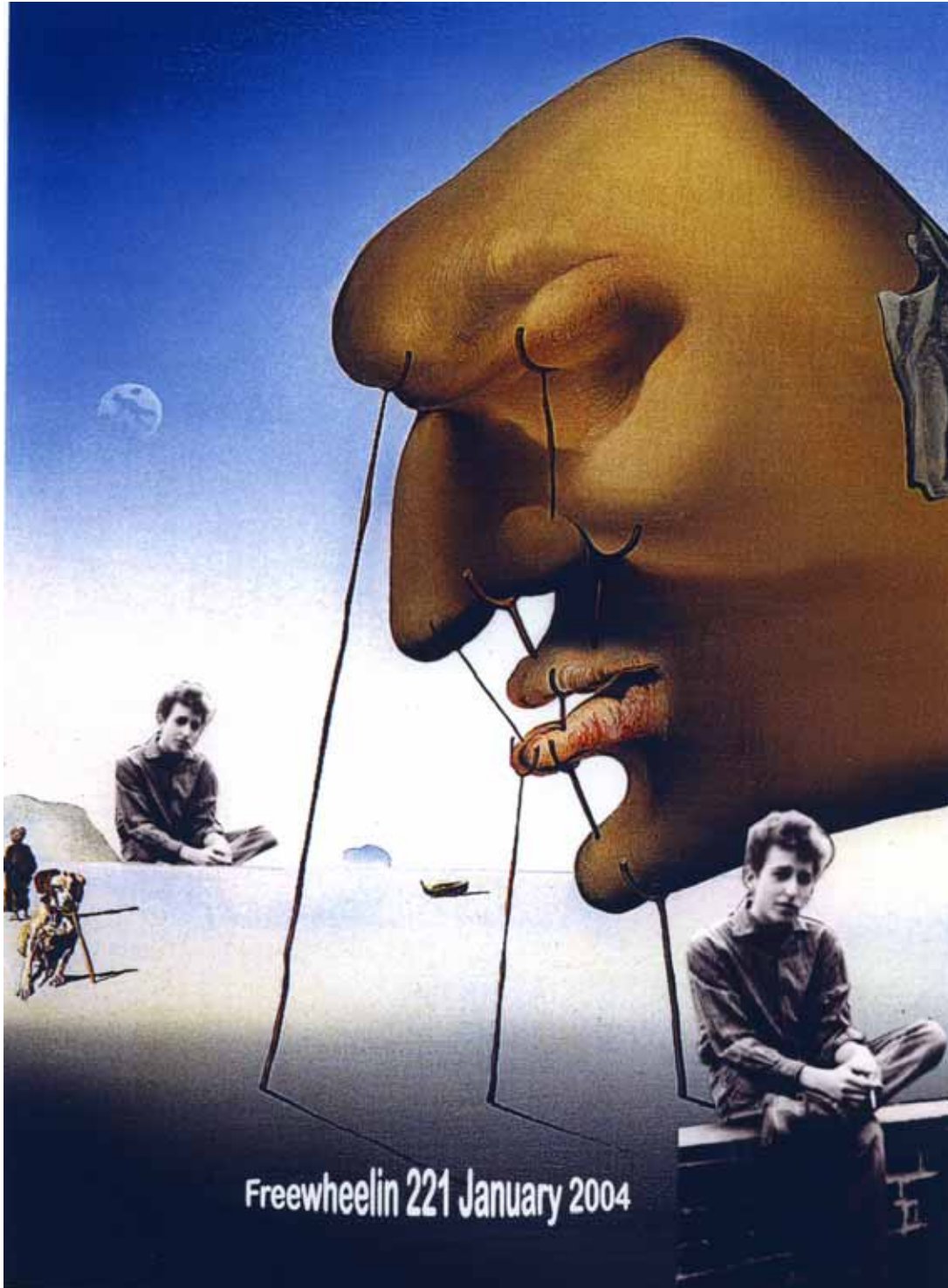


Freewheelin-on-line    Take Twenty Three



# Coverdown

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## Freewheelin 221

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Sooner or later the media are going to wake up to the fact that this year, 2004, heralds the 100 year anniversary of the birth of the Spanish artist extrordináire Salvador Dalì. When that happens there is going to be a Dalì explosion for there is so much to take into account about this genius of our time. You may think of Dalì as the weirdo artist with the waxed moustache and the scary eyes who painted dripping clocks and crazy landscapes but, in addition to all that, he was a sculptor, a film maker, a novelist and in 1956 he launched his own perfume which he called 'rock 'n' roll'. So it is right that we should celebrate his work on the cover of Freewheelin.

The main feature of this month's cover is taken from a painting that Dalì completed in 1937 which has the title 'Sleep'. Dreams and sleep were things that fascinated Dalì because he believed that the freedom of the subconscious within sleep could be tapped into and then used creatively. The giant slumbering head in this study is supported by crutches which illustrate the fragility of sleep. If just one of those crutches happened to snap, or if that dog on the left just happens to bark, then the dreamer would awake. Don't you just feel sometimes that when you are drifting off to sleep in a chair or on a train that your head is being held up by a crutch; and when that crutch snaps - "Well Hello!".

I have Dylan from 1964 both in sleep(background)and in reality(foreground). Speaking personally, he keeps me awake at night and in the day time too!

## Freewheelin-on-line Take Twenty Three (freewheelin 221)



### Page

- |     |                                                                                             |                            |
|-----|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 4.  | <b>Magnetic Movements</b>                                                                   | <b>by Chris Cooper</b>     |
| 8.  | <b>20 Pounds of Headlines</b><br><b>The Continuing Chronicle of Bob Dylan in the Press.</b> | <b>by Mark Carter</b>      |
| 12. | <b>The Whole Wide World is Watching</b>                                                     | <b>by Martin Stein</b>     |
| 14. | <b>What Was It you Wanted</b>                                                               | <b>by Jim Gillan</b>       |
| 17. | <b>Time Will Tell</b>                                                                       | <b>by Richard Lewis</b>    |
| 20. | <b>Renaldo &amp; Clara – the Conclusion</b>                                                 | <b>by Chris Cooper</b>     |
| 25. | <b>Take That Camera Off Of Me</b>                                                           | <b>by Mark Carter</b>      |
| 27. | <b>Alias Anything You Want</b>                                                              | <b>by Paula Radice</b>     |
| 29. | <b>Alternatives to College</b>                                                              | <b>by Michael Crimmins</b> |
| 32. | <b>Man Gave Names</b>                                                                       | <b>by Jim Gillan</b>       |
| 37. | <b>It's A Pile of Pretentious Old Wank</b>                                                  | <b>by Patrick Webster</b>  |
| 40. | <b>The Missionary Times</b>                                                                 | <b>by J R Stokes</b>       |
| 47. | <b>It Takes A Lot To Laugh</b>                                                              | <b>by Mark Carter</b>      |

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	Distance	Audio	Steadiness	Heads	Focus	Image
1	1/2 screen	1	Not in pic	80%	No pic !	L=left
2	3/4 screen	2	In pic 25 %	70%	Out of focus	C= Center
3	Full length	3	in pic 50 %	60%	Mostly blurred	R=Right
4	Knees	4	In pic 75 %	50%	Bit Blurry	1-9 10% angle
5	Thighs	5	In pic 100%	40%	Goes in and out	B=balcony
6	Waist	6	In pic moves	30%	Soft Focus	S=Stalls
7	Mid Chest	7	steady hand	20%	Mostly In Focus	PRO=TV
8	Head/Shoulders	8	monopod steady	10%	Near Perfect	D = Dark
9	Head	9	perfect	Never	Perfect	



***Magnetic Movements-On-Line by Chris Cooper***

***Issue 221***

*Hello and welcome*

*New films continue to flood in at the moment so there is much to discuss.*

*Once again you can view the forthcoming ones in brief at <http://dvdylan.com> Vygi keeps a full list of available DVDs there and the site is becoming quite versatile so check it out. Nice to see him acknowledge FW there also.*

*We are now seeing more and more well authored and correctly chaptered discs as the media grows in quality and professionalism. Of course this means that some things are getting re-issued, which I really don't have space to review. I will start mentioning the more valuable of these but this needs to be tempered so that we don't endlessly review the same discs/*

*If you have any news / copies of films that have not been listed please don't be shy, tell me, or Vygi about them!*



**D7 A8 S8 H8 F9 IBL5**

**Wembley 15-11-03**

**91.00**

Its All Over Now, Baby Blue /Cry Awhile / Desolation Row /Its Alright Ma/ Boots Of Spanish Leather/ Tweedle Dum & Tweedle Dee/ Mr Tambourine Man / Things Have Changed/ Highway 61 Revisited / Every Grain Of Sand/ Honest With Me/ Hattie Carroll/ Summer Days

*Shot directly from the left side so Dylan has his back to you. Waist up. Inappropriate chapters only at present. Entertaining view that this is it would be nice to see more of our mans face.*



**D5 A6 S8 H8 F9 IBL5**

**Wembley 15-11-03**

**104.00**

Desolation Row (s) /Its Alright Ma/ Boots Of Spanish Leather/ Tweedle Dum & Tweedle Dee/ Mr Tambourine Man / Things Have Changed/ Highway 61 Revisited / Every Grain Of Sand/ Honest With Me/ Hattie Carroll/ Summer Days.

