

Love You, Daddy Boy

DAUGHTERS HONOR THE FATHERS THEY LOVE

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Roseanne Cash

■ JOHNNY CASH

WHEN I was 18 years old and just graduated from high school, I took some time off before going to college to travel with my Dad on the road. It was then that I learned to play guitar, and developed a passion for folk and country music, which up to that time I had eschewed as the music of my parents. On the bus one day, struggling with my new guitar skills (or lack thereof), he watched me for a few moments and then sat down and wrote a list of songs for me. In bold letters across the top of the page, he scrawled ‘100 Essential Country Songs’. He handed me the list and told me that I needed to learn all these songs to complete my education. The list was far ranging, and thorough; it was assembled from his intuitive understanding of each critical juncture in the evolution of country music. There were old Appalachian folk ballads, and the songs of Jimmie Rodgers and Woody Guthrie. The influence of gospel and Southern blues was acknowledged, and he segued the list into rockabilly and then the birth of modern country music by way of Hank Williams, and up to the present, which was 1973. On the list were Carter Family songs like “Banks of the Ohio”, and Woody Guthrie songs like “This Land Is Your Land” and history ballads like “The Battle of New Orleans”, and Hank William’s “I’m So Lonesome I Could Cry”, as well as Carl Perkins’ ‘Blue Suede Shoes’. I endeavored to learn them all. I probably did, as the list hangs in front of me in my mind’s eye to this day, 33 years later, and the songs became part of my background knowledge and source of reference when I began writing songs myself. I looked to that list as a standard of excellence, and to remind myself of the tradition of which I was a part.

Dad loved to talk politics almost as much as he loved to talk music. Interestingly, he had the same poetic grasp of world events as he had of the lexicon of American music. His understanding of the world was free of rigid ideology, and full

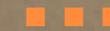


of an artist's sense of expansion, compassion and a wider perspective that included the past, the future and the human heart. The only subject on which he was unyielding was his belief in peace. He was a Southern Baptist who was nearly a Quaker in his absolute pacifism, but he was a true individual in how he expressed that belief. In the 1970's, he spoke out vociferously against the Vietnam War, and then immediately turned around and went there to play for the troops. This made a tremendous impression on my teenage brain, and I have endeavored ever since then to mold myself in the same spirit of personal truth, integrity, courage and social activism with which he defined himself. That remarkable act, and the beliefs that informed it (which many thought to be the opposite of what they actually were) stands as a model of what I aspire to be in my most courageous version of myself.

In the last several years of his life, he developed a near-obsession with watching CNN, and he was always incredibly well informed. He intuitively understood what was not part of the headlines: the complexities and the back-stories of various issues and conflicts. He had thoughtful opinions, based on his own principles and love of democracy. He also had great passion in his opinions, and we loved nothing more than to settle in with each other for a long conversation about politics and the state of the world. In the last few years of his life he rose very early in the morning. Whenever I went to Nashville to visit him, I would force myself awake at 3:30 or 4 a.m. and go into his little office to have coffee with him. He would turn on the news and we'd mull over what had happened in the world overnight. Those early mornings, before the house was awake or the staff had arrived, are some of my fondest memories of being with him. It was still dark outside on the lake just beyond his window, he was alert and interested in the world, and we were alone for a precious couple of hours. After we had digested the news, he would turn the television off and I would read to him from Psalms or Proverbs, until he grew tired again and had to take the first of several naps for the day.

He is defined to me by his love of language, songs, his love of being himself and being in the world, and his dedication to service and peace. That, combined with his love of rhythm and silly jokes, made up a father who stands unequalled among men to me. Not a day goes by that I don't think of him, or think of something I would like to share with him, or long for his advice, which I didn't ask for

nearly often enough. I gave up watching CNN after he died, because no one else could bring his poet's understanding to this difficult world, and without the poetry, the news is just too hard to take.



