

"With Electric Breath": Bob Dylan and the Reimagining of Woody Guthrie (January 1968)

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In 1956, police in New Jersey apprehended Woody Guthrie on the presumption of vagrancy. Then in his mid-40s, Guthrie would spend the next (and last) eleven years of his life in various hospitals: Greystone Park in New Jersey, Brooklyn State Hospital, and, finally, the Creedmoor Psychiatric Center, where he died. Woody suffered since the late 1940s when the symptoms of Huntington's disease first appeared—symptoms that were often confused with alcoholism or mental instability. As Guthrie disappeared from public view in the late 1950s, 1,300 miles away, Bob Dylan was in Hibbing, Minnesota, learning to play doo-wop and Little Richard covers.¹ Young Dylan was about to have his career path illuminated after attending one of Buddy Holly's final shows. By the time Dylan reached New York in 1961, heavily under the influence of Woody's music, Guthrie had been hospitalized for almost five years and with his motor skills greatly deteriorated. This meeting between the still stylistically unformed Dylan and Woody—far removed from his 1940s heyday—had the makings of myth, regardless of the blurred details. Whatever transpired between them, the pilgrimage to Woody transfixed Dylan, and the young Minnesotan would go on to model his early career on the elder songwriter's legacy. More than any other of Woody's acolytes, Dylan grasped the totality of Guthrie's vision. Beyond mimicry (and Dylan carefully emulated Woody's accent, mannerisms, and poses), Dylan almost preternaturally understood the larger implication of Guthrie in ways that eluded other singers and writers at the time.² As his career took off, however, Dylan began to slough off the more obvious Guthrieisms as he moved towards his electric-charged poetry of 1965-1966. Woody's death came right as Dylan sought convalescence off the public stage. As Dylan reoriented his map in the 1960s with help from The Band, he was forced to grapple with the meaning, consequence, and deeply personal significance of Woody Guthrie. Guthrie died from complications of Huntington's disease on October 3, 1967.

In January 1968, Carnegie Hall vibrated with thunderous applause as Bob Dylan emerged from his self-imposed exile resplendent in a blue mohair suit and his abstract, capricious smile. Gone from the public eye since his motorcycle wreck in the summer of 1966, Dylan returned to the stage as part of a memorial to Woody Guthrie. Dylan's appearance had sparked curiosity and in the audience. "He was dead," Richard Goldstein wrote in his review of the tribute in *Vogue*, "or deranged, or he had never existed at all."³ With shorter hair and recent beard, Dylan stood as a testament to his health and vitality—he was *present*—as well as a statement as to his place within the folk cosmos.⁴ Backed by "The Crackers," the thankfully short-lived name preceding "The Band," Dylan tore through three Guthrie songs—"Grand

Coulee Dam," "Dear Mrs. Roosevelt," and "I Ain't Got No Home"—at the end of the first part of the show.⁵ These three songs served as Dylan's tribute to his departed one-time hero and his reintroduction to the spotlight. But at the same time, these songs represented something deeper as Dylan confronted his own career within the larger matrix of the legacy of Woody. At the crossroads musically as well as ideologically, the tribute concert signified much more than simply a celebration of Woody's life and career. As nostalgic as some of the trappings undoubtedly were, especially in terms of the Okie-driven script, Dylan's performance, anti-nostalgic in song selection and temperament, spoke purposefully to deeper and more pointed truths embedded in the metanarrative of Guthrie. Overall, the Woody Guthrie Tribute concert allows for an examination of Bob Dylan's connection to the man he referred to as his "last idol" as well as a look at the vectors of history and identity that crisscrossed through this performance, connecting the past to the present and reaching perhaps to a look at what was to come. With a show based around the platonic ideal of folk music, and perhaps even Woody himself, Dylan's performance broke apart preconceived notions of what a tribute even meant. Superficially succinct in its messaging, the Carnegie Hall tribute in January 1968 underscored the complicated matrix that shaped the meaning and significance of Bob Dylan, Woody Guthrie, and the cultural battleground of modern America.⁶

1961 was an important year for Bob Dylan. The nineteen-year-old Minnesotan first came to New York City that January and soon after made his way to the Guthrie home in Queens. From that first meeting, Dylan would be a frequent visitor to the ailing Guthrie, both to his home and at the hospital. Several months earlier, in the Fall of 1960, Dylan had read *Bound for Glory*, Guthrie's autobiography from 1943, and had become entranced by the power and vision of the Oklahoman's perspective on life and his adventures. Near that same time, a "red-haired spiritualist" handed Dylan a cache of Guthrie records. "It was like," Dylan recalled, "the record player itself had just picked me up and flung me across the room."⁷ Woody Guthrie emerged as the Ur-poet for the young man from Minnesota. Guthrie functioned as a guide, however remote, for Dylan, and the young poet quickly adopted many of Woody's mannerisms, accents, and clothing and began to learn as many songs as possible. Notwithstanding the restrained and amateurish Guthrie performances on his Minnesota tapes (recorded in May and December 1961), Dylan grew into his Guthrie posture. Based on Guthrie's "1913 Massacre," Dylan's first noteworthy composition, "Song to Woody," came together after months of obsessing over the songs and words and mannerisms of his new hero. Recorded in November 1961, "Song to Woody" served as the penultimate track on Dylan's debut record for Columbia.

A year and a half later, on April 12, 1963, Dylan ended his Town Hall concert with a recitation of "Last Thoughts on Woody Guthrie." Bootlegged repeatedly in the following years, the performance found official release in 1991. The poem, though, highlights the various ways in which Dylan interacted with the ideal of Woody. But at the same time, the poem highlights

a historical perspective that also connected the two poets and songwriters. Throughout the piece, Dylan reflects on his past (invented or otherwise) in what one biographer referred to as "a long evocation of old memories."⁸ Dylan and Woody shared a collagist's eye towards the past—and both poets routinely refracted their past through their present: Dylan, through his consistent reinvention of identity and music, and Guthrie, through his self-organizing of his lyrics (he would compile thematic portfolios of his older songs) as well as his annotating/re-annotating of lyrics. And yet, both writers tended to push hard against the pull of nostalgia. There is nothing nostalgic in Dylan's "Ain't there no one here that knows where I'm at / Ain't there no one here that knows how I feel / Good God Almighty, that stuff ain't real," just as there is nothing nostalgic about Woody's songs. The optimism at the heart of Dylan's poem also speaks to the vastness of Woody's legacy and Dylan's paean to hopefulness came at important juncture both personally (as Dylan was just stepping into a national position) and culturally (Martin Luther King, Jr.'s *Letter from a Birmingham Jail* would be written that month and published later that year).⁹ This optimistic, anti-nostalgic perspective of the world served Dylan well.

