

The History of Dylan Humphrey

Exotic Beginnings

I guess I'll start in Hawaii. My Mom toyed with the idea of naming me THOR KAMAYAMAYA HUMPHREY, in deference to my ethnicity and birthplace, but settled on Dylan Wells, in deference to me and my uncle. I can't complain. Oh, when was this? May 31, 1976. That makes me a Fire Dragon according to Chinese Astrology, a FOUR and a FIVE according to numerology, and either a Taurus or a Gemini, depending on whether you think Ophiuchus should be in the zodiac or not.

My parents and I moved to Barrington, Rhode Island when I was about 3 months old, pursuing my Dad's new job. That was the last I've seen of Hawaii. :(When I was 3 *years* old, my parents moved again, following my Dad's new job with the University of Rhode Island. This time, we landed in West Kingston, and we've been there ever since. My brother Ross was born once we got here. That was October 5, 1980.

West Kingston Elementary

Against the kindergarten teacher's advice, my parents started me in the public school. West Kingston Elementary. I liked it there. Kindergarten was fun, as I remember, and 1st and 2nd grades were ok, too. Back then, I was best friends with Mike Phelps. We both had big ears, and while his stuck out more, mine were actually bigger. I was very good friends with Nick Marr, too, and by sometime in 2nd grade, I had some sort of falling out with Mike, and Nick was my best friend. I have a vivid memory of Nick, I think from 4th or 5th grade: several older kids were picking on me at recess, pushing me, etc. etc. Nick, who played Pop Warner football, came running over and threatened them, saying "You guys are dead meat!" I was both very thankful to Nick for rescuing me, and perplexed by the concept of dead meat. Isn't meat already dead?

I remember my 3rd grade teacher very well. She was very kind and a very fun teacher. Dorla Long. She made me think that I could do things well. She called me D.M.D. - Dylan My Darling. We used to talk in code; we'd write notes, but replacing many words with homonyms, or I suppose they were really homophonemes or something (sew eye mite say sumthing lyke thiss) I was amazed, I remember, at how many exceptions to words there were! oh, for example, I could use ai for a soft a sound, since that sound is what is created in "plaid." Stuff like that; get it? I got a big kick out of that class. The next year, I started getting letter grades instead of 1's and 2's. All I got were A's! I didn't understand why they bothered offering the other letters!

bam. Brick wall. Named Fran Richmond. She let me know why the other grades were there: for when I get lazy! I was turning into a pretty pompous little boy at this point (5th grade), and Mrs. Richmond was just what I needed. Sixth grade provided two crowning achievements for me. I ended my Elementary schooling in 1988, which, according to Numerology, should have been a big year for me. It was; I was ranked #1 in the daily tetherball contests at year's end, and I, along with Salinda Daley, won the Lacy Cross Craven Memorial Award. That meant a real lot to me; Lacy was my neighbor from the time I moved here until she died of a rare cancer in December of 1985. I was very sad that she was gone, but for a few years after that, I had a feeling at times that she was looking after

me. As I was sitting on the stage, listening to Mr. Corcoran talk about the qualities of the person that would win this award, I thought about Lacy, and I felt happy to have known her. I also thought about how much Salinda fit the description being presented by Mr. Corcoran. I felt kinda sad that I wasn't going to win it, I mean *I* was the one who knew her better than any of my classmates, but Salinda was obviously smarter, more polite, and on and on. But then I started hearing words like, "there was no way we could separate these two" "they are both so deserving of this award" "the 1988 Lacy Cross Craven Memorial Award is presented to Salinda Daley..." (I felt happy that the right person was winning it) "...and Dylan Humphrey." I was dumbfounded. If you knew me at the time; meek, quiet, hardworking, and modest, then you can understand why my vision was a little blurry and my balance was a bit off, as I approached the podium, passing by Salinda, to receive the Award. I was so proud and happy! Pride was not an emotion that I had felt that acutely before. A little bit with the tetherball, but nothing like this!

I have been talking all about school! Well let's break the monotony, shall we? I was a pretty quiet kid, as I mentioned. I liked playing outside and watching the clouds. We had a pretty nice place to play around outside - 10 acres worth! and we had chickens, too! How many people do you know who had pets that gave them eggs? For a little while, we had a steer, and we almost always had bees. Dad was the beekeeper. Ha! pets that gave honey! mmmmmmmmm....