Cat's In The Well/Like A Rolling Stone/ All Along The Watchtower

*You have to feel sorry for this taper, he tries valiantly to keep the overhead cables out of the way and does succeed in getting Bob between them as the above pic shows, but if he only he could have set a few seats in either direction what a difference it would make.*



**D7 A7 S7 H7 F9 I SR**

**Sheffield 20-11-03**

**9.00**

Man In The Long Black Coat/ Highway 61 Revisited (i) / Every Grain Of Sand (i) All Along The Watchtower (f)*Shot close up this was probably going to be a cracking film but is unfortunately rather short, some you win, some you lose.*



**D7 A7 S7 H7 F9 I SR**

**NEC Birmingham 21-11-03 (AN)**

**67.00**

Love Minus Zero (f) / Boots Of Spanish Leather (i) To Be Alone With You/ Its All Over Now, Baby Blue / Love Minus Zero (pt 1) / Its Alright Ma (i) / Floater (f) / Highway 61 Revisited (i)/ Boots Of Spanish Leather Pt 1 (i)/ Hattie Carroll/ Every Grain Of Sand / Summer Days

Cats In The Well/ Like A Rolling Stone /All Along The Watchtower(i)

*Similar angle to the last film, both circulate on the same disc, from same source. This one does succeed where the previous is too short. The usual volume of heads in the way when you film this close though.*



**D7 A8 S8 H8 F9 I BR5**

**Shepherds Bush 23-11-03**

**97.00**

Cold Irons Bound/ Might Quinn/ Down Along Cove /It Takes A Lot To Laugh/ Just Like Tom Thumbs Blues/ Most Likely You'll Go Your Way/ Million Miles / Tough Mama/ Under The Red Sky (s) / Positively Fourth Street/ Dear Landlord/ Tombstone Blues/ Jokerman/ Silvio/

Tweedle Dum & Tweedle Dee/ Like A Rolling Stone/ All Along The Watchtower

*This is certainly one of the better films of this amazing show, a little dark though all films from The Bush seem to be that way. Clear view most of the time, it's a good un.*



**D6 A7 S7 H7 F8 I BL5**

**Hammersmith Odeon 24-11-03**

**92.00**

You Ain't Going Nowhere (s)/ Cry A While (f)/ Romance In Durango (i)/Dear Landlord High Water (For Charley Patton) /Tough Mama/Floater (Too Much To Ask) /Million Miles/Jokerman/Honest With Me (s) \*/The Lonesome Death Of Hattie Carroll (i)/Summer Days (i)Cat's In The Well /Like A Rolling Stone /All Along The Watchtower

*This is almost the best film from these shows, but sadly when the taper started a 2<sup>nd</sup> cassette he used one with a minor fault which puts a permanent line on the picture. I have captured from this point to demonstrate it. It begins at (\*) and continues to the end, otherwise a good film.*



**D6 A8 S8 H7 F8 I BR5**

**Hammersmith Odeon 24-11-03**

**61.00**

Drifters Escape/ You Ain't Goin Nowhere/ Cry Awhile/ Girl Of The North Country/  
Romance In Durango/ Dear Landlord/ High Water/ Tough Mama/ Floater /  
Million Miles (f)

*Inappropriate chapters aside this is quite a watchable film certainly you get to see plenty of Bob singing and "dancing". Michael Jackson he ain't (though I bet Michael wishes he was these days)*

***Till Next Time...***





## By Mark Carter

**A bit of a mixed bag this month**, as we take a look at what was happening in the press during the early months of 2003, which includes the first confirmation (if any were needed) that Masked And Anonymous is not going to win any (a) Oscars, (b) critical praise or (c) paying audiences. Still, it may make us view Hearts Of Fire in a more favourable light for the first time since 1987.

Anyway, firstly there's a few more pesky Live 1975 reviews to round up. [The St. Louis Today's](#) Daniel Durcholz concludes that, "in stark contrast to the haphazard 1976 document Hard Rain, Rolling Thunder reveals Dylan to be equal parts shaman and showman, a serious social critic capable of having some fun, too."

Eric Waggoner of the [Seattle Weekly](#) tries to come over all knowledgeable and smug whilst bemoaning what the CD set doesn't contain but doesn't seem to realise that he's got his Rolling Thunders mixed up. "You won't hear," he complains, "Deportees, Railroad Boy...the traditional show closer Gotta Travel On, or Burnett's ghostly Silver Mantis, unless you score a bootleg of a full performance." By which time, presumably, you will have noticed that your bootleg says - 1976 and not 1975. That said, this is a particularly positive review and worth reading; "...As a document of Bob Dylan's own mid-1970s cosmic workout, The Rolling Thunder Revue is essential. Later explorations would try to achieve the same scope - the underrated Street Legal, for instance - but this was the one moment when the spark caught and held - and then burned down the house." In contrast, the [New York Daily News](#)' anonymous critic is largely unimpressed, claiming that it confirms what was thought of the shows back in 1975 - that they were a "sometimes shambling mix of overstated rock and clunky folk". Let me just say here that I have a pretty bulky 1975 cuttings folder and it contains not one review that goes so far as to even suggest such a thing. Still, that's critical licence for you, I guess. Our nameless critic



does admit, however, that Tonight I'll Be Staying Here With You “has pep”, as does the “plot-driven classic” Simple Twist Of Fate. As for the rest, well it's “hardly the disaster we saw in Renaldo And Clara, the howlingly bad fictionalised film about the tour's onstage and offstage antics. But as history, Rolling Thunder is far more footnote than watershed.” Wrong. Wrong/ wrong/ wrong/ wrong/ wrong.

Far better is the [\*Canada Daily News\*](#)' Ron Foley Macdonald's glowing review, which insists that “Live 1975 ranks right up there with Bob Dylan's very finest work. That puts it in the company of Blonde On Blonde, John Wesley Harding and the marvelous Love And Theft.” He also recognizes that Sloman's liner notes and Regan's “extraordinary tour photographs” are an essential part of the package and kindly points out that, for anybody wanting more, they should check out Sloman's republished book. Finally, Wayne Bledsoe of the [\*Knoxville News-Sentinel\*](#) reckons that the bonus DVD tops off an already essential set and claims that, for anyone who has not heard a 1975 bootleg, “Live 1975 is a new treasure from an artist who continues to surprise - whether it's new material or simply gems just coming out of the trunk.”

In January 2003 Dylan attended the Masked And Anonymous premier at the Sundance Festival. To celebrate, he dressed as Compo from Last Of The Summer Wine in a donkey jacket, scarf and wool hat and simply scowled at the photographers until it was time to escape into the darkness of a movie theatre. Needless to say, his photo appeared in all of the UK's daily rags (hilarious headlines include ‘It's Bob the Slob’ in the [\*Daily Star\*](#) and “Film job for Slob Dylan” in the [\*Daily Mirror\*](#). Oh, be still, my splitting sides). Wearing what looks suspiciously like another wig under the hat, Dylan certainly fooled Hugh Davies of the [\*Daily Telegraph\*](#). Davies assumed that it was his own hair dyed blonde for the movie (and straightened, presumably) and concluded that Dylan's 14-year Neverending Tour had ravaged Dylan's once youthful face (of course - he looked so healthy in 1987) and that, nowadays, “he rarely looks well...He had a haunted look”. As an aside, Davies informs us that Dylan's life is to be filmed by Todd Haynes, who was responsible for the hit-and-miss Glam Rock celebration Velvet Goldmine.

Back in the States Roger Ebert, writing for an unknown newspaper, amusingly reckoned that Dylan “looked as happy as a man unexpectedly delayed on his way to his execution.” Of the movie itself, albeit in a rough version, Ebert was singularly unimpressed, especially with Dylan's own performance. His dialogue is never longer than one sentence per shot and he fails to engage with his own Jack Fate character or with the cast or audience; “He occupies his scenes like a judge, gazing at the others as if measuring their worthiness to share the frame with him.” Whilst he enjoyed the music, Ebert considered Dylan's involvement in the movie to be entirely wanting; “...How much wiser if a celebrity lookalike of Dylan had been used, and Jack Fate had been portrayed by somebody who came to play?” Meanwhile, the movie had been acquired for distribution by Sony Picture Classics, who were presumably already planning to write it off as a tax loss.

On to less depressing topics. Steven Hart penned a knowledgeable and excellent article on the bootlegged Bob Dylan for [Salon.com](#) in which he correctly suggests that Dylan owes the bootleggers a greater debt than he will ever admit; "...for well over half his career, Dylan's art has been better served by the bootleggers than by his own label – or, indeed, by Dylan himself...the underground releases must get a good share of credit for sustaining interest in Dylan as a continuing creative force." A nice, worthwhile article but one that will undoubtedly put Hart straight on Dylan's Shit List at number one.

Sean Wilentz produced an equally enjoyable essay that turned up on [bobdylan.com](#) concentrating on the Newport Folk Festival then and now and, in particular, Dylan's August 2002 appearance; "...At one point, while going through the ritual of introducing the band, Dylan paused for half a second, looking as if he just might say something to mark the occasion/ as if the words were coming to him....If he was to say anything, he would say it now; and for a moment, beneath his get-up, Dylan seemed to be thinking it over. But instead he smiled and twitched and went back to playing, letting his masked theatrical self speak for itself, an entire festival in just one act."

In Australia, Nui Te Koha was reporting in the [Herald Sun](#) that Dylan's backstage requirements for his February tour only consist of hot and cold running water, a toilet, seating for four guests, clean towels, a full-length mirror, a banquet table, a bar of soap and two ashtrays. Two ashtrays??! These pampered rock stars just don't live on the same planet as the rest of us, do they? Also in the [Herald Sun](#), Mick Jagger, who is dragging the Rolling Stones pantomime down under in February, was telling Dino Scatena how the Stones have played Dylan's Like A Rolling Stone and Dylan has played Brown Sugar. He hints/threats that a duet with Dylan at one of their shows might be a possibility. Did no one learn their lesson last time?

During January, [Q](#) launched a special magazine titled 100 Singles That Changed The World. The Byrds clocked in at number 51 with Mr Tambourine Man and Dylan showed up at number 7 with Like A Rolling Stone. The four pages devoted to him included some relevant (if familiar) pics and a lengthy article by John Harris tracing the song's history from it's conception to it's artistic peak at Manchester's Free Trade Hall in 1966. A list of the Top 20 songs also appeared in several daily newspapers, with one or two hardy souls even questioning the validity of the choices or why [Q](#) bothered to do it in the first place.

January's [Uncut](#) included a two-star review of Mary Lee's Corvette's version of Blood On The Tracks by Nigel Williamson. Essentially a remake of the album from a female perspective, "the sequence and musical contours of Dylan's original 1975 masterpiece are followed so exactly that any fresh insight lies almost entirely in the transposition to the voice of a woman."

There was also a brief report on the Sundance Film Festiva, which, we are told, will feature the premier of Dylan's movie Masked And Abandoned - perhaps a Freudian slip on the project's inevitable conclusion.

February's [Mojo](#) featured a two-page spread on Eric Von Schmidt who, due to throat cancer, now spends his time mainly painting old blues singers at his Connecticut studio.

Numerous Dylan references abound but Von Schmidt will only say; “Dylan was a great guy. We stayed close until 1970.”

And in *Mojo*'s Collections section was a two-page spread featuring just a few bits and pieces of Dylan ephemera that nowadays commands more money than – let's face it – it's worth. For instance, a London Evening Standard newspaper celebrating Dylan's 1969 Isle Of Wight appearance will set you back £35 and a 1981 Earls Court ticket now comes complete with a fifteen quid price tag. Most impressive is a rhinestone-encrusted jacket with Christian imagery so garish it makes the Saved sleeve look positively understated. *Mojo*'s Fred Dellar insists that it originates from Dylan's 1980 Born-Again phase and that he gave it to Kinky Friedman when he reconverted to Judaism, but I'm positive that he bought it at the time of the 1976 Rolling Thunder Revue. There's just no way he would've worn anything that tacky during the early 1980s. You've only got to look at his 1981 silk jacket with the dragon design to know that. Anyway, if you want to buy the jacket, you'd better not expect any change from £8,000. Mind you, it does come with a certificate of authenticity. And if you're contemplating buying it, that's just what you need - to be certified.

