Twitter Thread by Faris



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Musicians and their constant battle with substance abuse: A [thread] of studies & findings on the subject ■

45% of UK musicians reported issues with alcohol. "Entertainers experienced performance-related incentives to drink before, during and/or after a show; including anxiety, matching their intoxication level to the audience's, and 'reward-drinking'"

(Forsyth, et. al. 2016)

One study of 226 musicians in New York State found that substance use was "markedly elevated compared to general population samples"

(Miller & Quigley, 2011, p. 401)

One study of 168 significant and famous jazz musicians found that their mean age at death was only 57.2 years.

(Patalano, 2000)

One study of the autobiographies of rock musicians reported that 62% contained a description of the artist's personal addiction story. (Oksanen, 2013)

Also, the confessional recovery memoir is now an established and popular genre. (Oksanen, 2013; Forsyth, Lennox & Emslie, 2016)

In one study of established European and North American pop and rock stars, they experienced double the mortality rates of the average population and over one quarter of the sample died from drug and alcohol problems. (Bellis, et al. 2007)

A study of top 10 singles across various years in 1981-2011 showed that 18.5% referred to alcohol within the song and 12% referred to heavy drinking. Up to 3.0% of songs contained *branded alcohol references*. (Bellis, et al. 2007)

Drugs have been employed in a number of ways by musicians to assist creativity and imagination: cocaine and amphetamines have been employed to increase energy levels, creativity and focus. (Groce, 1991; Trynka, 2011)

Heroin was the drug of choice for creative inspiration by bebop musicians (Spunt, 2014; Tolson & Cuyjet, 2007)

Alcohol and marijuana have been employed to relieve creative anxiety or lack of confidence (Belli, 2009; Groce, 1991)

BUT ■

Most scientific experiments into drugs and alcohol have found that in large doses it generally has a NEGATIVE IMPACT on creative productivity. So the belief that substance abuse helps or increases creativity is unscientific and mistaken. (O'Dair, 2016)

Artists usually believe that they get one shot at realising their dreams, they're going to give it a damn good shot, and if drugs and alcohol are going to help them get there, then that's what they're going to do. (Just et al., 2016)

In certain professional groups of classical musicians, approximately one quarter use beta blockers to control their performance anxiety (Lehmann, Sloboda & Woody, 2007).

Some are known to self-medicate using marijuana and alcohol (Roland, 1994)

Long term, heavy drug use can result in artists becoming more and more isolated and antisocial. (Knafo, 2008)

Over many decades, record companies have routinely facilitated drug use among artists as part of their artist relations support. Some examples ■:

Atlantic Records in the late 1960s was supplying marijuana and cocaine to artists, disc jockeys and journalists (Goodman, 1997)

A&M supplied hash brownies, alcohol, marijuana and mescaline to artists (Goodman, 1997)

Casablanca Records, LA had a large drug budget, the office was filled with people chopping cocaine. with visits from a woman who took their drug order for the next day (Dannen, 1990)

The subcultural identity involving drugs and alcohol that musicians are forced to embrace & espouse when in public eye (Ward & Burns, 2000)■

Hip hop subcultural identity brought a harder, rougher, more criminal edge, with street drug dealing a big fixture (Singer & Mirhej 2006)

"Heroin was our badge….the thing that made us different from the rest of the world. It [said], 'We know. You don't know.' It [gave] us membership in a unique club, and [for which] we gave up everything else in the world." — Bebop trumpeter Red Rodney (Ward & Burns 2000, p. 358)

Are you really sure you want to support an industry that FORCES people working in it to make their lives revolve around alcohol and drugs, causing numerous diseases & lowering of avg. life expectancy of the musicians themselves? Just for your entertainment?

Think well. ✌■

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