After school ended in '88, Dad got a consulting job for the Dept of Health....in Egypt! The rest of the family tagged along with him, and we got to see all the sights! The people there were very friendly, but this was before the big Christian/Muslim turmoil that has been unsettling the country of late. We met one Christian named Megde. He said that the Christians in Egypt were descended from the Pharaohs. I'm glad we left before *that* boiled over. This trip provided the first awe-inspiring sight of my life: The Sphinx. I got to stand between its paws...it was tremendous. I'd recommend it to you, but I don't think they let you get that close to it anymore. I also got to go inside Mycernus (the smallest of the three great pyramids), and climb on of Mycernus' smaller "wives' pyramids" I don't think they let you do this anymore, either. Bummer! Egypt did provide a highlight of a childhood of travel. My parents' families lived in North Dakota, Virginia, Minnesota, Seattle, Arizona and California. And we were in Rhode Island. My parents valued travel over all the other luxuries you can pick from, so we did a lot of it! I have pictures, if you want to come look at them. I'm not going to scan them all to put on the web, though! :P

South Kingstown Junior High

My life has seemed to have been a succession of broadening horizons. The first one was when I went from my family to nursery school. The second major horizon expansion was seventh grade. West Kingston Elementary was the smallest of five schools feeding into the Junior High, so I had a lot of new faces to get used to! Two of these were my favorite teachers: Mr. Gannon and Mrs. Schaffaroth. Mr. Gannon told a lot of jokes and I think I learned a lot from him. He was a history teacher. Mrs. Schaf was a Phys Ed teacher. I think one of the reasons I liked her was that I just liked gym, and moving around. This affinity was instilled in me by Kristina Kelly-Shumate, my gym teacher from elementary school. She had all sorts of neat programs, like having everyone jog and record their miles, trying to get the total to reach Los Angeles. Mrs. Shumate made me think that I could do physical things, whereas before, I thought all I could do were school things. I owe her a great deal for making me who I am today.

But seventh grade wasn't all gaining friends. I was spending a lot of time with Evan Blackwell, who I became friends with when he moved to town in 4th grade, but Nick wasn't in any of my classes anymore, and he was dating Cristy Balch, so I didn't see him much anymore. I tried my hand at girls, too, but for some reason could form the words, "want to dance?" or "wanna go out?" I couldn't even call her on the phone! I'm referring now to Jenn Smith, who I fell in love with in Art class. Dave Coleman thought she was pretty neat, too, and at the end of 8th grade, they started dating officially. I paid for my hesitation. I remained starry-eyed over Jenn until 10th grade. I was pathetic by my current (1997) standards.

School wasn't too bad, but I was ugly and pimply and braced and obnoxious...I often like to box my memories of Jr. High up into one package and dispose of them. But can you really dispose of memories?

School went ok; I got B's in math and english in 7th grade, but rallied to straight A's in 8th grade, beating out a newfound friend, Bill Palm, by a whisker. Bill and I, I came to realize, think much the same way. In Home Ec, though, I outdid him - his average was 99.13, and mine was 100. Ha! I say that because in 7th grade, he had gotten straight A's and I was jealous. When you got straight A's in this school for a whole year, you got an award, which the students called a "nerd plaque." Bill had one from 7th grade, and we both had our hopes up for one in 8th. The last class left was Wood Shop. Bill was a scout, and I had a dad with his own shop, so you would think that we'd have it made. But when we got our report cards, there was a problem. Bill got a B+ in shop! I laughed! I got an A! I told him it was too bad that he was losing his nerd plaque because of Shop. But as it turned out, they had ordered the plaques a month earlier, so they had ordered one for both Bill and myself. We would go on to get identical SAT scores and (I hope!) almost identical College Degrees. He a B.S. in Mechanical Engineering and me a B.S. in General Engineering (with a Mechanical concentration).

I tried out for the baseball team in 7th grade and didn't make it. I hadn't ever played baseball, but I liked it as far as hitting a ball around the backyard. In 8th grade I tried out for the basketball team and didn't make that, either. I had played a lot of basketball, with Nick, my Dad, and others. I felt that I should have been on the team, but I wasn't picking 'em. So in the spring, I joined the track team. No cuts there! Jerseys for everyone. I picked up shot put and sprinting. Nick was on the team, too, and he did the same events. He was a lot faster than me, but I did better in the Shot Put. We were both on the 4x100m team: he ran 1st leg, and I ran 3rd. I loved running the turn, that's why I ran the 200m as well. In the state meet, we won the overall title, and I got 5th or 6th in the shot. I really like sprinting. I like going fast, and feeling the air rushing by me. I won the Coach's Award, along with Nick Moretti and Kristen Comerford I think, and that remains one of my most prized awards.

The end of 8th grade brought a new revelation to me. At the end of the year awards ceremony, I won awards for math and science and my nerd plaque and I realized that I was smart! I had confidence in myself as a smart person. This confidence would carry my all the way to Swarthmore.