See ya next month.

THANKS TO THE ONE AND ONLY GRAHAM ASHTON.





## The Whole Wide World is watching

The best of the web by Martin Stein  
(With thanks to Expecting Rain)

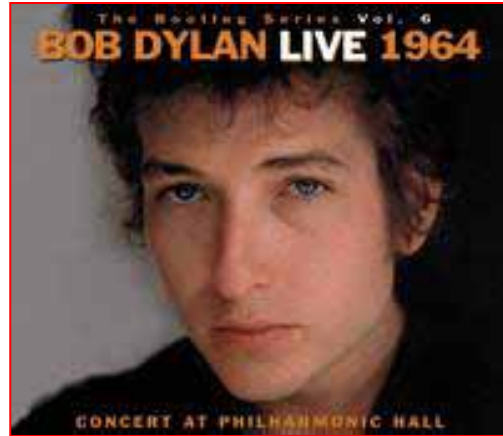
**Even after all these years** he's still the one to surprise us. Who ever would have guessed at the reason for his trip to Venice?! Sorry I can't be there with you all at JG4; someone else will have to croon Let It Be Me at 4:00 AM! Maybe someday we'll meet again somehow.

1. *I Played My Guitar Through The Night To The Day* – The previously uncredited Minneapolis musicians who contributed to Blood On The Tracks have performed their songs to mark the forthcoming book 'A Simple Twist Of Fate: Bob Dylan and the Making of Blood on the Tracks'. Performer



and co-author Kevin Odegard is pictured with other worthy originals Chris Weber and Gregg Inhofer. An excellent article on this milestone album can be found at <http://enjoyment.independent.co.uk/music/features/story.jsp?story=497167> and you can discover more about the musicians at [www.dfw.com/mld/dfw/living/8093799.htm](http://www.dfw.com/mld/dfw/living/8093799.htm) or [www.startribune.com/stories/457/46227011.html](http://www.startribune.com/stories/457/46227011.html)

2. *And The Only Tune My Guitar Could Play* - Live 1964: Concert at Philharmonic Hall -- The Bootleg Series Volume 6, will finally be released on 30<sup>th</sup> March. Live 1964 comes in a brilliant box with a hardcover slipcase and a 52-page booklet with rare and previously unpublished photos by Daniel Kramer, Hank Parker and Sandy Speiser. The booklet includes a new



3. essay by Sean Wilentz, the Princeton University-based historian and writer who attended the Halloween 1964 concert at age 13 (see Notes for Live 1964 <http://bobdylan.com/etc/>). A commemorative poster is also available from the official website.
4. *Hero's Blouse* – Proof that Bob reads Freewheelin'? Perhaps recent articles drawing heavily on draws have inspired our hero to appear in a commercial for Victoria's Secret Stores – makers of lingerie. CEO Grace Nicholls announced that the ads would feature a song and a guest appearance by Bob. “We asked him to be in the commercials and he said yes, he would gladly go off to Venice with the supermodels”.
5. *Memory, Ecstasy, Tyranny, Hypocrisy* – Defence Secretary Geoff Hoon has revealed his liking for Dylan's second album – anti-war songs and all! Read it and weep at <http://politics.guardian.co.uk/arts/story/0,13319,1154294,00.html?=-ticker>
6. *Disc-usted* - Sony Music are to release the recent SACD Remastered albums at the end of March on CD price £8:99. Now they tell us!
7. *Ghosts of Electricity* - Bob Dylan - Unplugged will be released on DVD on 29<sup>th</sup> March price £13.99

# WHAT WAS IT YOU WANTED

By Jim Gillan

*Ho hum. Just read **Freewheelin' 220** and, as ever, am acutely aware of my many limitations on all things Dylan. Which most might regard as me using a word more than I need to, but so it goes. Re 220 - I'm pretty sure that EVERYONE spotted my cunning 'best bits' woven into my tale of nice things in Nice, but to remind myself of what they were, they include,*

Endings.	Passion.	Insight.	Surprises.
Music.	Opportunity.	Travel.	Beginnings.
Je ne sais quoi.	Expertise.	Humour.	Et d'accord, lingerie
Climbing.	The Unusual.	Desire.	
Friendship.	Runyon.	Iconoclasm.	

*Dylan provides a soundtrack (I took a lot of trouble trying to slip in coded references) for much of that, but not to the exclusion of other music from across many genres. It's the simple fact that ANY 'best of' (or its equivalents, however they are expressed), is intrinsically limiting. Reflect, if you will, that the likes of 'FHM', 'Cosmopolitan', most TV programmes and other examples of popular culture, are consistently built on notions of 'best of'. Are you who the publishers, programme makers and purveyors of tat have in mind? Am I?*

*That said, there's nothing wrong with finding common ground; indeed we would all be better off if we routinely did it, and not just with wider humanity. The notion that ours is the life that matters most is used to routinely exploit other life forms. What about the relentless assault on resources and the environment? What about the exploitation of animals? What about the actions of Governments, who, when they can be bothered (ie in the run up to elections) trot out 'political expediency' as a sufficient explanation of their actions? And we're all part of that hypocrisy. Cue a step into another world.*

*On the morning of Saturday 31st January 1998 I was (almost to the exclusion of other things, it being a really busy time), a chief officer in local government. More specifically Director of Policy for Blackburn with Darwen BC, which at the time was a newly-designated unitary Authority, ie one empowered to deliver all local services, such as Education, Social Services, Highways maintenance, Housing, Leisure et al. Back then, had you or anyone said something to the effect that "it's hardly a proper job, your reverence," I would have responded with something along the lines of: I understand why you might think that, but here's another view...*



*Local Councils are faced with the huge task of trying to provide for the present and the future. It's horribly difficult (but vital) to make informed and effective decisions in an environment with a wide range of stakeholders, including the Government, the private sector, statutory bodies (NHS, Police etc) voluntary groups, community organisations and future generations. And because it's public money, there is an overarching duty to spend it wisely and well. My role, together with that of my staff and other colleagues, is to help inform the corporate policy making and strategic management processes, as well as activities and initiatives within and beyond the authority.*

*Had you pressed me on the many failings of local government I would have agreed with you, though also pointed to the real successes that are often unnoticed. Had you questioned the calibre of Councillors and my peers, I would have acknowledged that for rather too many of them, the size of their offices, like their sense of self-esteem, is inversely proportional to their abilities. I would have concurred that Councils are generally remote, forbidding and hideously bureaucratic. And with the fact that it's impossible for the ordinary public to get meaningful information, still less easily reach senior staff, or even middle managers. Though I would also have said that if things are to change (and they must), helping move things forward requires more than moaning about the ills and deficiencies. Getting involved is vital, though often thankless and always demanding.*

*In response to "what about the workers, you fat cat you" I would have said that staff indeed the organisation's most valuable asset and so must be empowered, developed and encouraged, rather than bullied, restricted by job descriptions and processes that often emphasise status, but are short on effectiveness. "Have some fun and get it done" was one of my mantras, based on my belief that if people enjoy what they are doing, it almost doesn't matter how demanding the job is. And it's vital to ensure that EVERYBODY who contributes is equally valuable and equally valued. We get paid at different rates because we do different things. But all of them are in some way important.*

*I know that I had very different views from most of my peers and behaved very differently, something that unsettled many, and amused some. But others were very supportive, so I wasn't entirely alone. Not that it would have mattered to me, but it would have hindered progress. Though on the whole, it felt like there was a very, very, long way to go.*

*I was probably thinking of work stuff as I rode back from Polar Bear records (with a couple of Dylan boots in the tank bag) on the afternoon of 31<sup>st</sup> January. It was a clear, bright day. The road was dry and the traffic moving pretty steadily along the Otley Road as I headed towards Leeds City Centre. My motorcycle, a 1,000cc Laverda Jota, was a real pleasure to ride. It was later estimated (incorrectly I think) that I was doing between 40 and 50mph when for some unknown reason I skidded and hit the concrete plinth of a traffic island. I sustained severe head and internal injuries and would have died there, but for the happy coincidence of crashing opposite an ambulance, in front of a police car and five minutes from a head injuries unit. Fortunately for me, my helmet was a top of the range model, whilst close fitting leathers minimised damage to the internal organs and limited blood loss.*

*But it was a near-run thing. I immediately went in to a series of 'grand mal' fits, so extreme that the Policewoman who came with me in the ambulance later said she ached for days with the effort of holding me down. When my wife arrived at the hospital it was to be told that unless the surgeons could stem the bleeding from my internal injuries I would die, irrespective of the extent of the head injury. It turned out that I had extensively ruptured the cranial sac (hence the loss of a lot of cranial fluid), fractured both eye-sockets, fractured my skull along the line of my eyebrows and down through my right ear (which is why I am deaf in it – but it saves buying the hybrid CDs), fractured my cheekbone and damaged the cerebellum, which affects balance. But the biggest*

concern was the swelling to the right hemisphere of my brain, the loss of cranial fluid and the length of time I was unconscious. Eight days, as it happens, although I think a lot of that was because I was kept sedated.

There is no such thing as severe head injury not having huge adverse effects, many of them permanent, however much they might be mitigated by a recovery programme. Even a mild injury can produce massive personality and behavioural changes, although as I didn't have much of a personality to begin with and have always misbehaved, the effect on me is less apparent. After a year off work and eight months on a phased return, I had to retire because I no longer have the ability to operate at the level I did before the crash. Mental stamina is still poor, as is concentration, problem solving, planning, short-term memory and other 'executive' functions. Although I could write from quite early on, I couldn't read for months, and then only hesitantly. I still struggle with anything unfamiliar. But I no longer get tearful (well, not very often), though having mild aphasia and something of a stammer is frustrating. I am also prone to sometimes feeling that my head is full of water sloshing about. I have extremely intrusive tinnitus, which makes sleep a major problem. I think that's the main reason why I can get very impatient and irritable, but maybe it's lots of other things too. There is extensive scar tissue on my brain, which makes any further head injury undesirable and I believe I'm at greater risk of meningitis and Alzheimer's. But so it goes.