The idea of Woody and the idea of Bob Dylan had long been entwined. Woody gave Dylan an identity, a mask to wear, something to hang onto.¹⁰ One aspect of songwriting (and identity-building) that Dylan learned from Woody—instinctually or otherwise—related to the breadth of writing in which Guthrie engaged. Guthrie wrote about politics—sometimes straight on, often from a sidewise perspective—and Okies and the Dust Bowl; but he also wrote about Harriet Tubman, Eleanor Roosevelt, his friends and family, big things, small things, hydroelectricity, and UFOs. Still, Woody would often be typecast as a protest singer, even by those musicians closest to him. Partly due to his own constructed persona, Woody's extensive range as a poet and a songwriter often was eclipsed by the more pressworthy exploits of the Okie drifter. As young Dylan came to perfect his Guthrie routine—learning as many of his songs as available, adapting a nasal twang, posing in work shirt and perfectly-angled guitar—he, too, began to develop an identity that blurred the lines between truth and fiction, authenticity and storytelling. Guthrie provided Dylan cover as he developed as a musician, though in similar ways as his mystical mentor, Dylan soon found the boundaries constraining. Woody had become a bit of a trap, and Dylan tired of the continued insistence to play someone else's game. The expectation to be Woody, or at least a working facsimile of a very particular version of Woody, proved limiting to Dylan, who soon felt the need to challenge the norms established by the folk revivalists. He even stopped visiting the ailing songwriter at some point.¹¹ With calls of apostasy from the folk elites, Dylan broke from the expected path of traditionalism and towards his amphetamine-fueled deconstruction of the American songbook in 1965-1966. With a glint of sunlight and hastily mashed brakes, this path came to an end with Dylan's motorcycle crash outside of Woodstock, NY, at the end of July 1966.¹²

Much has been theorized about the Triumph crash. Was it a ploy to escape tour commitments? Was it a move to escape and get off the drugs that had fueled so much of the 1965-66 tours? Was it a way to just jettison everything and reconnect to his wife Sara? At any rate, nursing a considerable injury, Dylan holed up at his physician's house and convalesced in a helpful waystation for the burned-out musician. The major outcome of this period of recuperation and reflection (broadly defined) was the dozens of recordings made by Dylan, accompanied by Robbie Robertson, Garth Hudson, Richard Manuel, Rick Danko, and (sporadically) Levon Helm. As they convened at various houses throughout 1967, this group of young men (Hudson, the oldest, at 30; Manuel and Danko in their early 20s; and Dylan at 26) collaborated with perhaps unclear objectives on a collection of songs that came to define the myth and magic of Dylan's life off the road. The Basement Tapes, as they collectively became known regardless of recorded provenance, cohered to a sound just as unique and striking in its power as Dylan's thin, wild mercury sound of 1966. This homemade laboratory of experimental sounds allowed Dylan to try out new songs with less conventional lyrics and structures. At the same time, these recordings conformed to a unique sound built around Dylan's (moderately in tune) twelve-string acoustic guitar and a rotating group of instrumentalists picking up drums sometimes or singing a verse here and there. The casual nature of the recordings belies the thoughtfulness of a large number of these songs. Free from expectation—of audience, of self—Dylan permitted a winding path towards a lyric and a song, which allowed for the loosest set of consistently engaged material of his career. These sessions would serve as the unintentional foundation for the next phase of his musical career.

On October 3, 1967, Woodrow Wilson Guthrie died at the Creedmoor Psychiatric Center located in Queens, New York, at the age of 55. News traveled quickly to Dylan, still in the Hudson Valley. Though direct references to Dylan's thoughts and actions during this period are infrequent, it is clear that Guthrie's death cast a shadow over much of Dylan's known work during these months. Between October 1967 and January 1968, Dylan seemed to dig into the Woody-centered past through songs such as "I Dreamed I Saw St. Augustine" (composed directly after Guthrie's death), the excavation of older folk songs in the final sessions for the Basement Tapes, and most clearly with his participation in the concert at Carnegie Hall. These moments help show the depth of Dylan's appreciation of Guthrie as well as his journey into the past. Never very nostalgic, Dylan seems to have used the death of his idol to drive him into a reflective period of looking backward, and the image of Woody flits around the edges of so much of his work during these years. Dylan's turn towards a stripped-down record, *John Wesley Harding* (1967), and a country-infused collection, *Nashville Skyline* (1969), emerge from this period of reflection; but Dylan's turn towards a more country-folk sound (and his Nashville croon) extended well into the early 1970s. From *Self Portrait* and *New Morning* (both 1970), a second greatest hits package released in 1971 (which incorporated some of the Basement

Tapes material), through the soundtrack to *Pat Garrett and Billy the Kid* and *Dylan* (both 1973), Dylan mined a relatively new strain of songwriting. This line of records from 1967-1973 combined cover songs and unreleased older songs with new material seemingly focused on creative challenges ("Watching the River Flow" and "When I Paint My Masterpiece," both released on *Greatest Hits, Vol. II*). As Dylan reflected on the passing of Guthrie, in other words, he seemed to enter into a distinctive phase of songwriting.

Two weeks after Guthrie's death, Dylan boarded a train for Tennessee. Having spent much of the summer writing and recording dozens of songs, Dylan abruptly moved to record his follow-up to *Blonde on Blonde*. At some point in September 1967, producer Bob Johnston visited Dylan in Woodstock, where he heard or at least discussed new music for a new record. It is unclear as to when Dylan wrote many of the songs that appeared on *John Wesley Harding*, but it is generally believed that at least two of the songs were composed en route to Nashville. The first session for the record took place on October 17th, just two weeks after Woody's death. In three hours, Dylan, Charlie McCoy (bass), and Kenneth Buttrey (drums) ran through three songs: "Drifter's Escape," "I Dreamed I Saw St. Augustine," and "The Ballad of Frankie Lee and Judas Priest." The second song, of which four takes exist, is central to the Woody story, however, and Dylan apparently wrote "St. Augustine" in the days after Guthrie's death—or even perhaps the hours immediately preceding to the session. Based musically on Woody's "Ludlow Massacre" and incorporating lyrics and allusions to the labor anthem "The Ballad of Joe Hill," "I Dreamed of St. Augustine" emerges as Dylan's eulogy to the recently departed folksinger. In all, that entire session could be read through this perspective, too, with the drifter iconography in the first song and even the sympathetic portrayal of people outside of the law in the last. It would make sense that Woody's life and music would filter back into Dylan's world during these weeks, and his music reflects this contemplation.