South Kingstown High

South Kingstown High School. I think my Student ID # was 94108. Wow. How 'bout that memory? 94 for my YOG and 108 for where I was in alphabetical order. I was between Nikki Horn and Dan Hunt. High School. I once again succeeded in falling for

several girls, but now, I succeeded in CALLING them! That was a big first. I think that was Jenny Nuuttila. Homecoming 1992. Oh, and I managed to *attract* them, too! Sophomore year - both Holly Rocco and Faith Bancroft. I actually dated Faith for a little while, but she would call me up and expected me to do all the talking! So I told her that I was too busy with school for a girlfriend. I felt bad about that a year or so later, since it was such a heartless way to break up with someone. But boys will be boys, right? Actually, I wasn't really a typical boy. I was totally at a loss when I heard Jason Monahan say, "he was just usin' her for, you know, his needs." Needs? I needed good grades and food, how is a girl gonna supply that?

Of course, the focus of my high school years was grades. I did ok, getting straight A's sophomore and senior years, a B in AP US History, a B in Honors Western Civilization, and a C in Honors English. That C was freshman year. It took me 7 years to finally start to get a real clue about writing prose. You may have noticed that I haven't applied any of the things I learned in this document, but I read a lot, and I hope some of that shows itself here. As long as there aren't too many grammar problems that make you wince! :)

I continued to enjoy using my body for things - intramural basketball, 4 years of track, lots of school dances, and senior year, my first varsity sport: Volleyball. It was the first year my school had ever had a Varsity Boys' Volleyball team. I was its' first setter and captain. Ben Schomp was the other captain. Sanjeeth was the one who got me to try out. and Vicki Tefft got me to go to the World Scholar-Athlete Games in 1993, the single most rewarding experience of my life so far.

WSAG was held in Kingston, on URI's campus in the summer of '93. That's because the idea was cooked up by people at URI's Institute for International Sport. Did I mention widening horizons before? Well geographically, this widened them to Australia, the Seychelles, Poland and, well, the whole world! It turned a switch in me - from quiet, smart kid to exuberant, joyful young man! The WSAG had an incredible impact on me. To demonstrate that fact, I met a girl at engineering camp the next week, and really hit it off with her! There is no way this could have happened to the pre-WSAG Dylan. No way. Only problem with this suaree was that I thought the people there were more athlete than scholar. The discussions we had weren't always very interesting. But had the people there all been like me, it never would have changed me so much!

My senior year was great - I got over the girl from Engineering Camp by listening to the Police, especially "Can't Stand Losing You." He kills himself in the end! I was sad, but not sad enough to kill myself. Poof! I was cured. Volleyball was great, too. I had coaches for soccer teams, but I almost always found fault in them. They were too mean or too dumb. Dilip K. Datta was the exception there - he was my first soccer coach. He was very nice. Oh the track coaches who I was with all through High School were always too **something**. And the Basketball coach that never put me on the team was just dumb, right? my sophomore year, he put 7 frosh on the team instead of me. By my senior year, only one wasn't incarcerated, moved, or dropped out of school. That was Andy Smith. I liked him a lot. So to counteract all this was Vicki. She loved volleyball and was a highly competent coach. Thanks to her coaching, I started my development into what I think is a pretty ok volleyball player. I made All-Division, too! Third team, I was the 17th best player in the Southern Division. Sanjeeth was 18th, though he was better than me, according to me.

Academics ended up really well. I edged out Bill for the #1 in Physics award, did well on the SAT's, finished my fourth year of Spanish (I love that language!), and got accepted to

attend Tufts, Rochester and Swarthmore. Dartmouth waitlisted me. I think partly due to my class rank. I was 6th, and the #2 girl from my class applied there, too. She got it, though she ended up going to Brown. The worst thing was that Mike Altreuter, who was like #12, got rejected. Stupid Dartmouth. My interview with them was bad, too. I made the mistake of saying "renaissance man" and one of the *three* interviewers lectured me on what a REAL Renaissance Man was like. But I didn't care! My long college search ended with Swarthmore. I graduated #6 out of 190 or something, and Bill gave a speech at graduation, as President of the Senior Class. Wanna know something weird? Bill was born on the same day as another president named Bill; Clinton, August 19th.

