

Sylvia Plath's Depression

Introduction

Sylvia Plath was an iconic poet and literary writer by the age of 30 at which she took her own life. Among many other things, she expressed her mental anguish throughout her writing. Plath's diagnosis of depression and her treatments explain many of her writings including Johnny Panic and the Bible of Dreams.



Sylvia Plath and her depressive expression.

"Remember That Time Sylvia Plath Stuck Her Head In An Oven?" by Lauren Duca
https://www.360info.com/2017/06/remember-that-time-sylvia-plath-stuck-her-head-in-an-oven-us_594c9da8e4b04ae497049d9a

"Depression is a serious mood disorder. At least 5 symptoms at need to be present for at least 2 weeks. These symptoms affect how you feel, think, as well as your daily activities. Sleeping, eating, or working me be affected."

Out of a possible 13 symptoms of depression, five must be present for most of the day for two weeks. The following are symptoms of Plath's depression:

- Anxiety
- Appetite/ Weight Changes
- Sleeping Troubles
- Lack of energy

Depression is treated by:

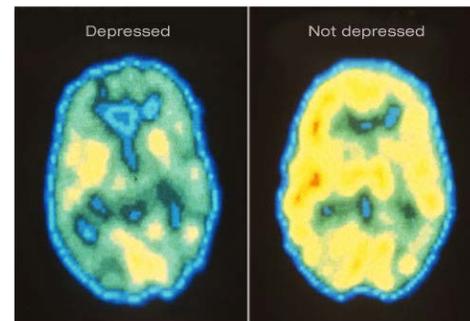
- Medication
 - Psychotherapy
 - Or a combination of both
- Electroconvulsive or electroshock therapy are alternatives if the others do not reduce the symptoms.

Madison Severcool

Dr. Berzsenyi/The America Gothic Short Story

Plath's History of Diagnosis

The onset of Plath's depression occurred at the age of 20. Many factors contributed to the onset of her depression such as the death of her father when she was 8, her challenging relationship with her mother, marital discord, and the pressure/expectation's from her mother. Plath turned to writing at a very young age as a way of communication. Throughout her career depression played a huge role in the production of her writing. When Plath wanted to write she had difficulties concentrating. Research suggests that Plath's depression may be caused by an inherited chemical imbalance.

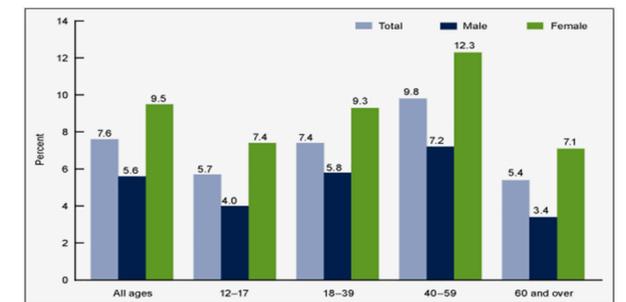


Increase of blue and green colors, as well as a decrease of yellow and white colors, shows decreased brain activities due to depression.

"Depression Overview Slideshow" by Melinda Ratini <https://www.webmd.com/depression/ss/slideshow-depression-overview>

Plath's Treatment's

Plath began treatment with therapy with a psychiatrist. She was then referred to electroconvulsive/electroshock therapy after her psychiatrist found gashes and cuts on her legs. She received her first electroconvulsive or electroshock therapy on July 29, 1953 by a psychiatrist J. Peter Thornton. Studies show that she also received insulin injection therapy as well.



Females have significantly higher rates of depression in all ages.

"Percentage of Persons of 12 and over with depression" by Bernie Mecann
https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Percentage-of-persons-aged-12-and-over-with-depression-by-age-and-sex-US-2008-2012-2_fig1_313426436

Johnny Panic and the Bible of Dreams

In the beginning of her short story, Johnny Panic and the Bible of Dreams, Plath shows her first sign of depression. She states, "Some nights I take the elevator up to the roof of my apartment building. Some nights, about three a.m." This to me indicates that she is expressing the fact that she is having sleeping troubles, which is a symptom of depression. About midway through the passage she also makes a reference about staying up night after night to record a book in the privacy and comfort of her own home. This also suggests to me that a lack of sleep is an issue. One symptom of depression is adamite through this story. In this short story she also states "I see whole storehouses of hardware: knives, paper cutters, pistons and cogs and nutcrackers..." This statement stuck out to me because all of the items she mentioned were dangerous. These items all could be used in assistance in harming herself or committing suicide. She did attempt suicide and suicidal thoughts are also a symptom of depression.

Sources

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