Funny old piece for WWIYW ain't it? In part it's here because Dylan was (and remains) a very important part of recovery for me, both as a means of relaxing and as a vehicle that helps rebuilt old skills/attributes. Writing, whether about Bob or anything else, is therapeutic and also offers a way of connecting with a previous life. I regret its passing, but have much to celebrate, so on balance it's OK. Most of the time. If an analogy helps, what I'm trying to do is akin to reconstructing a map that has been shredded by the blast from a 12-bore shotgun. There's a huge hole in the middle and lots of smaller damage on the periphery. It will never be as it was, but with a lot of effort and luck, it might once again serve a useful purpose. It won't do for everybody, but (as ever) all I'm offering is one perspective of one reality. All the best for 2004 (or its equivalent in other calendars) and beyond.

Jim. (entirely deaf in one ear, endlessly daft in the other).

# Time Will Tell

By Richard Lewis

**I didn't manage to write this article** for last month's issue of Freewheelin'. In my last article written back in November I told you about not seeing Bob in Sheffield because my mum was poorly. At that time although she was still in hospital she was getting better but it turned out that it was only the secondary infections that could be cured. The real problem was her liver, which was diseased and could not be cured. We hoped we could bring her home for a few days at Christmas but she was too poorly. She died peacefully in her sleep on January 4<sup>th</sup>. The rest of this article is dedicated to her as she got real pleasure hearing about what I was reading, watching, doing and listening to.

## Dylan

Having only read a few bits about it I'm really looking forward to seeing "Masked and Anonymous" when it is released over here. I quite enjoyed the soundtrack but feel it will make more sense when I've seen the film. Not getting to see Dylan this year the undoubted highlight for me has been John Cohen's wonderful photo book "Young Bob". There are a bunch of black and white shots from 1962 including some where Dylan uses his cigarette as a prop and another lot from 1970 with some lovely colour shots out on the NYC streets. You owe it to yourself to get this book. There are only 72 pages but each one will bring a smile of delight to your face.

## Ireland

I wrote a little bit about my holiday in Ireland at the beginning of my article in Freewheelin' #219. It was a magical time. Beautiful countryside, exciting wildlife, good food and drink and perfect company!

## SACD

Sometimes I buy CDs or books and then put them away for a week or more before I play or look at it. I've bought several of the new Dylan reissues but have yet to play them. However I just love the look of them, especially the ones with extra photos or a little booklet. I think my favourite is appropriately "The Freewheelin' Bob Dylan" which is a miniature work of art even before you hear the music. Well done CBS!

## River of Song

Browsing in a remaindered book shop I came across a hardback coffee table type book called “River of Song” and on the cover it said it was ‘*a companion to The Mississippi: River of Song, a Smithsonian Institution series for PBS*’. It is a musical journey down the Mississippi from Lake Itasca near the Canadian border down to New Orleans and the Gulf of Mexico. The book is full of still photos from the TV series and lots of quotes from the musicians we meet along the way including Spider John Koerner, Fontella Bass, and Babes in Toyland, Rufus Thomas, John Hartford and Levon Helm. It is a book you can read right through or just dip into and as it was listed at 35 dollars and I got it for £5 it was a real bargain. A few weeks later I was looking at a CD market stall in Bingley when I spied “River of Song” the companion double CD to the book on sale for just £4. Another bargain. Together they make up my find of the year. Now I just hope that I get to see the TV series on one of our channels.

## Live Performances

The very best one had to be by my schools drumming group called “The Hit Squad” who performed at The Lord Mayor’s Parade. The 17 strong group walked two miles through Bradford City centre playing the whole time. A great day. Other good shows were by Jackson Browne, Richard Thompson, Roy Harper, Elvis Costello, Tom Paxton, The Handsome Family, Mary Gauthier and Emmylou Harris.

## John Green Day 3

A great day as I wrote back in Freewheelin’ #213. Friends old and new, good music, talks and conversation and plenty to look at. Roll on the next one

## Time Will Tell

The year after my dad died in 1976 my mum moved from Muswell Hill to Highgate to share a house with her friend Yvonne Kapp. Yvonne was an author who was probably best known for her marvellous two-volume biography of Eleanor Marx. Eric Hobsbawm called it “*one of the major biographies of our generation*” and Michael Foot said “*it is a work of scholarship but also a work of art*”. Since Yvonne died in 1999 my mum had been trying to get Yvonne’s memoirs published. Early last year she was successful and Verso were not only going to publish the memoir “Time Will Tell” but also the Eleanor Marx biography as a single volume. In May to celebrate the book launch we had a little party at my mum’s house. It turned out that this would be the last occasion when so many of my mum’s friends and family would be gathered together. A good memory for all of us.

## Spirited Away

This is a Japanese animated children's film, which is simply magical. Look out for it and if you manage to see it you won't be disappointed. It would lift anyone's spirits.

## CDs

All sorts this year. New ones by the Handsome Family, Eric Andersen, The Thrills, Lucinda Williams, Kings of Leon, Tom Russell, Neil Young. Special mentions to Richard Thompson's "1000 Years of Popular Music" and Joan Baez's "Dark Chords on a Big Guitar" and Show of Hands "Country Life" all of which I love. Some great reissues such as the first 3 Fairport albums, Gene Clark's "No Other", Byrds "Sweetheart of the Rodeo" and Neil Young's "On The Beach". And then some old ones that were new to me such as the Stones "Exile on Main Street", Incredible String Band "5000 Spirits", Shirley Collins & Davey Graham "Folk Roots, New Routes" and The Clash "London Calling".

## Books

As well as the Dylan books there have been several other worthwhile musical ones such as Ian MacDonald's "The People's Music" which opens with a great article called "Wild Mercury: A Tale of Two Dylans". Then there was the second volume of Richie Unterberger's history of folk-rock "Eight Miles High". At the Virgin Mega store in London I saw an interesting photographic exhibition of folk singers called "A Gathering of Folk" and bought the accompanying book. It is by Mark Leightley and there are good photos of just about everyone from Bob Copper to Julie Felix and Richard Thompson to Tom Paxton. Worth a look. As is Barry Miles' latest work, "In The Sixties" which is a great reminder for those of us who were there at the time and an eye opener if you weren't.





# Renaldo & Clara The Conclusion

**By Chris Cooper**

Well I guess it's time for the final bit on Renaldo and Clara, seems a long while ago now too. Hope we both remember where we are and what we are doing. I sort of thought this was going to be easy this month, I knew more or less what I was going to do. I also knew that I was going to have a fair bit of spare time. Funny how time slips away, Elvis I believe? Well it sure is true. I have the odd excuse, I was going to be home recuperating from a minor operation. Unfortunately it proved to be a bit more major than minor and whilst it is ok now it has meant I have had less energy for things than I expected to have. I'm the kind of guy that sits around almost never, I usually am doing at least 2 things at once, often more. Sometimes though you let these things take on more importance than they should have. So it has been both enlightening and surprising to find myself taking several days just watching dvds and reading.

I wish I could say I spent the time watching Renaldo and Clara, but it is not so I'm afraid (mostly Star Trek I am afraid) but have no fear it is on now, so lets recap slightly.

Renaldo and Clara was billed when screened in the UK as the "Rolling Thunder Road Movie", this is not an entirely inaccurate assessment of course. It is filmed during the tour and roughly a third of its 230 minutes is indeed concert footage. But, two thirds is not. I am sure it goes without saying



though that the concert shows Dylan at the very pinnacle of his on stage persona.

And the non-concert footage, whilst at first seeming to simply portray the chaos of life on the road it certainly appears to cast comment on Dylan's life outside the tour, and his attitudes to a number of issues. We'll come back to that in a minute.

I have suggested that Dylan may well have borrowed much of the thematic flow of Renaldo & Clara from the film "The Children Of Paradise" (see FW 216) there are just too many connections for it to be mere coincidence. However Dylan probably saw this film whilst in France in May 75, but by this time the tour, and the idea of filming it, were already past the planning stage. Ginsberg has spoken about this in several interviews, one given in Australia in 1978 reports how Bob had the scenes marked out on cards and arranged the sequence of them, deliberately mixing the medicine, as it were. (Wouldn't you like to see those cards now?) So, we ask ourselves was the film what Dylan had planned? Or had it metamorphosized into something else.

This brings me nicely back to Dylan's life and attitudes. Whilst the film was being made Bob's relationship with Sara was breaking up, he was clearly being placed in a position whereby he had to examine the whole basis of his relationship with Sara, and one imagines, with women generally.

Throughout the film many of the scenes address contemporary issues that I would imagine Dylan was contemplating a lot at the time.

His relationship with Sara

His past relationship with Joan Baez and it's affect on his marriage

His ideas of marriage

His consideration of homosexuality

His ideas of sexual freedom, and the difference between love and lust

The role of religious belief in his life

Life on the road

Dealing with his own mortality and his aging

Dealing with becoming an "icon" and that rock n roll is a young mans thing

Dylan has always shrouded his private life in as much mystery as he could manage so these thoughts are not going to be examined too closely in public. But many of them can be transposed, or projected onto others, and then if they are placed within the film of course Bob could vent the ideas and retain at least a degree of anonymity, and that, I believe is what Renaldo and Clara is really about.

So, let me take these points and expand on them a little. I have listed all the scenes that I see as pertinent to these matters using my scene breakdown that was printed in FW's 217 and 218.

#### His relationship with Sara

Scenes:

9, 11, 14, 17,19, 29, 43,49, 61,63,75, 86, 92, 96, 102, 106, 107, 108,110, 116, 117, 123, 127,

Obviously a pivotal part of the film, it is hard to break these down from those that affect Joan Baez and marriage in general. Clearly Dylan has issues in all these areas. You can feel the desperation in many of these scenes, desperation to grasp and hold onto a past idea, dream that is now slipping past him.

#### His past relationship with Joan Baez and it's affect on his marriage

Scenes:

47,50,63, 82, 84, 86, 88, 90, 102, 107, 108, 109, 113, 114, 116, 118, 123, 125,

Much cross over with the Sara scenes, though noticeably Joan gets to speak/sing her own side of the story, whereas Sara's perspective seems to be largely placed there by Dylan. Maybe Joan co-operated more, maybe Sara was just too close for it to be that abstract. I know a lot of Joan Baez knockers but I am not one. Yes she has a large ego, yes she is very strongly opinionated, but she has never hidden her feelings of Dylan and I think has been frank about her past and its links with Dylan. This has clearly had an effect on his marriage and I think you find that scenes with Joan are often based around marriage principles here.

#### His ideas of marriage

Scenes:

4,18, 19, 29, 34, 41, 45, 47,50, 51, 61,75, 81, 86, 92, 95, 99,106, 116,  
121, 123,

More of the above, there are however a number of scenes that deal with the concept of marriage rather than any direct effect on Bob's.