The concert that would become the Woody Guthrie Tribute began as a roughly formed idea for a fundraiser for Huntington's disease. Essential to these talks and plans were the two most significant people to the building of Woody Guthrie's legacy: Marjorie Mazia Guthrie, his ex-wife who reentered his life as a caretaker as his body began to weaken, and Harold Leventhal, a liberal activist who had represented the Weavers in the 1950s as well as promoting several high-profile concerts in the 1960s. Together, Guthrie and Leventhal worked to reconfigure the show as a multi-act tribute to Woody. One of the many mysteries of this period (in conjunction with the chronology of the recording of the Basement Tapes) relates to Dylan's plans for the memorial show. Perhaps because of the surprise nature of his appearance to the public, commentators tend to see Dylan's arrival at Carnegie Hall to be somewhat of a last-minute arrangement, or that The Band was thrown together quickly, or that he would have performed some of his own material (there is a tantalizing hypothesis that he wanted to play "Blowing in the Wind," since he ran through it with The Band late in the Basement Tape

recordings). But in reality, Dylan had committed to the concert early and had transmitted his intentions long before the show. In a letter dated October 30th, 1967, for example, Harold Leventhal, Woody's manager and general business caretaker, wrote Dylan to confirm information in an earlier phone call. "As a follow-up to our telephone conversation the other day," Leventhal writes, "we would appreciate your holding the date of SATURDAY, JANUARY 20th, Carnegie Hall, for the TRIBUTE TO WOODY GUTHRIE." The concert planning was still in its infancy (and Woody had only died several weeks earlier), but Leventhal made clear that it would be two performances ("one at 3:00 pm which will most likely bring in the family crowd and the other at 8:40 pm") and that the format and performer list remained unresolved.¹³ Thus, with a vague "the other day" as a calendar guide, Leventhal asked for Dylan's participation, perhaps in the last week of October 1967. Dylan, regardless of the particulars, was in.

In terms of The Band and the set list, as early as the late November 1967, Harold Leventhal, in a letter to Albert Grossman, knew Dylan was committed to the show, that he was going to "sing with the backing of his small group," and that "he was working on three of Woody's songs."¹⁴ The contract between Dylan and Leventhal, inked in January, further shows that Dylan had arranged for The Band to accompany him, though Robbie Robertson and the other musicians would only receive double scale for their performance (Dylan would forego payment with Leventhal covering his hotel and city transportation needs.) Grossman demanded, too, that "no other performer will receive more favorable treatment or more prominent billing or credit than Mr. Dylan in connection with the advertising, promoting and exploiting of the two concerts hereunder." A look at the archived stage notes further illustrates a couple of interesting points. For one, Dylan's set was arranged fairly early on, as his songs (though with abbreviated titles) are printed along with the rest of the script and performers' notes. His trio of songs, too, were printed in the program, so Harold Leventhal must have had the song selections at some point in advance of the show. Dylan's role in the show, however, was not quite established, as he is penciled in during the group-sing of "This Train." Overall, despite some late changes and additions to the scripted material, Dylan knew what he wanted to do six weeks out from the show and was committed to doing something just after Woody died.

Politically motivated as he was, Woody escaped much of the conservative backlash of the 1950s. Partly due to his illness, as Sean Wilentz notes, Woody simply was not present. His songs floated through, of course, in his voice as well as many, many others. His illness and absence spared Woody the blacklist, but it also created a void. By the 1960s, when a teenaged Bob Dylan found his way into *Bound for Glory*, Woody was already mythic, perhaps even more fiction than fact; a shadow that drifted across folk consciousness for those born too young to travel with Woody in his prime. The zenith of the folk revival in the late 1950s and early 1960s gave form to the vapor; but just a dozen years from his prime, Woody seemed like he'd come from the distant past, or from no past. Dylan's particular take on Woody

(as idol, as imitator, as mask, as jukebox) arrived at the exact time in which it could work in two ways by connecting to Guthrie’s cohort as a reminder of the power and vitality of the living ghost, as well as by communicating Woody’s grand folk tapestry to new, younger audiences. His electric transgressions in 1965 spoke as much to losing Woody a second time as to any objective stylistic charge—for people like Pete Seeger, Woody had vanished a second time. But Dylan also never played it straight. Woody was never just a one-dimensional political writer and Dylan was shaped as much by the variety of the songs and topics than anything else (Guthrie’s songs, he noted, “had the infinite sweep of humanity in them”); and one could sense the claustrophobic boundaries that the folk leadership proscribed around Woody as well as Dylan (and Dylan’s version of Woody).¹⁵ Woody’s death came right as Dylan was in the midst of reorienting his music and direction. In 1967, as the pop world turned towards psychedelic maximalism, Dylan zagged into a sepia-toned landscape of fractured parables that lacked easy lessons or resolutions. Dylan alone could speak to the meaningfulness of Woody in all of its thorny relevance, and his return to the stage in January 1968 stood as a reminder to Woody’s dignity, authority, and influence.

With guitar amplifiers and a drum set belying any acoustic austerity—“all that Fender shit behind Pete Seeger (poetic justice) belonged to Bobby”¹⁶—the stage at Carnegie Hall hinted at the presence that had brought in a younger crowd than would normally be expected for a tribute to a folksinger who had been out of the public eye since the mid-1950s. After an opening act that featured Pete Seeger serving as the center for a caravan of folksingers new and old, as well as Woody’s own words dispersed through a soft-focus narrative, Bob Dylan, Rick Danko, Levon Helm, Garth Hudson, Richard Manuel, and Robbie Robertson took the stage looking like riverboat modernists: simultaneously of no particular time and completely of the now, a blur of 1868 and 1968. With an undecided strum and a firm bass groove, the group launches into “The Grand Coulee Dam” with an audible pleasure.¹⁷ Dylan, in fine voice, enunciates firmly yet playfully. Dylan glides through the song with an urgency stemming not necessarily through nerves, but perhaps from an insistence on defining this particular moment. The Band show their cards, too, with Manuel’s saloon piano playing off of Hudson’s organ, Danko and Helm locked into their bass and drum telepathy, and Robertson floating above with steely bite. With backing vocals locked together in ramshackle glee, they sound as one—even if, as Garth Hudson recalled, they worked out the arrangement in just one or two rehearsals “maybe in the green room” and that he just hoped he knew the chords.¹⁸

Opening a set in 1968 with a propaganda song about federally-funded hydroelectricity, Dylan upended expectations in any number of ways.¹⁹ Woody’s “Grand Coulee Dam” was based on the melody of “Wabash Cannonball,” about the train that rode the Rock Island Route/Line. As early as the 1880s, a song titled “Rock Island Line” had existed, but with lyrics that later became connected to “Wabash Cannonball”. The Carter Family recorded “Wabash Cannonball” in 1929, which is probably the recording that

