



The Archives of Let's Talk Dusty!

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Author

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allherfaces
Administrator
★★★★★

Posted - 28/04/2009 : 23:16:28

Following this conversation with interest.



USA
14235 Posts

A few years ago I was working on this question with my advisor. She said, as Will does, that it's impossible to truly diagnose Dusty.

However, we did talk about her various issues, symptoms etc. Based on various readings I have done, my guesstimate is that in addition to depression, she perhaps suffered from PTSD. If you know Judith Herman's book, Trauma and Recovery, she gives an excellent description of how this is often confused for borderline personality disorder. That also is a possibility, but because it's been such a negative label, I shy away from it. Self-harm is often linked to BPD or PTSD, also. Of course nothing was understood about it at the time.

By trauma, I don't mean one big event, but a series of events that undermined her sense of self and safety in the world. What I've heard called "little t" trauma v Trauma.

My advisor at the time, who was also a PhD psychologist and had practiced as a therapist for many years, said when there are issues of substance abuse, a diagnosis is really impossible. So again I'm agreeing with Will, that those problems cloud everything.

I'd add in parting that my interest in diagnosis is only to try to better understand Dusty. I don't want to categorize or pigeonhole her. She'd be saying "none of the above" as she did about her sexuality, although in both cases, I sometimes think "all of the above" might be closer to the truth.

A very complicated lady who obviously went through a lot of pain, but a survivor too! It almost defies the imagination, considering what she went through.

x N

There's something in my soul that will always lead me back to you.



Sara
I'll try anything
★★

Posted - 28/04/2009 : 23:32:55

Completely. Interesting post, Nancy.

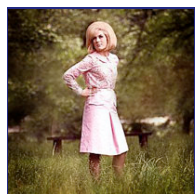
Sara x



1163 Posts

Will

Wasn't born to follow



United Kingdom
7603 Posts

Posted - 28/04/2009 : 23:41:20

I would add again that although Dusty's issues at various stages are fairly well known now, it is easy to overlook that peacefulness that seemed to come later in her life. I hope that it was a true and deep peacefulness, reflecting an acceptance of herself finally at various levels. Way back, elsewhere on the forum, someone once asked what we would say if we met Dusty. I don't know I would say anything at all - but I would love to have just given her a great big hug and told her that it was OK, then let her cry her eyes out on my shoulder. Oddly, I actually feel quite tearful just thinking about that.

You're right about the substances, Nancy - what starts as a symptom eventually becomes the problem. The real roots of the problem, however, began far earlier and I do wonder about the nature of that.

Will

"..a voice on the travelling wind and a glimpse of a face at morning.."

Gallery: www.askyofhoney.com



memphisinlondon

Where am I going?



United Kingdom
3565 Posts

Posted - 28/04/2009 : 23:50:49

Thanks from me too, Will. This is the first time I've read anything at all this thoughtful apart from Leigh's and Bobbie's posts.

All I've ever seen in books is the mention of 'manic depression' in DWD. And then you get the old chestnuts about Mary and Dusty - the two personalities: one introvert the other more disturbed in bad and good ways. All I can gather is that Dusty had a very fragile personality and that being unsuccessful in Los Angeles, of all places, was the worst thing that could happen to her. I think Dusty ended up in Belle Vue the same hospital Marilyn Monroe said was a total nightmare years before. Yet, Dusty seemed to take it in her stride as a refuge and even a bit of a laugh. Maybe because weight was taken off her shoulders and she could just be 'stopped' and taken care of.

I wondered here before if the peace Dusty reached was also because she finally got the right therapy and medication. But, as usual, we don't know much at all about this part of Dusty's life. Unfortunately DWD only took pains to let us know about the tragic symptoms. I found a Kim Wilde quote a while back but it wasn't complete. She was saying that when she met Dusty around the Stringfellow period there seemed to be something wrong with Dusty. I think there was something wrong (not just drugs) and maybe that's why we hardly saw her later on. It wasn't worth it anymore and she had to take care of herself. All those YouTube interviews make it seem like she was on TV often but she wasn't. I hardly ever saw her. And I'm glad she stepped back out of the spot-light.

Memphis
Ever since we met...

PS I was writing as Nancy's post came in so missed this and Will's and Sara's. Very thoughtful tho' I don't know what Nancy's acronyms mean. Nancy could you explain please? I guess one is bi-polar disorder.

Edited by - memphisinlondon on 28/04/2009 23:58:41



allherfaces

Administrator



Posted - 29/04/2009 : 00:05:40

BPD by this I meant borderline personality disorder

PTSD - post traumatic stress disorder



USA
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With everyone, it's a combination of environment and genetic vulnerabilities, and I'm sure that was the case with Dusty, whatever the issues.

Some recommended reading:
Judith Herman: Trauma and Recovery
Marilee Strong: The bright red Scream
Dusty Miller: women who hurt themselves

x N

There's something in my soul that will always lead me back to you.



memphisinlondon
Where am I going?
★★★

Posted - 29/04/2009 : 00:08:50

Yes, thank you, I agree.