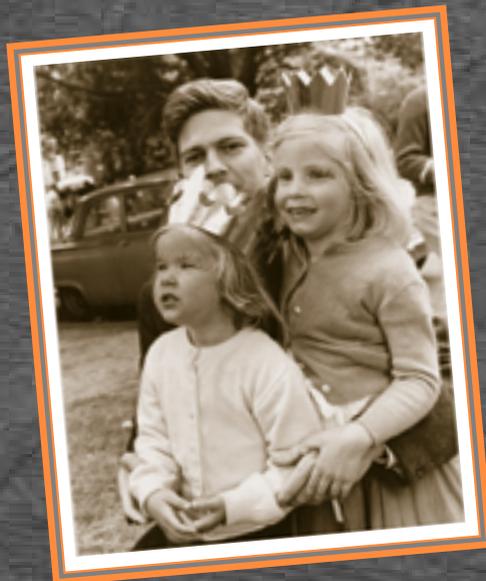
Johnny Cash is one of the most beloved musicians in the history of American music, and is known to billions of people around the world. He is the winner of multiple Grammy awards and hundreds of other music awards, as well as the Medal of Arts, and is the only performer who was elected to all three Halls of Fame: The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, the Country Music Hall of Fame, and the Songwriters Hall of Fame.

Rosanne Cash is a Grammy-winning singer and songwriter who has released 12 albums over the course of her 28-year career and had 11 number one records, as well as numerous awards for songwriting and performance. She is also a noted author and essayist whose prose has appeared in The New York Times, New York Magazine, The Oxford-American, Martha Stewart Living, and various other periodicals and collections.



Susan Harper

■ JAMES H. BILLINGTON



MY FATHER was never the type to putter around the house on weekends fixing things, mowing the lawn, or tending to garden beds. Instead, he usually worked in his study, surrounded by books and completely absorbed in a world of ideas. When my younger sister first learned from our mother that babies were made “when Daddy planted a seed in Mommy”, she shot back, “That’s IMPOSSIBLE. Daddy has never planted a single seed in his entire life!!” The four Billington children regularly went to sleep at night to the staccato lullaby of our father’s manual typewriter, so we were sure there was always a new book in gestation even if we didn’t believe the part about the seeds.

Yet, with all this intellectual activity, my father was not remote or distant. He involved us in his intellectual life from the beginning and ignited interests that led us all to great universities and, in my case, to a career in scholarship. As a little girl, I was allowed to sit under the baby grand piano inside the living room while he led college precepts for Princeton students – all men back then – who spoke in long sentences laced with words like “intelligentsia.” I was enlisted to number and renumber pages and footnotes of his book manuscripts and, eventually, to be a research assistant in major libraries in America and Europe. When I visited Yale as a prospective student with my father, we got no further than Sterling Library on the college tour because the card catalogue was simply too tempting. While the rest of the prospective student continued to the dining rooms, gym and dorms with the guide, we stayed in the library looking up references for my father’s book. When I enrolled as a student, I didn’t know much about the college but I was an expert on the library!

My father also taught me the profound importance and joy of learning about other people and cultures. My first school was an outdoor park in Helsinki, Fin-

land, where my sister and I were entrusted each day, faces protected with Vaseline from frostbite, to a portly “Park Auntie.” At the age of six and eight respectively, my sister and I were the first American students to attend “Special Polytechnic School #47” in Moscow, Russia, where we wore Soviet uniforms decorated with baby Lenin pins and made lifelong friendships with ordinary Russians. On the planes home from the sabbatical (no direct flights then), I was unable to understand why the stewardess would not respond to my repeated requests for water until I realized that I was speaking in Russian rather than in English.

My father had completed his doctorate in Russian studies while a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford at the beginning of the Cold War. His subsequent career was devoted to helping Americans understand their greatest and most dangerous adversary. Toward the end of the Cold War, I was given a similar opportunity to go to Oxford on a Rhodes Scholarship, where I completed a masters degree in Philosophy, Politics and Economics and a doctorate in South Asian studies. This education is now enabling me, in a much more modest way, to help some Americans better understand new challenges and opportunities emerging from developing nations in a multi-polar world.

Being part of the first-ever “father-daughter” Rhodes team would never have been possible had my father and mother not infused our lives with a passion for learning and ideas. I don’t remember them ever discussing our grades, but I do remember long conversations about the subjects we were studying. I remember visits to our home of great scholars and poets and I remember that the bookshelf seemed the most exciting place in the world to be. When I felt insecure, my father used to encourage me by saying “Susan, you’re going to become the first woman President of the United States!” His confidence gave me confidence to do things I would never have thought possible. But, even more importantly, his unconditional love gave me the assurance that, even if I never achieved worldly success, his love would always remain intact. My sister remembers pretending to fall asleep one night and hearing our father pray aloud for her. She never forgot the earnest and loving tone of this prayer, which he thought only God had heard. We never doubted that, in everything, our father relied entirely on his Father in Heaven. His faith in God permeated his life and, so also, ours. In the end, this has been the most important thing of all.