Woody had first heard. The other song, "Rock Island Line," emerged as a prison yard/work song and later became a huge hit in 1953 for Lonnie Donegan. Donegan's version set off the skiffle craze, which led young English students such as John Lennon and Paul McCartney to first pick up instruments in Liverpool. Closing the circle of influences, in 1958, Donegan recorded Woody's "Grand Coulee Dam" for the British television show *Six-Five Special*, which repopularized that song—and it is perhaps this version of the song that Dylan first heard.²⁰

Guthrie took the melody from a song about trains via the Carter Family, but the literal inspiration for the song came from a gig offered through the Bonneville Power Administration. Woody, though the encouragement of Pete Seeger, traveled north from Los Angeles to the Columbia River in the Pacific Northwest. In roughly a month, Woody traveled the area and toured the construction of the Grand Coulee Dam.²¹ Twenty-six songs emerged from this excursion, including songs that would forever connect to the songwriter such as "Roll On, Columbia," "Pastures of Plenty," "Ramblin' Round," and "Hard Travelin'." Recorded in Portland, Oregon, in May 1941, these songs became part of the *Columbia River Collection*, released later that year. Born out of the politics of the New Deal, Woody's "Grand Coulee Dam" speaks to the drive for industrialism in the last years of the Depression before the United States entered World War II. Filled with poetry—"in the misty crystal glitter of that wild and windward spray"—as well as the specifics of a government-funded documentary—"making chrome and making manganese and light aluminum"—Guthrie's composition illustrated the multiple entanglements of progress. Dylan's version plays it without irony, but it remains intriguing to hear him sing about the making of war machines in 1968, and the take tends to reconsider the grandeur of the song's subject. Less a paean to industrial might as it is to the power and dignity of Woody's poetic voice, "Grand Coulee Dam" in Dylan's hands touches on the past while simultaneously digging into the spectral center of the song. Dylan could have seen his own past in this song, too, as he grew up near the Mesabi Iron Range, where extractive industries fueled industrial development.²² In an anthology of ten of his songs, Guthrie wrote on the meaning behind this song. "If you ever want to build a house or light up a town, or bring the people power," Guthrie wrote, "the secret is this: Sing about your people, not about your millionaire play folks." The wealthy and the elite, Guthrie charged, wanted to deny electricity, and by extent power—electrical, political, social—from the people since, they claimed, it would "take too much work and materials and would make the wheel run entirely too nice and light up the country entirely too bright." At the heart of "Grand Coulee Dam," then, remains the leftist ideals and the promise to put "fonies back in their place."²³

Before the crowd's applause ebbed, the band moved into a country shuffle, with Manual channeling country-pop radio. In notebooks from this period (1967-68), Dylan jotted down a number of current country music records that he either admired or in which he was somehow interested. Records such as Ferlin Huskey's "Just For You" (noted twice), Floyd

Cramer's "Gentle on My Mind," and Webb Pierce's "Won't Somebody Please" highlight a path towards a particular taste in country music; but these notations more generally illustrate Dylan's aural soundtrack as he moved from the Basement Tapes to Carnegie Hall to *Nashville Skyline*.²⁴ "Dear Mrs. Roosevelt" was the most left-field cut of the show, not least because Woody himself had never recorded the song. An insider's joke, perhaps, but Dylan recognized something in his lyrics that others could not see. "Dear Mrs. Roosevelt" was different. Written by Woody after the death of FDR in 1945, the song functions as a retelling of Roosevelt's life. He was "born in a money family on that Hudson's rocky shore," Woody begins, and then proceeds to chronicle his political career in the Senate and getting specific in terms of Stalin, Churchill, Nazis, and fascists. It ends, however, with: "I guess this world was lucky just to see him born." Dylan seems to have captured the song's sentiment from this final point and the song in his hands constitutes a telling tribute to Woody. Dylan's selectivity is key here, too, as he navigates his way around a number of deleted verses. Gone are the references to Hyde Park—he cuts the second verse—and gone are the references to the war, as those four verses disappear, too. Unsurprisingly, Guthrie's laudatory verse to Stalin is also cut. Dylan chooses to keep "I was a GI in my army camp that day he passed away," placing himself in Woody's uniform. It is another political song, and yet Dylan has slyly recrafted it to reflect his admiration for a completely different statesman—the politics of the personal trumps any presidential narrative and, as Woody mourned a leader, Dylan said goodbye to a friend and mentor. Tim Riley connects this performance to counter-cultural concerns. "In his own songs," Riley argues, "Dylan avoided sentimentality as old school. Here, his Guthrie tribute glanced at politics only through scathing omission."²⁵

The manuscript of "Dear Mrs. Roosevelt" appears in one of Guthrie's notebooks where he collected and collated some of his lyrics. The original lyrics appear on a piece of paper taped into a notebook with ruled pages. Woody included the song, dated "January 30, 1948, Coney Island, Brooklyn, 24, New York," in a collection he titled "Book #1 Union Labor Songs."²⁶ Guthrie routinely collected his lyrics in various notebooks that he would organize by theme (sometimes pretty specific, sometimes fairly broad). This particular notebook dates to 1953 and features an epigraph dedicated to Harriet Tubman. "You deserve," Woody writes directly to Tubman ("Dear Harriet," he begins), "five or six dozen purple hearts and I'm striking[] out right now to see that you get them....going right on and working and fighting till we kill that old snake of slavery that you and your breed and your seed and your creed and your kind crippled as bad as you've crippled it." The juxtaposition between Eleanor Roosevelt and Harriet Tubman allows for multiple interpretations, especially as Guthrie saw Tubman as a symbol of sorts for this particular collection of lyrics. The treatment of "Dear Mrs. Roosevelt" coheres to Woody's general pattern of self-anthologizing and his revisiting of lyrics. He continually returned to his manuscripts to scrawl notes of inspiration or dating, or to tape them into new assemblages, or to adorn

them with splashes of watercolor. In effect, Guthrie served as his own historian and repeatedly went back to older songs to reformat, reassess, and reconsider their meaning and context. "Dear Mrs. Roosevelt," then, meant something to Guthrie, even as he left no recording. Dylan, too, found meaning in the lines and appropriated them into a modulating shuffle, with the roughhewn harmonies of Manual and Danko providing part mournful wail, part Greek chorus, and part brotherly compassion. The vocals take precedence here and the easy harmonizing that characterized so much of the Basement Tapes comes across as the status quo. No one in the audience, and perhaps only a handful of people backstage, knew of the vast repertoire Dylan and The Band had fashioned; but through "Dear Mrs. Roosevelt," Dylan was telegraphing much of what they had built out in the Catskills.

