**

😞😞 I would think that SOAPM was in the R&B charts 😊

## Re: R&B charts?

by **st louis blues**

Posted: **Tue Apr 26, 2011 5:07 am**

Hello and welcome to the forum. I didn't grow up in the sixties so my perspective comes from being a print junkie. I've been a music fanatic since I was a little girl and I have read as much as possible about that time period. Having said that I think you hit the nail right on the head as far as what went wrong with Dusty's career in America during the late sixties to the seventies when she lived here. She made some mistakes when it came to some career decisions and of course the addictions to drugs and drink made things worse. However, I've always felt that there were many things that she had no control over. You mentioned several in your post. Dusty had the talent, but radio didn't know what to do with her nor it seems did some of her managers. I can't really think of another white female from that time period who could sing R&B as convincingly as Dusty could. In addition, Dusty had her own style when it came to singing R&B.

I've always felt that she made a mistake in not working more with Gamble and Huff. I think she might have been able to eventually broken through on Black radio if she could have worked with them a little longer. It's a shame that with the Memphis album, Brand New Me, and Cameo, all very good albums, all she got in return was falling sales. All these albums had some fine R&B on them. I think poor Dust was just ahead of her time.



## Re: R&B charts?

by **jeffery**

Posted: **Tue Apr 26, 2011 9:55 pm**

😊 Maggie's right about the things Dusty was up against.

Detroit radio *was not* playing white artist cover of Motown songs.

That's why I stayed up late to receive broadcasts from Boston.

Even Jimi Hendrix was pressured by black militants as to who (race) should play in his group, and what cause he should be supporting.

Not only was Dusty not black, she was not a man, she was not American, and she was not *the next big thing*. (Beatles ?)

She didn't fit the mold in any way. Didn't want to fit the mold, so how you gonna sell that ?

The recording companies have never cared about the artist. They looked at them as though they were a commodity or property. I know she was an adventurer and brave, but it must have been tough for her to be alone in the wilderness of L.A. without someone in her corner. 🙄

I think the troubles came before the booze and drugs.

## Re: R&B charts?

by **Sweetbaby**

Posted: **Tue Apr 26, 2011 11:04 pm**

*Cas19 wrote:*

I Googled the question and they are saying that Dusty had a RnB hit ....top 10 with Take Another Little Piece Of My Heart in America in 1968.

Casx

😊 *Piece of My Heart* has only appeared in the R&B charts via the original version by Erma Franklin which reached #10 R&B in 1967. Dusty's version was never issued as a single: her two US single releases in 1968 were *I Close My Eyes & Count to Ten/La Bamba & The Sweet Ride/No Stranger Am I*.

## Re: R&B charts?

by **st louis blues**

Posted: **Wed Apr 27, 2011 4:49 am**

Jeffery, interesting you should mention Jimi. I remember reading that he was conflicted by this because it seemed Jimi was pretty colorblind when it came to race. I also agree about Dusty's problems starting before the addictions. I don't think there were one or two events that lead to her downfall. Instead, it was a domino effect and I think it started when she and Vic Billings split and the signing with Atlantic.

From what I gather she acted as her manager for a while after the split; I read an old clipping where Dusty talked about the added responsibilities and that she couldn't afford another manager after paying Vic to break the contract. Are you familiar with Linda Ronstadt? In the 60's she had a rather inept manager who didn't seem to know what to do with her. Around 1973 she was heavily in debt to her record company and her career was stagnant. Then Peter Asher came along. He believed in her, bought out her contract with her old manager, and developed a plan for Linda's future. He was willing to take a temporary loss because he knew Linda's potential. This is what I don't understand. Dusty was already a star and was well known and regarded in the U.K. as well as America. I would have thought she would have no trouble getting a manager willing to take her to the next level. Was there no manager in either country willing to buy out her contract? Unbelievable. I think Pat was correct when she stated that by the end of the 60's Dusty was worn out. She came here not knowing how to navigate the music industry and her management was wrong. I also think the deal with Phillips handling the U.K. releases and Atlantic the U.S. releases was a bad decision. On paper it sounds great, but it didn't work out.

This is what I wish would have happened. Dusty puts together a crack R&B band, gets rid of the gowns and wigs, and starts playing colleges to get her confidence back. She is then befriended by Bill Graham who books her at the Fillmore and she knocks everyone out by playing songs from DIM. Well, I guess I can dream.



## Re: R&B charts?

by **jeffery**

Posted: **Wed Apr 27, 2011 8:16 pm**

🌱 Those of us who have taken the wrong fork in the road, and had to fight our way back appreciate the obstacles Dusty overcame to regain her footing.

I'm glad Dusty had friends who loved her enough to intervene, and bring her home. 🌹