United Kingdom
3565 Posts

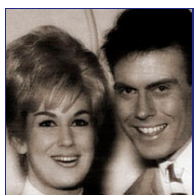
Memphis
Ever since we met...



spooky
Little by little
★

Posted - 29/04/2009 : 00:34:26

All very interesting. I wish we knew more about D's childhood and adolescence. In addition to the drugs, drink, and trauma one must take into account that Dusty was a creative artist. Psychologists have always struggled to "explain" creativity and they still don't know quite how it works because it varies so widely from one creative personality to another. Dusty's creative "wiring" would complicate any diagnosis. My two cents!



Annie

USA
372 Posts

warten und hoffen...



memphisinlondon
Where am I going?
★★★

Posted - 29/04/2009 : 01:00:01

I agree with you, Annie. And I'm glad you've popped by. I've said as much before. I would bet \$100 (not much more) that Dusty's childhood played a big part because from what I've read it was, at best, chaotic. And what was her mother drinking from those tea cups? What was her father doing hitting Dusty so much that she had to ask him why later on? But we don't even need that. We have the transformations. The dis-locations. The re-locations. The Ch ch ch changes. I can't think of many artists that were this disturbed apart from Bowie, Dusty's baby soul brother.



Memphis
Ever since we met...



allherfaces
Administrator
★★★★★

Posted - 29/04/2009 : 01:20:00

I suspect you are right, Memphis, but I think most of our troubles arise from that origin. it's just the nature of the beast--it's where we learn relationships, and what to think of ourselves, and all that. That is not to say that parents in general are to blame for all of their children's problems, of course. And I would probably appreciate that more if I were a parent myself. Nonetheless, Dusty's folks did not seem especially happy with each other or with their daughter, and if you add to that the "thin boundaries" of her artistic temperament--when hurt went down it stung her harder. Dusty herself talked about how vulnerable she was to negative



USA
14235 Posts

comments and her low self esteem.

Dr Ernest Hartmann who has written extensively about dreams and nightmares did some studies (I think) of people who tended to dream more than others (or at least remember their dreams more): these people were generally the more 'artistic types' --creative people who were more sensitive than others, and had thinner boundaries between fantasy and reality, themselves and others, and so on. So I think Annie is onto a key angle as well.

x N

There's something in my soul that will always lead me back to you.



memphisinlondon

Where am I going?



United Kingdom
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Posted - 29/04/2009 : 02:32:39

I agree. And I'm not blaming the parents. They did the best they could. Most parents do. It's just that the kids had to absorb all that stuff. Somehow it made both children extraordinary. Dusty was very, very sensitive. I suspect Tom is too. By 1968/69 Dusty was living in a pressure chamber. And something had to give.

It would be so interesting to be able to understand Tom's own story -about himself- one day.

Memphis
Ever since we met...



allherfaces

Administrator



Posted - 29/04/2009 : 03:07:43

No, I didn't think you were blaming the parents, but I sense some of the parents on the boards might be sensitive to that characterization, so wanted to put it out there.

I wish Tom would speak==say anything, really, but how much longer can we hold out hope for that?

x N

There's something in my soul that will always lead me back to you.



USA
14235 Posts

MissDustyFanatic

Where am I going?



Posted - 29/04/2009 : 05:12:03

Well, he is a few years older than Miss Dusty, so he's got to be what...75, 76?

"I've got to be where my spirit can run free..."



USA
2606 Posts

daydreamer

Moderator



Posted - 29/04/2009 : 07:25:45

quote:

Originally posted by spooky

Psychologists have always struggled to "explain" creativity and they still don't know quite how it works because it varies so widely from one creative personality to another. Dusty's creative "wiring" would complicate any diagnosis. My two cents!

Annie

United Kingdom
5404 Posts

warten und hoffen...

My two girls were different from babies and still are. They had the same love, attention and offered opportunities. Lucy the "creative artist" says now she is "wired differently" and life has not always been easy. She admits to the type of dreams mentioned in Nancy's post and the thin boundary between fantasy and reality. I see a lot of Dusty's problems in Lucy and Lucy would too. The one thing that hasn't been mentioned and which Pat always claims was Dusty's biggest problem was her battle with her religion, we talked at length about it just yesterday....and don't forget she knew her from the very beginning of her fame.

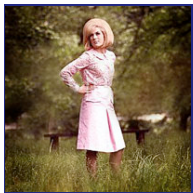
Carole x

"There's a part of you that's a part of me..."



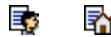
Will

Wasn't born to follow
★★★★★



United Kingdom
7603 Posts

Posted - 29/04/2009 : 08:26:39



I have no doubt that Pat could shed light that would certainly clarify, things; but I absolutely respect her loyalty to her friend.

As for the religion side of things, I strongly suspect that may be one of those 'root's I referred to earlier.

Will

"..a voice on the travelling wind and a glimpse of a face at morning.."

Gallery: www.askyofhoney.com



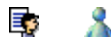
streepalicious

Little by little
★



Australia
279 Posts

Posted - 29/04/2009 : 08:40:48



quote:

Originally posted by MissDustyFanatic

Well, he is a few years older than Miss Dusty, so he's got to be what...75, 76?

"I've got to be where my spirit can run free..."

I thought he was born in 1932 which would indeed make 76ish!

But Tom might as well have duck tape over his mouth in conern to speaking about his famous sister. 😬

Alice xxxxx



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