The final song, "I Ain't Got No Home," brought everything full circle. Closing out the eulogic arc, this song floats along the visceral lead lines of Robertson as Dylan sings of rambling, roaming, gambling, and working. Basing it on the old gospel song known variously as "Can't Feel at Home" or "I Don't Feel at Home in This World Anymore"—a version of which was recorded by the Carter Family in 1931—Guthrie wrote his song in response to the Carter version in an attempt to capture more effectively the life of the Dust Bowl refugees. Guthrie composed the song in Los Angeles in 1938 and returned to it multiple times, noting on one manuscript that the piece was "rewritten" in March 1940 in New York City.²⁷ Guthrie biographer Joe Klein notes that Woody disliked the message of the original song and saw in it a weakness. "There was something about that song that bothered Woody," Klein writes. "It was a mild annoyance at first, but it developed into a grating, pulsing anger as the weeks passed and he couldn't wipe either the tune or the idea from his mind." "He was beginning to understand," Klein argues, "that the effect of this song was to tell the migrants to wait, and be meek, and be rewarded in the next life." The religious tenor of the song, in other words, tended to lead towards complacency and acceptance rather than radical action. "It was telling them," Klein writes, "not to strike, and not to fight back. He was outraged by the idea that such an innocent sounding song could be so insidious."²⁸ One typed version of this manuscript includes Woody's comment that "this old song to start out was a religious piece called 'I Can't Feel At Home In This World Any More.' But I seen there was another side of the picture." "Reason why you can't feel at home in this world any more," Guthrie maintains, "is mostly because you aint got no home to feel at." Much like his reaction to Irving Berlin's "God Bless America," which led him to compose "This Land is Your Land," Woody responded strongly to songs that seemed to remove the voice or activism or power from the people.

In September 1940, Guthrie composed a brief handwritten essay of sorts on the back of one typed manuscript of "I Ain't Got No Home." "You might not think it's such a pretty song," Guthrie notes. "Some folks don't think that the old dust bowl is pretty but it looks good to me. There's a chance for you to go down there and go to work and fix it up again and that's something pretty." In this brief annotation, Guthrie goes on to discuss the nature of

beauty, activism, and the importance of perspective. “I’ve seen people,” he writes, “that said the Arizona desert was ugly—but there aint no ugly scenery in the world its all how you look or listen to it. You see and hear on the outside just what you got on the inside.” He also emphasizes the everyday particulars of the Dust Bowl that are neglected by the media. “We got the blowed awayest clothes made,” he argues, but it is “not so much the other states fault they manufactured good clothes and they are well made but they just don’t gamble or figure on any such wind . . . we got in the dust country.” “You make a dress or a suit,” Guthrie writes, “to sell and wear up and down the street in the other states and when you step out and try the same thing in the dustbowl you’ll find your [duds] blow plum off or get so twisted up around your head you caint eat for a week and you don’t know what a shock this is to a young lady that aint never been to Hollywood or New York—you see the people in the dust bowl has been taught to wear clothes and work and New York and Hollywood work mostly without either.” This composition clearly connected deeply to Guthrie as it reverberates across his most central vectors of identity. Dylan, too, related to the themes embedded in this particular song, seeing in it perhaps the same call to arms against complacency that drove him to write in the first place. “I wrote this song from what I actually saw,” Guthrie concludes, “and if you don’t believe it you just go see—if you want to see—but don’t let me wake you up.”²⁹

Dylan was drawn to this piece early on in his career, and a comparison of this performance with an earlier one goes a long way towards illustrating Dylan’s path with Woody as well as his general musical evolution. Dylan first documented a version of “I Ain’t Got No Home” back in 1961, just as he was solidifying his Woody mask. Part of what is known as the “Minnesota Hotel Tape,” this version is part of more than two dozen songs that Dylan recorded at Bonnie Beecher’s house in Minneapolis on December 22, 1961.³⁰ Most of the material is traditional and relates to his first record for Columbia, and as he also incorporates six Woody Guthrie numbers it offers a good snapshot of the types of songwriting that first spoke to Dylan. The 1961 version of “I Ain’t Got No Home” features the acoustic strumming, harmonica breaks, and the adopted Woody voice as Dylan runs through three verses of the song (he omits verses three and four, saying later that “I left out a verse and I can’t remember that one verse”). It is a good version, yet one tied directly to Woody’s identity. Dylan, of course, could have come out in 1968 and performed that song as he had in 1961 (and that was perhaps even the expectation). But by 1968, Dylan no longer needed the posture, or at least not that posture. The words remained the same, even if Dylan once again played with the structure by omitting verses two, three, and four (he sings the first verse then the third verse before repeating verse one and ending with verse five). From the acoustic coffeehouses in 1961, when he began to fashion a career based upon the idealized footsteps of Guthrie, to the stage of Carnegie Hall, Dylan reached into this song as a reflection of both his closeness to the spirit of Woody and an illustration of the miles he had

traveled—physically, musically, emotionally, and metaphorically—since he first appeared at the Guthrie family residence.

Overall, the three-song tribute—featuring a federally-funded dam, a grieving First Lady, and a drifting rambler—as curated by Dylan outlined the various elements of Guthrie's music and life that came to influence him, and brought these images together in tribute to a multifaceted and complicated poet and singer: Woody the democrat (small-d as well as capital-D), Woody the historian, Woody the rambler, Woody the American, Woody the icon, Woody the "last icon." Dylan refracted each of these different components of Guthrie out into Carnegie Hall. A marker to the past, the concert also provided Dylan space to reclaim his position within the folk elite as well as the public eye. But the concert reflected a period of transition, too. Coming at the end of the Basement Tapes era—Sean Wilentz refers to the concert as a "coda" of sorts to those proceedings—and in the middle his "country music" period, this performance stands as a testament to the musical searching Dylan undertook in 1967 and 1968. Off the pop radar, Dylan quietly reframed his connection to his voice, to his songwriting, and to his identity as a performer. Guthrie had afforded Dylan the necessary persona to claim entry into the folk world back in 1961. Seven years later, almost to the day, Dylan returned to the city to eulogize Woody in a manner that again permitted him to reorient his musical identity and role in a new way.³¹ After the concert, Dylan joined most of the performers at actor Robert Ryan's apartment in the Dakota Building. Then he disappeared once again into the sheltered seclusion of the Catskills.

