

Bob Dylan's Early Career

- ***Review:*** "Folk music" (early 1800s; J.G. von Herder)
 - supposedly stable, "**authentic**" or deeply-rooted cultures
 - (seen as "superior" to artificial, unstable, and self-conscious musical traditions)
 - BUT "folk music" is itself unstable, forming and re-forming as a reaction against a contemporary world
- **Historically, "Folk" aesthetics appeal to audiences in cultural upheaval**
 - German/British early 1800s ... U.S.: 1850s, 1930s, and 1960s
 - Think comparatively about the *value* of folk musics. What is "revived" and what is ignored or left behind?

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- 1961: Inspired by Guthrie to play an aggressive "hobo style" in Greenwich Village
 - (-- a style that seemed forgotten by 1950s folk artists.)

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- Feb 1963: **"Freewheelin' Bob Dylan"** continues "Hobo style" singing, but departs from folk themes
 - ("Hard Rain's Gonna Fall" -- *existential, beat-influenced poetry*)
 - "Masters of War", "Blowin' in the Wind" *dramatizes contemporary political issues.*)
 - Aug 1963: participates in March on Washington, writes "The Times They Are a-Changin'"

Electrification and Rebellion, 1965-1975

- **DYLAN AS FOLK (Greenwich Villiage, 1962-1964)**
 - Dylan **resists** the "folk" tendency to Romanticize the past / yearn for authentic roots
 - reflects desire to explore "what is a poetry of sound" or a "rhythm of tonal breathing"
 - Rediscovering Woody Guthrie and 1930s "hobo" music, Dylan "remade" the folk music tradition for the 1960s
- **DYLAN ELECTRIFIES (Newport Folk Festival, 1965)**
 - Is Dylan's use of a rock ensemble a **departure** from folk, or a new episode in folk's consistent narrative?
 - Is Dylan a folk musician, or a poet who simply uses the music that best serves his poetry?