#### His consideration of homosexuality

Scenes:

30, 33, 41, 52, 96,99, 103, 120,

This crops up more than I thought actually, though I can see why it is an issue in a film that is mostly about relationships. I wonder how much Allens involvement in the film influenced these scenes inclusion?

#### His ideas of sexual freedom, and the difference between love and lust

Scenes:

4,17, 20, 29, 41, 43, 45, 47, 49, 52, 63, 84, 92, 95, 99, 107,116.

Again a lot of crossover, seems Bob has trouble deciding whether he should be married or not. Or at least confined by it. I was once told that love and lust are like two candles. Lust has a bright flame that burns fast, Love has a smaller flame but lasts longer. Often Bob seems to wrestle with those problems. This is nothing new I know, but for Dylan to address them in public at a time when they were directly affecting him is nothing short of heroic.

#### The role of religious belief in his life

Scenes:

7, 13, 16, 20,26, 45, 58, 68, 102, 113, 130,

I am surprised this does not feature more. Indeed at this point Dylan's views seem quite traditionally Jewish. Of course he was only a year or two away from profound Christian changes, though I see no hint of that here.

#### Life on the road

Scenes:

1, 12, 13,24, 27, 37, 38, 56, 97, 132,

An obvious setting this and I imagine a simple way to help link the movie together. Though that would suggest there should be more scenes than this.

#### Dealing with his own mortality and his aging

Scenes:

14, 23, 27, 40, 51,56,60, 75.

I would like to have seen this addressed more, I would think if he ever made Renaldo & Clara the Sequel this would fill the film. But it features enough here, I assume that this was a by-product of his disintegrating social life at the time.

Dealing with becoming an "icon" and that rock n roll is a young mans thing

Scenes:

3, 24,28, ,32, 36, 40, 81, 97, 112, 121, 137

I think Bob sets the obvious cliches here, can you be old and play Rock n Roll? Etc. I get the feeling they are included because it is sort of expected.

There are other areas I am sure people will say I good have mentioned,. Like the sizeable part that Hurricane Carters plight has in the film. I am not devaluing there importance. But the purpose here was to examine the honesty that the films shows about the personal life of Bob

I would venture as far to say that most of us at some time in our lives has considered such issues, and usually in private, so for Dylan to come out in public like this is pretty courageous. But for me that has always been the lynch pin on which I hang my own interest in Dylan. His ability to bring focus to many things that I may contemplate, but not necessarily solve for myself. I do not suggest that Bob solves my problems, but that his art empowers me to examine them from a different viewpoint.

And with that I must stop, or I may start entering the shady egocentric area of lyric analysis, and that's one zone that I prefer to keep private.

So is this or is it not his Masterpiece? You decide, I already have made up my mind, as I hope you can all see.

Till Next Time

# TAKE THAT CAMERA OFF OF ME – I CAN'T USE IT ANYMORE

BY MARK CARTER

**I recently picked up a DVD** containing all of Dylan's promo videos - some two dozen in all - beginning with To Ramona in 1965 and ending with 2000's Things Have Changed and taking in all of the Wilbury ones along the way. Not only was the quality of many of them better than some of those that I had acquired over the years, usually tucked in between hours of ropey audience footage that I would never want to watch again or - worse still - lost entirely, thanks to my recent spates of video pruning, but they were in chronological order and allowed me to be reminded of just how rocky his link with any camera and/ or director trying to help him promote his own song has been during the past couple of decades.

The Empire Burlesque ones are especially dated now - all big hair and shoulders -and it's hard to imagine that there may even have been a time when they were considered cutting-edge. Tight Connection is Miami Vice with extra gloss and no content. The shot of a powder blue wig bouncing down a flight of stairs provides an early unintentional laugh. It would not be the last. Lest we are not sure that it is a scene of immense importance, we get it twice; once from the bottom of the stairs looking up and once from the top looking down. No wonder Dylan was so horrified with the results when he saw it. Even mid-80s Dylan must have realised that the quality control of everyone involved in that particular little epic was absent throughout.

Following that, he went black and white for the next couple, but with little improvement. When The Night Comes Falling can probably best be described as a performance video without the performance.

The half dozen Wilbury s promos are best when they're trying not to be wacky. Handle With Care can probably be described as a classic, unfortunately The Wilbury Twist cannot. What is interesting is seeing how Dylan was forced to embrace humour in at least three of them – She's My Baby, Inside Out and the aforementioned Wilbury Twist. Humour and Dylan have always been strange bedfellows, usually the two aren't even on speaking terms let alone anything else (save a brief glorious period in 1965) and these videos merely magnify how uncomfortable he must have felt. Bad enough that he has to lip-synch - a task patently beyond him - but to have to try and smile at the same time!

His real tour de force, of course, has always been - and will probably always be -Series Of Dreams, interestingly presented on my disc as the raw uncut version as well as the

computerised finished result that we all know and love so well. This is the one Bob Dylan video that I never tire of watching and his only one that really stands as a work of art. At the time, I kind of remember hearing that he was so impressed with the finished result that he was planning to use the same team for any future projects, and so it briefly seemed that Dylan's early 1990s might have contained more sparkle than they ultimately did. The next time he stepped in front of the cameras was for the home movie *Blood In My Eyes*, showing - for once - a very human and approachable man. Ten years ago, I likened him to a Pied Piper, leading his flock behind him as he mugged for the camera and, here in 2004, that's still the image I see. For once the fabled and cliched armour was down and the real man briefly shone through. He seemed so happy, pity it couldn't last. I guess it never can.

I hated 2000's *Things Have Changed* promo when I first saw it - Dylan as the song and dance variety artist he was briefly rumoured to be becoming at the time, complete with straw hat and cane. All that was missing was the leg kicks - "Give me the moonlight, give me the girl, and leave the rest to me." Nowadays, I can appreciate it for what it is - yet another example of Dylan gamely trying to come to terms with a format that has eluded him since 1983. That's why *Most Of The Time* is his most powerful performance video, because he is allowed to sing the song live in whatever style and manner he feels like at the time. In contrast, *Not Dark Yet* can only bravely run a very poor second because, once again, someone decided it would be better for Dylan to lip-synch rather than just do what he's best at.

Some footage from *Masked And Anonymous* would have been a nice addition tucked on the end so that we could see in a two-hour trawl how he has aged and how much he has changed and how little he has really changed. It was also a shock to see him as recently as 2000 without his little moustache - it sometimes seems as though he's had it forever - and with a little bit of stubble around his old chops, which has always suited him better. Somehow, without the moustache, he didn't look so.....daft.

Yes, I think that's the word I'm looking for. Sorry, Bob.





# Alias Anything You Want

by Paula Radice



**Two new books to write about this month**, both very enjoyable, but very different in style and substance.

First the fun, then down to the more serious stuff. **Brits and Bobs - Bob Dylan in the British Isles** (published by Eye 5), edited and compiled by Steve Butterworth, is as it suggests a bits and pieces look at the times that Bob has visited Britain, and is a highly entertaining read. In large paperback format, it gathers together pictures, photos, statistics, newspaper reviews and individual reminiscences (both of the audiences and some of the musicians involved) of the 141 British shows that Bob has played in Britain, along with some of his other artistic endeavours that have occurred here, like the filming of *Don't Look Back* and of *Hearts of Fire*. It's all held together with a very irreverent, very British, commentary that pokes fun equally and fairly at the strangeness of the artist and his audience; I particularly enjoyed "The Biggies Guide to the Concert Go-ers from Hell" section.

Dylan definitely does have an affinity to these Isles and enjoys being here, and showed it most conclusively at the three final shows in London of last year's tour. And being a British Dylan fan is very different to being an American, or a German, or a Scandinavian one, I think. The Dylan community is very tight here, very interconnected, and we don't have the huge distances to cover to get to shows, or to each other, that Americans, Canadians, Australians have. It is perfectly possible (work permitting) to travel to every show in Britain and meet up with the same people at every location. We have frequent social events (local meetings, annual events like the John Green Day, Conventions every so often) that enable us all to keep in touch with each other and build a communal experience from the times we see Dylan in concert. Plus, of course, the fact that we're all completely crackers. This book distils all that into a very pleasurable and amusing read: Dylan from a British perspective. It can be obtained from Steve Butterworth at Eye 5, 29 Tenterfields, Great Dunmow, Essex, CAA6 1HJ.

On a more academic and serious note altogether is **Alias Bob Dylan Revisited** by Stephen Scobie (Red Deer Press, and available from Amazon). Scobie is one of my very favourite writers on Bob Dylan (following my tenet that only real poets get to the very heart of what Dylan is about) and I have been waiting for the publication of this with great anticipation. To say that it is a reworking of his 1991 *Alias Bob Dylan* would be to do it a large disservice, as it so fully expanded and revised as to be effectively a new work altogether. And a very good work it is indeed.

Scobie takes as his premise the belief that throughout his artistic career, Dylan has taken up two stances, those of “Prophet” and “Trickster”. He examines these through a series of themes, including “alias”, “masks”, “signature”, “self portrait”, “ghost”, “quotation”; themes that occur and recur throughout the songs, the interviews, the films. Dylan’s career is divided into three phases: “The Years of Creation”, “The Years of Commitment” and “The Years of Performance”.

In every case, Scobie’s treatment is articulate, persuasive and insightful. Although it is by definition academic (and more specifically, post-modern) in its approach, it is never patronising or inaccessible. The book is a joy to read, especially in the way it makes connections between different genres. The explanation of the interconnection of themes within *Renaldo and Clara*, for example, is the most convincing I have ever come across (and a thousand times more comprehensible than Bob’s own attempts to explain it). It also gives us some new biographical information, particularly on the relationship between Dylan and Allen Ginsberg. The only faults I would find with it are of omission: sometimes the examinations are tantalisingly short, and leave you wanting more. For example, the discussions of *New Pony* and of “*Love and Theft*” are great, but too brief and, infuriatingly, the book has come out too early for Scobie to have examined *masked and anonymous*. I really hope he will provide a postscript, perhaps in one of the Dylan magazines, that will allow us to find out his take on that extraordinary piece of work (if you read the book with the film in your mind, there are connections everywhere - the dying/absent/inadequate father, the ghost of Oscar Vogel, the vaudeville humour, the masks and aliases - which tie *masked and anonymous* to the themes present in Dylan’s songs).

I can’t recommend *Alias Bob Dylan Revisited* highly enough. If you found Ricks hard-going (and I know a lot of people did) then this may well be the book for you.

**Indispensable.**



*Bob Dylan portrait by A.Fortier*

## ALTERNATIVES TO COLLEGE

### In anticipation of The Bootleg Series Vol. 6

by Michael Crimmins

**I used to write songs**, like I'd say' yeah what's bad, pick out something bad, like segregation, OK here we go, and I'd Pick out one of the thousand million little points I can pick and explode it, some of them I didn't know about.