The critical reaction to the show illustrates the various tensions that undercut it, or at least the potential fault lines coursing through the metanarrative of Dylan and the folk revival in the late 1960s. Novelist Eli Jaffe noted Dylan's transition: "Bob Dylan was there, no longer blowin' in the wind a-changin' the times with solitary Martin and Hohner." But, Jaffe insisted, "Dylan was doing his 'thing' and Woody was always on the side of the people who did their 'thing' (provided their 'thing' was on the side of the people)."³² David Dashey, writing for the Los Angeles *Free Press*, argued that Dylan's performance had demonstrated the chasms present within the folk community (and even between artist and audience). Partly due to Dylan's well-worn enigmatic façade, Dashey pursued the psychologically unknowable. "He chose a style," Dashey writes, "that was an electrified country-western, with a touch of poignant integrity that assumed a degree of pathos coming from a silk suited, tieless, bleary eyed question mark." Dashey picks up on the incalculable distance between acolyte and idol, between performer and audience, between Dylan and the song, as it played out in real time at Carnegie Hall: "He seemed determined not to let the benefit degenerate into a homecoming party for himself and I could not help but feel a magnificent solitude in his presence."³³

But Dashey also intuited a certain frostiness (real or imagined) between the folk elite and Dylan: "The disdainful Dylan seemed to be saying 'fuck all of you in that Carnegie Hall audience, I'll talk to Woody the way I want to'."

The second half of the statement undoubtedly true, Dashey got to the unspoken query of the event: would Woody's complicated folk family cohere behind a unified purpose or would lingering divisions threaten the seams of the evening? Listening to the recordings of that night, it is difficult to discern any animosity on stage or in the audience, but Dashey and others intimated at the possible cross-purposes at play beneath the adulation and applause. "I remember," writes Rick Robbins, "The Band being so far ahead of their time in terms of their sound that a lot of people didn't get it in the beginning, they really didn't get it." "I'm not sure if the audience there that night at Carnegie was ready for the rock and roll sound," Robbins noted, "because it was Woody Guthrie. You think Woody Guthrie, you think guitars and fiddles, and acoustic stuff. So it was not like Bob took out his acoustic and started playing Woody songs."³⁴ Richard Goldstein, who wrote approvingly of Dylan's set, nonetheless perceived the ways in which Dylan created his own gravitational pull. "Though the audience at Carnegie Hall felt a genuine respect for Woody Guthrie," Goldstein pointed out, "most of them had come to see the 1968 Dylan."³⁵ Dashey went further, however, noting the disconnect between the audience and the intended subject. "As I left the hall," Dashey writes, "with the sound of 'This Land Is Your Land' sitting like a saccharine doughnut in my stomach, listening to the teenies talking about Dylan's beard, I was happy that a picture of Woody had been flashed on a screen so that the Now Generation might at least know what he looked like."³⁶

Not all the response was positive. Phil Ochs, in particular, felt personally insulted by his lack of inclusion. In an interview for *Broadside* published after his suicide in 1976, Ochs spoke openly about "his bitterness about being excluded" from the concert. Compounding Ochs's indignation was his thorny relationship with Dylan. "I had to look at Dylan," Ochs said, "I just had to see him since I hadn't seen him for, oh, since I had the fight [Dylan had ejected Ochs from his limousine in the mid-1960s] and I had to look at him just to see what he looked like." "So I went there," Ochs continued, "and I saw Dylan, and as I sat there watching the concert I was writhing in my seat, I was, like, clutching myself. I was swearing... 'oh, fuck you!'"³⁷ Likewise, Ramblin' Jack Elliott also felt jilted by the organizers—though he would manage to appear on stage after talking with Leventhal.³⁸ Izzy Young, who owned the Folklore Center on MacDougal Street in Greenwich Village and was an important early influence on Dylan, expressed disappointment and resentment after allegedly witnessing Pete Seeger teaching "several performers" Woody Guthrie songs. Overall, regardless of the high points (and Young, in particular, thought that "Dear Mrs. Roosevelt" was "the best song on the program), there existed a strain of disappointment at the general, at times maudlin, tenor of the show as well as the selected performers.³⁹ "I don't think Woody Guthrie would have been invited to the Woody Guthrie Memorial," Ochs argued, "because he would have been out of place, you know, because, there were all these performers, and there were all these managers lurking backstage, and 'lurking' is the word, where everybody, everybody seemed to be taking advantage and here was a man who had

suffered for years”⁴⁰ The editors of *Broadside* noted that “there was some feeling that Woody himself might have walked out on the whole proceedings, in the sense that the ESTABLISHMENT, which he had resisted with all his strength while he was able, took him over when he was dead and couldn’t do a thing about it.”⁴¹ The multiplicity of perspectives on Woody’s legacy—the folksinger, the political writer, the Dust Bowl balladeer, the poet, the comic, the “freak weirdo”—created tensions as much as coherence.⁴² In addition, the ease in which sectors of the folk world literati adhered to dogmatic definitions of what was acceptable in terms of music and instrumentation helped draw strict borders between artists. Despite the drama, perceived or otherwise, Dylan’s performance helped focus the proceedings on the larger metanarrative of Woody’s life and music.

But Dylan’s set, though, also highlighted Dylan’s life and music. The energy of his singing and the emotional starfield at the center of those three songs underscored Dylan’s survivor status. He was celebrating Woody, to be sure, but also celebrating his own life and his endurance through the tortuous tours of the mid-1960s. While perhaps reaffirming Dylan’s health and vitality, there was something else going on that imbued the show with an air of transition. As Australian music critic/journalist, Lillian Roxon, wrote: “His once huge head of hair now neatly shorn, his face tight and tanned and altered ... by a whole new expression, not the familiar one of rebellion and confusion, but one of peace and tranquility.”⁴³ The energy of his performance certainly allowed for a rousing sendoff to Woody, but there was also the feeling that Dylan was also saying goodbye to a Woody’s shadow on his career. He was saying, “This is my guy, but I’m heading off into a new direction.” Devoid of any hint of nostalgia or false sentiment, Dylan’s 1968 performance serves as a touching tribute to a hero; a coy reminder that Woody was larger than any particular political slogan; but also a subtle goodbye, a tip of the hat to the icon who had served him so well in the past. Dylan would not completely jettison Woody—he concluded a number of concerts on the Rolling Thunder tour with “This Land Is Your Land”—but he was on a different path at this point and his map was no longer oriented towards the Rambler.