Susan D. Harper, an independent writer and mother of four children, received her B.A. from Yale and her M.A. and D.Phil. from Oxford, taught writing and history at Harvard, and has served as Program Officer for Religious Scholarship at The Pew Charitable Trusts and Executive Director of the Templeton Prize for Progress in Religion. James H. Billington, the 13th Librarian of Congress, received his BA from Princeton and his D.Phil. from Oxford, taught history at Harvard and Princeton, and served as Director of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars before being appointed to his current position in 1987. Susan and her father were the first-ever father and daughter both to receive Rhodes Scholarships.



Condoleezza Rice

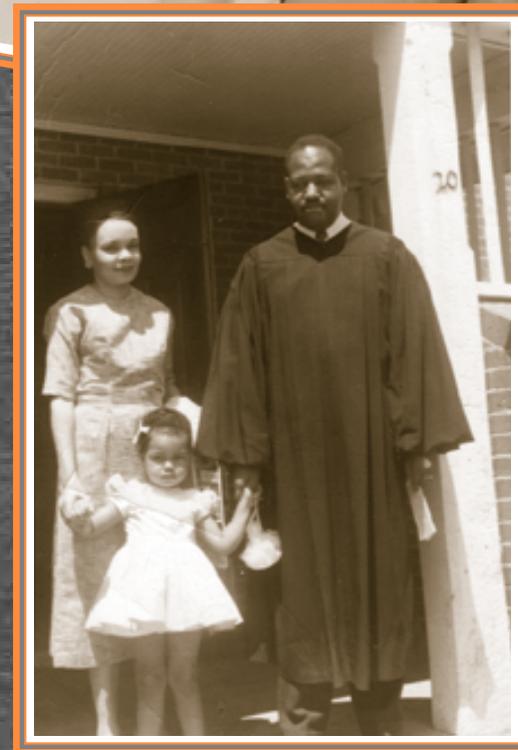
■ REV. JOHN W. RICE JR.

I HAVE become convinced over the years that there is no more important relationship for a girl than the one she has with her father. It is a girl's father who helps to shape her character, forms her trust, and I believe entirely sets her expectations of the way men should treat her. He defended me. He encouraged me. And he challenged me.

My father did everything in his power to protect me from harm or ridicule. When I was about seven or eight years old, my father wanted me to perform in my elementary school talent show. He hired the drama teacher to give me tap dancing lessons and bought me a costume. Needless to say, I was embarrassed because I was not very good. But on the day of the show, there was my father – with all of his imposing height, and weight, and strength—standing at my side and staring at the audience, as if daring them to laugh. No one made a sound, and then everyone applauded.

My father also encouraged me to explore all of my unique interests, ideas, and dreams. When I was eight years old, I decided that I wanted to join the Presbyterian Church. Never mind that this was a ceremony for adults, not children. I was drawn to the church, and I wanted to join. My father, a Presbyterian minister, never discouraged me, or forbade me, or told me it was a stupid idea. To the contrary: He fully supported me. So, one Sunday morning, with my father looking on proudly, I walked down the aisle and joined the Presbyterian church, which remains my spiritual home to this day.

What I am perhaps most grateful for was that my father continuously challenged me to improve myself—to study more, to work harder, to practice longer. He never let me think that certain goals were unattainable, or that my horizons



were somehow limited. Once, while figure skating, I took a pretty bad fall. My father, however, just replied, “You’ll be all right,” and encouraged me to keep practicing. He loved me so much that he wanted me to have standards of excellence that inspired my dedication and sacrifice. That, he taught me, was the only way to fulfill your greatest aspirations.

More than anything, however, my father was always my friend. We watched football together, went to church together, and generally hung out together. He was my confidant and my counselor, the person I turned to first when I wanted to share some good news or needed to work through some bad times. We were always buddies. The memory of our relationship sustains me today. And there is nothing more that a girl could ever want from her father.



Dr. Condoleezza Rice is a classical pianist, a professor of political science, and a former Provost of Stanford University. She served as National Security Advisor to President George W. Bush until becoming Secretary of State in January 2005. Her father, Rev. John W. Rice, Jr., was an educator, a religious leader and, like his daughter, a sports enthusiast.