Swarthmore College

Off to Swarthmore. Freshman year was great. Magical. I started on my Engineering Degree, and started learning about Eastern Philosophy. That was another big thing for me, as far as turning points go. I really liked what I read in the Tao-te-Ching. I wrote a Taoism Page when I learned about HTML. I roomed with Fred Bush, who shared little in common with me, other than tee-totalling. I made him sing O Fortuna at Screw Your Roommate, though. We often disagreed on what music to listen to; me choosing Gordon Lightfoot, and he choosing TMBG, Simon and Garfunkel, and others. I met so many cool people! I've heard that the folks you meet right away are the friends you have forever, and what do you know, but I've seen everyone this summer: Beth Wiles, Joan Hoffmann, Lynn Chosiad, Mandy Hourihan, Ashley Flynn, Kristin Vitalich. I made some animated gifs in honor of a few of them. I'm sad, since I haven't seen Seth Murray, Kate Schneider, Morgan Kelly, Ronan McCoy and a lot of others, but I'll see them back at school! I met Julie Humphreys, who shared my mailbox with me, and most of my last name. I embarked on quite the relationship with her; it was very good for most of freshman year, quite bad for sophomore year, kinda not there for junior year, and I am hoping good for the upcoming year. She says that the chorus from the Freshman song applies to us pretty well. I had thought that Gordon Lightfoot's Never Too Close had, too. Volleyball was good, and I jumped right in and started setting for the Club Team! By the end of the year, Ben Chong and Araul had gotten sick of either me or the whole team, and they quit. Araul had been our coach. I love Volleyball. Paul does, too. That would be Paul Hsu, who I roomed with Sophomore Year.

Sophomore year witnessed the beginning of my relationship with Lynn Chosiad. September 24th, 1995 so you can count along at home. We had been friends all of freshman year, but now we were better friends. What was weird was that Lynn roomed with Julie! Go figure. I think it was around here that I started to heed Greg Arakelian's advice and stop thinking so much. I lived on Hallowell 3rd that year, along with Paul, Wonju and Jimmy. George was downstairs, too. What a great year. Never mind the C's I got in Math. Oh, I put up a page of all the Courses that I've taken, for those that are curious. It was sophomore year that I gave up hopes of being a Physics/Engine double major. I liked Physics a lot, but Joan and John Boccio just couldn't outweigh how much I liked the field of Engineering.

Sophomore year was a lot of fun. Rednex' album, Sex and Violins, has songs which get the general emotion of that year accross, I think. Oh, that year is also the year I ended 19 years of teetotaling. mmmmm....vodka. I'm not even Russian! or Latino, but I like tequila, too. My grandmother likes tequila, though, so I guess I get it from her. I stopped listening to Gordon Lightfoot as much as I should have, but as of 1997 I'm back to where I like to be. I was still breaking it on down as often as possible - I danced in High School, and I try to do the same at Swat. I'm not as Crazy as Peter Murray and Isaac Reed; I give much props to those two boys. Oh! Sophomore year also introduced the largest wrinkle of my life to date:

Multiple Sclerosis. I've put all the salient information up on that page, so I won't here. I started working at APC around then, too. That was pretty cool, working with HTML, and meeting Aaron. Aaron = Da Bomb. We both had Ladies in the Boston Area, and we bonded over that. We had a monster trek up to MacWorld in '96, too. how cool?!

OK, are we at Junior year yet? Yup! Finally started taking REAL Engine classes (see My Classes for details) like E41, where we actually studied how an *engine* works! and Heat Transfer! I loved that class! Fluid Mechanics was cool, too! All my friends were either girls or volleyball players or Byron! Oh right, I was living with Byron, as I stated on an older homepage. Lynn and I were still an item, and Julie was still her roommate! No small thanks to me, which is part of the reason why Julie and I weren't getting along very well. At one point, I analyzed her name Numerologically and realized that she'd be much better off going by Julia than Julie. Junior Year featured the end of my life as a Red Sox fan. pretty sad. I still like fenway, and baseball, and I'll go toe to toe with anyone in baseball trivia, but I can't be fanatical about the Sox anymore. Oh, I finally got to take Intro Education, and it was another wonderful class. Swarthmore's full of wonderful classes! I'd recommend it to anyone who has \$120K to spare.

Senior year. It was basically the first time I'd ever drank a whole can of WHUP-ASS. bang boom pow - I'm done now, though. got my BS engineering from swarthmore, thank you, see you later. maybe.

They sure help you enjoy senior week at Swarthmore; Dixieland band, great food, good parties, good friends...ahh. almost made up for the rest of senior year. <g> Oh - and at graduation then had all us engineers sit in back, so we doffed our mortarboards and replaced them with train engineer's caps, and then put great big letters on our backs, which spelled out "MORE BS THAN THE REST" flaunting the fact that we are the only ones on campus that are awarded Bachelor of Science degrees. Which letter did I wear? aha! I didn't wear one! I was the space in between THAN and THE. A void between the most common. A Taoist's paradise, I guess...

Now it's the real world. Rob set me up with a piece of employment out in San Mateo; hopefully I will be able to get my life restarted out there. West coast, baby. So now I suppose my biography should end. I'll start it up later, once I find a new place to hock my web wares. :)

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