I wrote a song about 'Emmett Till', which in all honesty was a bullshit song ...I realize now that my reasons and motives behind it were phoney, I didn't have to write it.

(Bob Dylan New York 1964)

"When he sings and plays, his songs come to life as though he were painting them in the air in front of you, he has a power, a presence, that doesn't yield to easy explanations"

(Paul Williams/Performing Artist book one 1960-73)

It's the 31 October 1964 and it is Halloween. Bob Dylan is in a friendly talkative mood, some say stoned, I don't! If Dylan has become a victim of

his own success, in as much as everybody wants him to explain his songs, he made it rather clear tonight, that he isn't about to explain anything. He wishes no complications or responsibility. It is really spooky to hear Mr Dylan deliver a darkly foreboding song, then the moment the song ends, go into some amusing in between song rap. He completely distances himself from his songs by this, almost as if they had been written by another! After delivering an eerie version of a new song "Gates of Eden" Dylan announces, his voice crackling with mirth "Don't let that scare you- It's just Halloween - I have my Bob Dylan mask on --- I'm masquerading" Your not kidding Bob!

Before delivering a seemingly heartfelt protest "Who killed Davy Moore" it was almost alarming to witness Dylan disown the song "This is a song about a boxer! It's got nothing to do with boxing, it's just a song about a boxer! And it really doesn't have anything to do with the boxer really. It's got nothing to do with nothing! I put all these words together that's all"

Of course I wasn't really there at the Philharmonic hall in New York that night, truth is there was a lot of water separating Bob and me, and I was only twelve at that time! Maybe though the above thoughts occurred to one or two that were present.

Dylan does have a power and a presence that does not yield to easy explanation, I agree whole heartedly with this. I find it is interesting none the less to speculate on the concert dialogue in respect of remarks, as quoted above, that Dylan made, in an interview from around the same time Does The Halloween concert recording soon to be an official release, reveal Dylan's inner struggle, with the weight of his pen and communicative skills acting almost as an ironic barrier to his future artistic freedom? Bob Dylan at this point was only months away from 'going electric'. The electric instrument that shouldered a lot of the blame that night at Newport, was nowhere to be seen here, yet there was plenty of room for consternation as Dylan put himself through this process of self denial. Listening to the songs along with the dialogue (I hope it released so) is an extraordinary experience!. On one hand the songs are perfectly delivered, respected and loved by the artist, and on the other, (dialogue) they appear to be almost a source of embarrassment to him

Although an artist in turmoil is not always a bad thing for us, witness 'Blood on the tracks', I believe that Dylan went through a dangerous period in regard to his health and even his own personal safety, especially around the time that he was regarded as having turned his back on social and topical matters . Another artist ,no stranger himself to inner turmoil , Phil Ochs astutely voiced his opinion on Dylan's precarious public position in 1965 "Dylan is very disturbing Dylan gets up there and sings great thoughts and poetry to everybody, and when you say everybody you mean also to neurotics ,to immature people, to the lumpen proletariat ,to people not in control of themselves"

At one point ,to be honest I cant remember when, Dylan said " It is lonely where I am" I can quite clearly , and to some degree with the help of hindsight, feel his isolation on this recording . The concert programme contained a new poem by Dylan 'Advice for Geraldine on her miscellaneous birthday', which I hope will be a part of the package that we will get, it heads off with "Stay in line. Stay in step. People are afraid of someone who is not in step with them"

This Bootleg series vol 6 release ,is a unique stepping stone to Vol 4 Live 1966 "Albert Hall", that charts Dylan's most transitional period . Though they are released in a strange order, I don't complain , I am glad that they are there ,in place ,or soon will be , for all to hear. The music is an absolute treasure ! all of it!! I unlike Uncut's Andy Gill find Joan Baez anything but "Obtrusive and annoying"

Dylan and Baez perform four songs together . Looks like I will finally get to hear the full version of "Silver Dagger" from "The King and Queen".



## *Man Gave Names.. .by Jim Gillan*

Long experience tells me that it's 3am or thereabouts. Ros is curled up in the duvet, her breathing even, her presence a joy. But for me, nature calls, so it's off to the toilet. The curtain moves softly as the faint breeze brushes past the partly opened window. Outside a fox screams and downstairs Spike, our dog, responds with a low growl. I flush and, as ever, put the seat back down. As I do, I feel warm approval sweep over me, so intense that I almost ignite. Surprised and pleasingly disconcerted by this, I step into the bathroom, the light from the top landing being just enough to give shape to what's in the shadows. God is lying in the bath, suds stacked high and a-popping.

"Howdy!" I say.

*"Hello yourself,"* is the agreeable reply - although I'm sure neither of us speaks.

"What brings you here? Not that you aren't very welcome, of course."

*"Well, in God's truth, I need a bit of a rest from all the blather. The only place I can get that is around an atheist. Believe me, it's tough having the whole world - and everywhere else in the universes - giving it some. If they're not asking for something, then it's the clamour of celebration and praise, with one lot trying to out-do the other. It all gets a bit wearing."*

"Then you DO exist!"

*"For those who believe."*

"Ah! H'mmm! I need to think about that - meantime, what name should I use?"

*"Whatever takes your fancy. But what's in a name? Though there are some I haven't heard for a while, like 'Thor'. It wasn't exactly me, but it was once pretty popular. These days it only has 'myth' tacked to it. It's like fashion. One moment in demand, but soon no one cares a fcuk"*

"E'rmmm, as I recall, Viking fashion included using Thor, Odin and co to justify actions such as rape, pillage, destruction, invasion, exploitation and conquest."

*"Given the things that are still done using me as the justification, what has changed?"*

“But how can you let all the obscenities and absurdities happen – and in your name?”

*“Interfering only makes things worse. I tried it a few times, but a powerful few hijacked my attempts for themselves and fooled the rest of you with their take on my message. It’s why you’re now over-burdened with theology, ritual, schisms, sects and – NOW what!”*

“I thought for a moment you were saying we were over-burdened with ‘sex’, then I realised I misheard.”

*“Most do. But there is absolute nothing wrong with lots of rumpy-pumpy. God knows it does you much more good than a bullet. But humanity only seems to want the destructive and hateful. Too many of you have allowed anything loving to be cast as sinful, as a weakness of the flesh. And you believe it! I don’t think that humanity has ever grasped the true meaning of irony - most of it seems to think it’s what is used to make armoured cars. Now you’re looking even more perplexed! Why?”*

“Well, no offence, but as I don’t believe in any deity, any religion, how come I can see you?”

*“How well?”*

“Only middling”

*“And what does that tell you?”*

“That as a collapsed Catholic, I have minute traces of dogma imbedded in me? So try as I might, I could never really be a 100% atheist! But all my past denial means you’ve now come to pass judgement on me?”

*“HA! The old guilt trip. By God, that was a cracker they came up with as a way of controlling the masses. But no, the reason is simply that I’m in shadow. Pass the sponge please.”*

“So are you saying that it doesn’t matter whether we believe or not?”

*“Not exactly. However, subscribing to the tenets of a religion isn’t the same as adopting the ethical and moral principles integral to a compassionate deity. Which, if you think about it, is all a Creator can be. Exploitation,*



*brutality, extortion, violence and so on aren't God given. Practised by individuals they're called crimes. Practised by corporations they're called good business. Practised by those in office they're called government."*

"How come you don't make all this clear to the world?"

*"You've already asked me that. I said I tried, but that interfering made it worse! Dylan understands what I mean."*

"Dylan?"

*"Yes, Dylan. Shortish bloke. Funny walk. Predictable taste in underwear. Reads a lot, paints, ponders. Writes endlessly. Performs a fair bit. Sings - well, sort of. But never explains anything, anymore, as no one really listens. Instead they prefer to turn to an army of untiring investigators, inventive commentators and self-appointed experts, who all feel the need to explain Bob. When they're not scrapping amongst themselves over what he means, they're trying to sell their take on things to those too lazy to think for themselves, or who are fooled into believing that others know better. Remind you of anything?"*

"Prophets? Preachers? Mystics? Theologians? The Inquisition? Congregations? Michael Gray?"

*"Exactly! Pass the soap please. And sing something. Even a voice like yours can soothe."*

"Do you get much opportunity to hear music?"

*"Not really, on account of all the noise made by praying, counting beads, and groaning with the pain of some self-imposed fast. Would I really ask someone to go hungry? Yet music is one of the few things that gives me any hope that humanity can find an answer for itself, instead of looking to me to do it all for them. Though now and then, even music gets hijacked. Look at what the Nazis did to Wagner. And Ronald Reagan to Bruce."*

"Fair enough. Any tips on what I should put on the CD player?"

*"I've just told you, I can't think for you, you will have to decide."*

“OK. What about the BIG question. Why am I here?”

*“Your mother and father are much better placed than I am to answer that.”*

“My father died in 1984”.

*“Doesn't mean you can't have a chat though does it? Which I know you already do.”*

“OK, OK. The REALLY BIG question then, What lies beyond this life?”

*“It depends on what you do in this one. Everything has consequences, though not necessarily those that people generally hope for or expect.”*

“For example?”

*“Well, many believe things in an afterlife (whatever form it might take for them), are going to be better than what they have in this life, especially if they drape themselves in the trappings of religion. But why should that be? Is it enough to go through the motions of being good whilst also oppressing, exploiting and destroying others, whatever justification they invent? What sort of God do these people think they might face? One who believes their lies?”*

“So does that mean there is a Heaven and, by extension a Hell? Or whatever they might be called?”

*“Maybe. It depends on what you alone believe. Oblivion can be nirvana for some, just as reincarnation can be for others. It's your integrity, your behaviour that matters, not what others want you to subscribe to and do, however clever their arguments. Here's a parable for you. Once, everyone in the world simultaneously heard a piece of music. Many found something profound in it and were satisfied. Others however wanted to thrust their views on the rest. The differences were tiny and utterly meaningless, but they escalated in to major conflict. It doesn't matter if it's Scripture or Bob's songs. More sublime moments lost to humanity's stupidity.”*

“I’ve always said that the future of humanity is utterly irreconcilable with the future of the planet.”

*“As it behaves at present, and is likely to continue doing, you’re right. But does it matter?”*

“Not to me – but then I don’t believe that humanity is at the core of things.”