Dylan spent much of 1969 again out of the public eye. In February, he recorded *Nashville Skyline*, his follow-up to *John Wesley Harding*. Still, on July 14th, he joined The Band for a one-off gig at Southern Illinois University in Edwardsville. After The Band’s main set, Dylan joined the group (a “cowboyish figure in brown shirt, pants, and boots”) for an encore performance including a version of “I Ain’t Got No Home.”⁴⁴ No recordings have surfaced, though the Guthrie number undoubtedly sounded similar to the Carnegie Hall show. According to a brief *Rolling Stone* review, Dylan’s voice was “still *Nashville-Skylined*.” Finally, in August, Dylan put together his first full-scale concert at the Isle of Wight Festival. Backed again by The Band, this entire show was cut from a similar cloth as the Carnegie Hall and Edwardsville shows, blending material from *Nashville Skyline* and *John Wesley Harding* with many of Dylan’s older tunes. The Woody songs were

jettisoned, but the sound remained (he did play “I Dreamed I Saw St. Augustine” as well as a version of “Wild Mountain Thyme”). Dylan did not stay on this path long, of course, and he veered right and left once he reconvened The Band for a tour in 1974. But within the timbre and spirit of these performances one can make out the echoes and reverberations of the past as well as the faint scrapings of a map to what was to come. In the immediate future, the music marked a step towards the Rolling Thunder Revue shows of 1975-76, which saw Dylan reunited with Joan Baez and included Ramblin’ Jack Elliott, Allen Ginsburg, and Roger McGuinn. These caravanesque shows boasted a rejuvenated Dylan willing to take risks on stage and developing new arrangements for older material. Woody Guthrie’s legacy hung over this experiment, too, as “This Land Is Your Land” closed out many of the concerts. From the second show in Plymouth, Massachusetts, on October 31, 1975 through the final show of the first leg at Madison Square Garden on December 8, 1975, Dylan closed thirty shows with Woody’s anthem.⁴⁵ These shows proved that Woody still played a role in Dylan’s world, and a line of sorts could be drawn in terms of personnel and repertoire between 1966 (when he left the public stage) and 1976 (when he began to tour again regularly).

The Carnegie Hall concert remains a rather enigmatic chapter in Dylan’s career: just three songs performed in memory of a mentor, but this set essentially reaches backwards into Dylan’s past, touching on both personal and musical vectors of memory as well as reaching forward as a template for a unique sound that he would revisit occasionally—and which would have a sonic impact on numerous musicians down the road. In some ways, the Carnegie show set the archetype for the alternative country music of the 1990s (not to be confused with the country rock explosion of the 1970s), as bands such as Uncle Tupelo—and later Wilco—mined an analogous vein of music at once traditional in terms of subject and instrumentation and postmodern in its rejection of the dogmas of authenticity. “Dylan paid tribute to Woody Guthrie,” Richard Goldstein maintained, “by making his songs musically relevant. With stomping rhythms and shrieking harmonies, he infused ‘Grand Coulee’ with electric breath.” “It was a moving homage,” Goldstein argued, “and nobody stopped to wonder whether it was real folk music.”⁴⁶ In time, out of time, Dylan stepped onto the stage of Carnegie Hall to issue a reminder of the power and relevance of Woody’s voice-- a prophetic genre-bent shot across the bow to assert a vision of mentor and a concept of self. Dylan used this venue and these three Guthrie songs to (re)define his place within the music world. By looking backwards to his indebtedness to Woody he allowed for space to consider new directions. Responding to the music in 2018, historian Sean Wilentz writes that “even as the recordings of the Guthrie tribute concerts strongly evoke Dust Bowl-era dissent, they also affirm basic and lasting continuities with all that came after, in the compassion and irreverent wit and contempt for privilege in Woody’s songs, as rousing today as they were in the 1930s and 1940s.”⁴⁷ It is difficult to draw a line connecting the music he conjured in West Saugerties with The

Band to *John Wesley Harding* and *Nashville Skyline* and beyond, but the Guthrie Tribute makes a convincing case as a magnetic midpoint. Combining the folk ethos of Woody to the country-blues underpinnings of his early career, the soulful, bounding leap of his most electric Dada period, and the Nashville grooves of the late 1960s and early 1970s, the Carnegie Hall performances signify Dylan's eulogy as well as his plotline to the future. Through the lens of his emotionally relevant, postmodern requiems, Dylan surveyed the past, maintained a fixed stance in the present, and reconnoitered the future. Woody, with his blend of steadfastness as well as inventiveness, his historical mindedness as well as his impatience for something brighter and better, could demand no finer acclamation of spirit or intent.

NOTES

¹ "I'm out here," Dylan sings in his major statement on Woody's influence, "a thousand miles from my home." Bob Dylan, "Song to Woody," *Bob Dylan* (Columbia, 1962).

² "Dylan was, in short, a Woody Guthrie clone in the early 1960s." Robert Santelli and Emily Davidson, *Hard Travelin': The Life and Legacy of Woody Guthrie* (Hanover: Wesleyan University Press, 1999), 49.

³ Richard Goldstein, review of Guthrie tribute concert, *Vogue*, March 15, 1968, n.p.

⁴ "He bore an uncanny resemblance to Che Guevara's corpse." Richard Goldstein, review, *Vogue*, March 15, 1968, n.p.

⁵ The group included Rick Danko (bass), Levon Helm (drums), Garth Hudson (organ), Richard Manuel (piano), and Robbie Robertson (guitar). This group worked and toured with Dylan throughout 1965-1966, with and sometimes without Helm. Before settling on "The Band," band names came and went during this period, but the group is listed in Dylan's contract simply as "his sideman (five persons)." See also, Robbie Robertson, *Testimony* (New York: Three Rivers Press, 2016), 303.

⁶ In the twenty-six months between Newport and Guthrie's death in October 1967, Dylan managed to release two of the most profoundly important records of the rock era; conduct an infamous world tour centered on a new sound comprised of folk, rock, country, and blues, though sounding like nothing that had been recorded before; suffer considerable injuries in a motorcycle accident; and quietly reconvened with The Band to record dozens of songs in the Catskills. Guthrie's death at the end of that period seemed to push Dylan into a period of reflection, and between October 1967 (when he began work on *John Wesley Harding*) and early 1968, Dylan's work reflects a reimagining of his connection to Woody.

⁷ Bob Dylan, *Chronicles* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2004), 244.

⁸ Anthony Scaduto, *Bob Dylan: A Biography* (London: W. H. Allen, 1972), 137-138.

⁹ "What struck me most," Dylan noted, "was Guthrie's optimism." Daniel Wolff, *Grown-Up Anger* (New York: Harper, 2017), 15.

¹⁰ See also, Nona Willis Aronowitz, editor, *The Essential Ellen Willis* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2014), 20-21.

¹¹ Dylan notes that the trips were "sobering and psychologically draining." Dylan, *Chronicles*, 99.

¹² "He still had electricity running through his veins." Robertson, *Testimony*, 259.

¹³ Letter, Harold Leventhal to Bob Dylan, October 30, 1967. Harold Leventhal Collection, Woody Guthrie Archives (hereafter WGA), Tulsa, Oklahoma, Folder 116.

¹⁴ Letter, Harold Leventhal to Albert Grossman, December 6, 1967. Harold Leventhal Collection, WGA, Folder 116.

¹⁵ Dylan, *Chronicles*, 244.

¹⁶ David Dashey, "Dylan in Tribute to Woody," [Los Angeles] *Free Press*, February 2, 1968, p. 6. "You could see a worried look on the face of the concert promoter," Robbie Robertson

recalled, "Bob was going to do it his way, and that was that." Robbie Robertson, *Testimony*, 305.

¹⁷ Dylan "lit into 'The Grand Coulee Dam,'" Richard Goldstein writes, "with a twang that was not folk or rock or country blues." Goldstein, review, *Vogue*, March 15, 1968, n.p.

¹⁸ Author's interview with Garth Hudson, September 8, 2012.

¹⁹ "But river while you're ramblin' you can do some work for me"—arguably the most poetic definition of hydroelectric power conceived.

²⁰ Jim Loewen, "Wabash Cannonball," <https://historynewsnetwork.org/blog/152354>.

²¹ Greg Vandy with Daniel Person, *26 Songs in 30 Days: Woody Guthrie's Columbia River Songs and the Planned Promised Land in the Pacific Northwest* (Seattle: Sasquatch Books, 2016).

²² See, for example, Dylan's "North Country Blues" (1963). Wolff, *Grown-Up Anger*, 20.

²³ Michael Strelow, *An Anthology of Northwest Writing, 1900-1950* (Eugene: University of Oregon Press, 2001), 177; Wolff, *Grown-Up Anger*, 185-9.

²⁴ Bob Dylan Archive, University of Tulsa, Series IV, Box 01, Folder 6.

²⁵ "When Dylan sang the swelling refrain," Tim Riley argues, "he commented slyly on how the stature of presidents had fallen during times that seemed no less trying. Instead of critiquing the deceitful war and cynical politics of Lyndon Johnson, or the first Madison Avenue presidential campaign and Richard Nixon's election later that fall, Dylan sang about how lucky everybody was—Roosevelt, Dylan, folk music itself—to see Woody Guthrie born."

Tim Riley, "Another Side of Bob Dylan,"

<https://www.thefreelibrary.com/Another+side+of+Bob+Dylan.-a0137012981>.

²⁶ Woody Guthrie, Notebook Series 2, Item 1, pg. 41, WGA.

²⁷ Later copies include: Typed copy [handwritten note: "typed up & changed wg; "I made this song up to tell you how I felt on the early part of the [x'd out] rising morning of nineteen forty three." "New Words and music adaption by Woody Guthrie," Pete Seeger notes in one exchange dated March 3, 1977, "the melody is 'I Don't Feel at Home in This World Any More' but the words are all Woody's except the 'in the world anymore' phrase." Scans of manuscript and letter in WGA.

²⁸ Joe Klein, *Woody Guthrie: A Life* (New York: Delta, 1980), 117.

²⁹ Handwritten note on one manuscript dated September 30, 1940. Scan in WGA.

³⁰ "Still on the Road: 1961 Concerts and Recording Sessions,"

<http://www.bjorner.com/DSN00020%201961.htm>.

³¹ Andy Green, "Fifty Years Ago Today: Bob Dylan Arrived in New York,"

<https://www.rollingstone.com/music/music-news/fifty-years-ago-today-bob-dylan-arrived-in-new-york-251722/>.

³² *The Tribute Concerts: Book 1, The Concerts* (Oldendorf, Germany: Bear Family Records, 2017), 10-11.

³³ David Dashey, "Dylan in Tribute to Woody," [Los Angeles] *Free Press*, February 2, 1968, p. 6.

³⁴ *The Tribute Concerts: Book 1, The Concerts*, 51-53.

³⁵ Goldstein, review in *Vogue*, March 15, 1968, n.p.

³⁶ "It was not quite accurate to label the standing ovation he received at the end of this concert as folk music's welcome back to an errant prince. Bob Dylan never abdicated." Dashey, "Dylan in Tribute to Woody," [Los Angeles] *Free Press*, February 2, 1968, p. 6.

³⁷ "By the end of the concert I was almost in tears, it was, it was a tossup between tears and rage, you know?" The Phil Ochs interview is reprinted in *The Tribute Concerts: Book 1, The Concerts*, 49-50.

³⁸ Hank Reineke, *Ramblin' Jack Elliott: The Never-Ending Highway* (Lanham: Scarecrow Press, 2009), 184-5. "Jack Elliot alone," Dashey argues, "was able to get to Guthrie without trying to be Guthrie." Dashey, "Dylan in Tribute to Woody," [Los Angeles] *Free Press*, February 2, 1968, p. 6.

³⁹ Reineke, *Ramblin' Jack Elliott*, 184-5.

⁴⁰ "Now," Ochs notes, "Richie Havens is the nicest of people, as performers go, he's among the nicest. But on his last album cover he's there with a sitar, and there he is at the Woody

Guthrie concert and I'm sitting in the audience, you know, crying." *The Tribute Concerts: Book 1, The Concerts*, 50.

⁴¹ *The Tribute Concerts: Book 1, The Concerts*.

⁴² "I'm not into Woody the icon," songwriter Jeff Tweedy argues, "I'm into Woody the freak weirdo." Greg Kot, *Wilco: Learning How to Die* (New York: Broadway Books, 2004), 145. Alan Lomax: "He can write a ballad," Alan Lomax notes, "in five minutes that will fool a folk lore expert, that will make you laugh your head off, that will make you glad you are born able to understand American lingo." In "Scrapbook," WGA.

⁴³ Craig McGregor, *Bob Dylan: A Retrospective* (New York: William Morrow, 1972), 212.

⁴⁴ "Dylan Joins the Band Onstage at Mississippi River Fest,"

<https://www.rollingstone.com/music/music-news/dylan-joins-the-band-onstage-at-mississippi-river-fest-190769/>.

⁴⁵ During this first leg, Dylan also performed "I Dreamed I Saw St. Augustine" sixteen times. Dylan also played "Deportee (Plane Wreck at Los Gatos)" at least five times during the second leg of the tour in 1976. See: "Still on the Road: 1976 Rolling Thunder Revue II," <http://www.bjorner.com/DSN03275%201976%20Rolling%20Thunder%20Revue%20II.htm>.

⁴⁶ Goldstein, *Vogue*, March 15, 1968, n.p.

⁴⁷ *The Tribute Concerts: Book 1, The Concerts*, 9.