*“Right again. All life, however it is expressed, whether as a rock, tree, microbe, sheep or lead singer of the Sex Pistols, has a purpose. Yet humanity doesn’t really value any form of life. It’s not just war. Too most, all manner of things are held to be more use dead than alive – yet no one asks the chicken or the tree how it feels. It’s how life is expressed that gives it a value. Which, as Attila, Stalin, Hitler, Bin Laden, Bush, Blair and more demonstrate, can be negative.”*

“Yes, but there are very many good people, who lead by shining example. Nelson Mandela for one.”

*“For a terrible minute I thought you were going to cite Mother Teresa. Who on the whole was well meaning, but who got a bit too hooked on appearances. Anyway, good intentions and worthy acolytes won’t necessarily produce the best results. Though Mother Teresa was a handy person to have visit if you were short of a tea-towel. What about you?”*

“Me?”

*“You. Goodness begins with the simple individual, not with the inflated figurehead.”*

“Is it OK if I say that my ambition is not to do good, but to do as little harm as possible?”

*“Of course it is. In the world as humanity has made it, it’s all anyone can hope for. Well done! On which note, I’m away. Besides, you’re out of hot water and not in it, if you follow me.”*

Back in bed, Ros turned sleepily to me and said “you’ve been a long time. Are you OK?”

“I’ve been chatting to God,” I replied. “What did she say?” murmured Ros, before dropping back into the sleep of the mostly untroubled. Just the same, I hugged her. Afterwards I thought about things and eventually realised where (and why) that feeling of approval must have come from when I put the toilet seat back down.

# It's a pile of pretentious old wank

949 words on

## Nothing very much

By Patrick Webster

**First of all** I would like to apologize for not writing a top ten for last month's *Freewheelin'*. If I were to be honest I would state my lack of sufficient enthusiasm for the whole idea, but then I must say I enjoyed everyone else's list.

In fact, I am at something of a loss to know what to write this month, having just finished a long series of pieces on 'Isis,' I am a little like our esteemed collator JRS and his work on 'Visions of Johanna.' (Although I must stress in a much lesser way - I wouldn't compare my work to his series on 'Visions of Johanna' which to my knowledge must stand as the most detailed examination of any Dylan song yet published, anywhere at anytime by anyone -I stand in awe at the expanse and detail of the work accomplished.)

In any case, I was much entertained by last month's *Freewheelin'*, especially by Mark's typically side-splittingly funny contribution. What struck me most, and would simply not go out of my head, was this line, a remarkably pithy response to Christopher Ricks' *Visions of Sin*:

### **It's a pile of pretentious old wank.**

What appealed to me, apart from the breadth of its incisive critical acumen, was the detail in the line. Thus, if I may be so bold, I would like to deal in detail with this memorable line of prose.

Now, without falling into the trap supplied by the line, I'd like to start by taking Freud's (and to some extent Roland Barthes') idea that any author is never fully aware of the full and total meaning of their words when they set down to write. That is, unconscious elements can always be seen to be resonating within the cluster of conflicting signifiers the writer creates.

We begin with the word:

## **It's**

Nothing wrong here, not too sure about the apostrophied contraction, it might have had more authority had we had: 'It is ...' but a good opening, nonetheless.

The second word:

## **a**

The indefinite article - not much more to say about this.

The next word:

## **pile**

Now this is more interesting. Why a pile? And is it potentially viable - can you have a pile of wank, whether it be pretentious, and not to say old? Could we envisage a betrayal of some sense of scatological anxiety here in this word pile? Possibly, but let us go on.

The next word

## **of**

This need not detain us long, a nice compact preposition. Now the following word:

## **pretentious**

In some respects I think this verges just a little towards the unfair, insomuch as Ricks - back in the early 1980s - was one of the key figures in UK academic life to oppose the onset of postmodern and poststructuralist theory within humanities. Now postmodern theory is pretentious, as I will attempt to demonstrate next month, when I compare Dylan's *Slow Train Coming* to Jean Francois Lyotard's musings on the loss of the grand narratives within a postmodern environment. If you want to see real pretension just peruse any work of literary theory published in the last twenty years.

The next word, the sixth, really starts to get interesting:

## **old**

Now we have no way of estimating just how old the old wank is - but to me it could be very old. In fact I could see it as dating from as long ago as 1973. This was the year when I first remember hearing Ricks offer a talk on Dylan, on Radio 3, I still have it on an old reel-reel tape and I think it still stands up. (Still stands up - now there's a giveaway phrase.) Anyway, this sets up the surreal image of the good Professor, a younger

Christopher, masturbating into - well who knows, maybe a plastic cup - and retaining this seminal fluid - this pretentious old wank - throughout all these years - in order to produce it - in all its longevity - for our critical perusal in the present day.

The final word:

### **wank**

I have to admit is one I have never liked and rarely used. The *OED* claims it is of relatively recent linguistic lineage, 1940s 'of unknown origin.' It means, of course, to masturbate as a verb, and the product of that masturbation as a noun. To describe a book like Ricks' in this way perhaps isn't so pejorative because it is literally seminal - none of us would have been here without the content of the aforementioned fluid. Also, masturbation is probably the most common sexual act, 'don't knock masturbation, it's sex with someone I love,' as Woody Allen once said. Why it has thus become a term of ultimate abuse is of interest - but that is another story for another time and place.

To be serious, just for a moment, I have to say that I would want to take just the slightest of opposing stances to Mark's memorable and pithy critique of Ricks' book. I just feel the need to aver ever so slightly. For example, if one were to read the section wherein Ricks compares 'Not Dark Yet' to Keats' 'Ode to a Nightingale' (pp. 359-374) I just have the slightest suspicion that this might offer us just a little more than the aforementioned pile of pretentious old wank. If I was to be wholly honest then I would go a little further and suggest this was not the most incisive criticism of Ricks' book - but perhaps it would be better if I don't: - so I won't.

Keep up the good work everyone, I thought last month's issue was one of the best in a while.

# THE MISSIONARY TIMES

By J.R. Stokes

## Let Me Ask You One Question Mark (Let Me Ask you One Question, Mark)

**In his seasonal look at the delights of his year 2003**, Mark Carter praised to high heaven the band The Darkness and declared that this particular band reminded him of why he got into music in the first place back in the mid-70's. Putting the full weight of his words squarely behind the band, Mark ventured: 'Their Christmas single 'Christmas Time (Don't Let The Bells End)' is the best seasonal record since - what? - The Pretenders' '2000 miles' back in 1983 probably...'. 'Listen to them' Mark declares, 'watch them and for a moment believe it's 1975 again'.

Now fortunately, the appreciation of popular music is a very broad church and, when it comes to the popular music of 1975, Mark is clearly an Arch Bishop and I am the tassle on a hassock. To me 1975 was not a classic year for popular music: from what I recall it was mainly The Bay City Rollers, The Rubettes, The Glitter Band (but please don't mention the Leader of the Gang), Mud, Showaddywaddy and all that crowd. I mean if you listened to Fluff on a Sunday afternoon, you couldn't really take the charts seriously could you?

On the other hand, if you wanted to take your choice of popular music a little more seriously, and bearing in mind the congregation of this chapel wherein I write, could I just mention that, at the beginning of 1975, Dylan released 'Blood On The Tracks' which just overshadowed everything else and created a black hole so vast and deep into which, for me, Glam rock just fell and fell and fell until it disappeared without trace. Having said all that, in 1975 Mark was probably a teenager with eye shadow, four inch heels and a tartan wrist band whereas I wore a vest and was about to start a family: he was from Jupiter and I was from Saturn. Thereafter, at some stage during our respective time traveling, we both found a common denominator in Bob Dylan and we arrived together with a bump on Planet Earth!

So Mark, I have listened to and watched The Darkness and I just don't get it I'm afraid. To me they are like Clive Dunne meets Bon Jovi - they just cannot be taken seriously and it was with some relief, although matched with great surprise, that they didn't make the Christmas number one. That relief and surprise was also coloured by a great deal of delight because, having watched the Donnie Darko movie twice in the lead up to



Christmas, I was really happy that the spooky and evocative ‘Mad World’, which comes from the movie and which is sung by Gary Jules in Michael Stipe fashion made it to the all important Christmas number one. No gimmicks, no childrens choir, no Baddiel-and-Skinner influenced pop video: just a voice, a guitar and some haunting lyrics. And in the evening we still played party games. And of course it’s a very, very ... mad world.

Now I’m not here to talk about Christmas number ones . (although Mark, and this is the question: surely ‘Fairy Tales of New York’ by Shane McGowan and Kirsty McCall surely beats The Pretenders’ ‘2000 Miles’?as a Christmas number one), although, on second thoughts, you can change that because I AM here to talk about Christmas number ones. But not of the musical kind. The book that made it to the number one spot of bestsellers at Christmas, and is indeed still top of the bestsellers as I write, having sold almost half a million copies, is something of a weird one and is also something that found its way into my Christmas stocking. ‘Eats, Shoots and Leaves’ is all about punctuation. PUNCTUATION? Dots, commas and semi-colons? How boring, how fastidious and how fucking insignificant. Wrong, wrong and wrong, because, as the dedication of the book shows, punctuation caused a momentous incident in history:

*‘To the memory of the striking Bolshevik printers of St Petersburg who, in 1905, demanded to be paid the same rate for punctuation marks as for letters, and thereby directly precipitated the first Russian Revolution.’*

The author of the book, Lynne Truss, is something of Punctuation Revolutionary herself as it appears that she is out to amass an army of like minded individuals in order to rid the world of bad punctuation. The aim is to achieve a state of zero toleration to the manner of punctuating grammar. Still think it’s boring, fastidious and insignificant? Well, you are still wrong, wrong and wrong because I defy anyone to read this book and not want, at the end of it, to join the army. Let me give you a pertinent example of the book’s worth: I started out in this article by mentioning a pop group. In the chapter of her book under the title ‘The Attractable Apostrophe’ Lynn Truss also focuses on the name of a pop group which has strange punctuation mark:

*‘In the spring of 2001 the ITV1 show Popstars manufactured a pop phenomenon for our times: a singing group called Hear’Say. The announcement of the Hear’Say name was quite a national occasion, as I recall; people actually went out in very large numbers to buy their records; meanwhile, newspapers, who insist on precision in matters of address, at once learned to place Hear’Say’s apostrophe correctly and attend to the proper spacing. To refer in print to this group as Hearsay (one word) would be wrong, you see. To call it Hear-Say (hyphenated) would show embarrassing ignorance of popular culture. And so it came to pass that Hear’Say’s poor, oddly placed little apostrophe was replicated everywhere and no one gave a moment’s thought to its sufferings. No one saw the pity of its position, hanging there in eternal meaninglessness, silently signalling to those with eyes to see, “I’m a legitimate punctuation mark, get me out of here.” Checking the Hear’Say website a couple of years later, I discover that the only good news in this whole sorry saga was that, well, basically, once Kym had left to marry Jack in January*

2002 - after rumours, counter-rumours and official denials - the group thankfully folded within eighteen months of its inception.

*Now, there are no laws against imprisoning apostrophes and making them look daft. Cruelty to punctuation is quite unlegislated: you can get away with pulling the legs off semicolons; shrivelling question marks on the garden path under a powerful magnifying glass; you name it. But the naming of Hear'Say in 2001 was nevertheless a significant milestone on the road to punctuation anarchy.'*

That is an example of the light hearted way in which the book is written. Light hearted but serious in its endeavours to unite those who cringe at the use of bad punctuation. This is underlined by the author stating her own stance:

*'My own position is simple: in some matters of punctuation there are simple rights and wrongs; in others, one must apply a good ear to good sense. I want the greatest clarity from punctuation, which means, supremely, that I want apostrophes where they should be, and I will not cease from mental fight nor shall my sword sleep in my hand (hang on, didn't "Jerusalem" begin with an "And"?) until everyone knows the difference between "its" and "it's" and bloody well nobody writes about "dead sons photos" without indicating whether the photos in question show one son or several. There is a rumour that in parts of the Civil Service workers have been pragmatically instructed to omit apostrophes because no one knows how to use them any more - and this is the kind of pragmatism, I say along with Winston Churchill, "up with which we shall not put". How dare anyone make this decision on behalf of the apostrophe? What gives the Civil Service - or, indeed, Warner Brothers - the right to decide our Tinkerbell should die? How long will it be before a mainstream publisher allows an illiterate title into print? How long before the last few punctuation sticklers are obliged to take refuge together in caves?*

*So what I propose is action. Sticklers unite, you have nothing to lose but your sense of proportion, and arguably you didn't have a lot of that to begin with. Maybe we won't change the world, but at least we'll feel better. The important thing is to unleash your Inner Stickler, while at the same time not getting punched on the nose, or arrested for damage to private property. You know the campaign called "Pipe Down", against the use of piped music? Well, ours will be "Pipe Up". Be a nuisance. Do something. And if possible use a bright red pen. Send back emails that are badly punctuated; return letters; picket Harrods. Who cares if members of your family abhor your Inner Stickler and devoutly wish you had an Inner Scooby-Doo instead? At least if you adopt a zero tolerance approach, when you next see a banner advertising "CD's, DVD's, Video's, and Book's", you won't just stay indoors getting depressed about it. Instead you will engage in some direct action argy-bargy! Because - here's the important thing - you won't be alone.*

*That's always been the problem for sticklers, you see. The feeling of isolation. The feeling of nerdish-ness. One solitary obsessive, feebly armed with an apostrophe on a stick, will never have the nerve to demonstrate outside Warner Brothers on the issue of Two Weeks Notice. But if enough people could pull together in a common cause, who knows what we*

*might accomplish? There are many obstacles to overcome here, not least our national characteristics of reserve (it's impolite to tell someone they're wrong), apathy (someone else will do it) and outright cowardice (is it worth being duffed up for the sake of a terminally ailing printer's convention?). But I have faith. I do have faith. And I also have an Inner Stickler that, having been unleashed, is now roaring, salivating and clawing the air in a quite alarming manner.'*

After reading the book, and realizing that the purpose of it finding its way into my Christmas stocking was because my own punctuation gets pretty haywire sometimes, I found that my Inner Stickler came out of the closet and I started to take a somewhat unnatural interest in the matter of punctuation. You could say that, for a brief period of time, I became quite obsessed. And when my two obsessions collided head on I had some sleepless nights. So I just have to get it off my chest: I have to look at Bob Dylan and punctuation; or at least (for a start) the punctuation in the titles to the songs Bob Dylan.

Once it was always the case that the best place to start if you wanted to search for Dylan's songs and lyrics was, quite naturally, in the book entitled 'Lyrics'. The latest copy of 'Lyrics' however is now almost 20 years out of date so an even better place to start these days is on the wonderful website: <http://bobdylan.com/albums/> where you will find an up-to-date listing of lyrics from the albums 'Bob Dylan' (1962) right through to 'Live 1975' (2002).

So, I started at the very beginning and immediately my Inner Stickler became enraged. There is in fact an apostrophe in the title of the very first song on the very first Bob Dylan album ('You're No Good') but the lyrics of that song are not on the website because they were not written by Dylan. Fair enough. So the very first song from which the lyrics are shown is 'Talking New York' and this is exactly how the very first verse of that very first song appears on bobdylan.com:

*Ramblin' outa the wild West,  
Leavin' the towns I love the best.  
Thought I'd seen some ups and down,  
"Til I come into New York town.  
People goin' down to the ground,  
Buildings goin' up to the sky.*

Have a look for yourself. There are speech marks (i.e. double quotation marks) in front of the word 'Till when surely there should only be one? And the speech marks don't close anywhere! Now if you are going to say that there are two apostrophes because two letters are missing ('un' til), then have a look at the song 'Till I Fell In Love With You' from the album 'Time Out Of Mind'. On the website the title to the song is just Till I Fell In Love With You (i.e. no apostrophe before the abbreviated word 'Till) but in the lyrics to the song there is just one apostrophe thus: 'I was all right 'til I fell in love with you.' which, to my mind, is the way it should be.

Rather than give up in frustration straight away I ploughed on with this business of apostrophes in abbreviated words and so I got:

*In my Time of Dyin'*  
*Fixin' To Die*  
*Blowin' In The Wind*  
*The Times They Are A-Changin'*  
*Talkin' World War III Blues*  
*Knockin' On Heaven's Door*  
*Goin' To Acapulco*  
*You Ain't Goin' Nowhere*  
*Driftin' Too Far From Shore*  
*T.V. Talkin' Song*  
*Tryin' To Get To Heaven*

Of course all those apostrophes are to denote abbreviated words and in each case the missing letter is 'g'. There is in fact only one song where the missing letter is other than 'g' and that is *Po' Boy*. Am I getting obsessed? Well, after apostrophes I became involved with brackets – and here we go again:

*I Don't Believe You (She Acts Like We Never Have Met)*  
*It's Alright, Ma (I'm Only Bleeding)*  
*One of Us Must Know (Sooner or Later)*  
*Quinn the Eskimo (The Mighty Quinn)*  
*One More Cup of Coffee (Valley Below)*  
*Senor (Tales of Yankee Power)*  
*Tight Connection to My Heart (Has Anybody Seen My Love)*

After 'Tight Connection' from 1985, the brackets disappeared for 16 years. That was a long wait, and then just like London buses, two arrive together - in 2001:

*Floater (Too Much To Ask)*  
*High Water (for Charley Patton)*

There are a couple (at least) of omissions here: on the website the titles to the songs *Where Are You Tonight?*(1978) and *Do Right To Me Baby* (1979) have nothing in brackets but as we all know, there should have been (Journey Through Dark Heat) after the former and (Do Unto Others) after the latter.

It was in 1978 that the first question mark appeared in the title to a song on an official Bob Dylan album in the form of *Is Your Love in Vain?*. This was however followed closely by questions in the titles to songs on subsequent albums, perhaps noting Dylan's search for some answers at this period:

*When You Gonna Wake Up?*  
*What Can I Do For You?*  
*Are You Ready?*

Then after an absence of almost ten years, question marks appeared again in two songs from *Oh Mercy* (the album title which surely should have contained an exclamation mark!):

*What Good Am I?*  
*What Was It You Wanted?*

(The Inner Stickler wants to say that the question *Has Anybody Seen My Love ?* in the title to the song *Tight Connection to My Heart (Has Anybody Seen My Love)* should have a question mark, but doesn't).

A moment ago I was talking about exclamation marks, well there are just two songs that have one, and they are both from the same album.

*Lo and Behold!*  
*Yea! Heavy and a Bottle of Bread*

What about the common or garden comma? There are course lots of them but these two come in pairs:

*Lay, Lady, Lay*  
*Going, Going, Gone*

Then, there is the hyphen, as in:

*Pretty Peggy-O*  
*The Times They Are A-Changin'*  
*Leopard-Skin Pill-Box Hat* (two in that one)  
*Sad-Eyed Lady of the Lowlands*

And only one forward slash: *Love Minus Zero/No Limit*.

So much then for the songs, what about the album titles? Two of Dylan's first three albums have some nice punctuation with *The Freewheelin' Bob Dylan* in 1963 and *The Times They Are A-Changin'* in 1964. Thereafter (apart from Bob Dylan's Greatest Hits Volumes 1,2, and 3) there was absolutely nothing until, some 37 years after the apostrophe and the hyphen of 1964, the following arrived:

## “LOVE AND THEFT”

Whaaaaat!? Why? And what’s the reason for? Where did those speech marks come from? Are they just there by accident? Is this the work of a Punctuation Revolutionary with a double apostrophe on a stick? Is this the end of the Dylan album title as we know it? So many questions. So much punctuation. This is how Lynn Truss deals with double quotation marks:

*‘Since the 18<sup>th</sup> Century we have standardized the use of quotation marks – but only up to a point. Readers are obliged to get used to the idea from an early age that “Double or single?” is a question not applicable only to beds, tennis and cream. We see both double and single quotation marks every day, assimilate both, and try not to think about it. Having been trained to use double quotation marks for speech, however, with single quotations for quotations-within-quotations, I grieve to see the rule applied the other way round. There is a difference between saying someone is “out of sorts” (a direct quote) and ‘out of sorts’ (i.e., not feeling very well): when single quotes serve both functions, you lose this distinction.’*

Thus, according to she-who-knows, anything within double quotation marks means direct speech. And presumably it is Dylan himself who is doing the speaking here. The words are straight from the horse’s mouth so to speak: the idea being perhaps that when you look at the album cover you hear him saying “Love and Theft” in his own voice. You don’t need to play the album to hear that mid-western drawl: all you have to do is look at the cover. It’s different; it’s inter-active and it’s in your cd rack right now. Wanna hear Bob? This is what he has to say: “love and theft”, man. Eat your heart out Inner Stickler!

Finally, on the subject of punctuation, and just in case any Inner Sticklers out there get their Outer Sticklers to point a finger in my direction. We call ourselves Freewheelin. Why no apostrophe to denote the missing ‘g’? Because ‘Freewheelin’ has now become a word in its own right. It’s not ‘Freewheeling’ any more. So there!

# IT TAKES A LOT TO LAUGH

WHEN THE INTERVIEW STARTS BADLY

2

SO, BOB, DO YOU STILL BELIEVE  
IN JESUS THEN, OR WHAT?



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