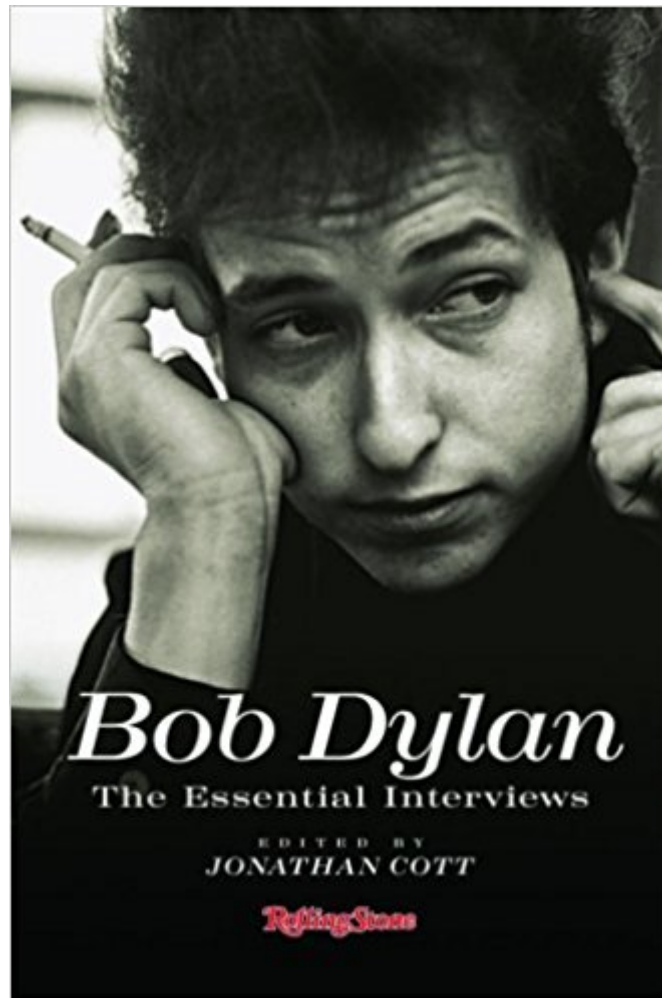




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# Bob Dylan: The Essential Interviews



## Synopsis

Direct from the mouth of America's most celebrated street poet comes a rare and diverse collection of intimate interviews. *Bob Dylan: The Essential Interviews* features 31 of the most significant and revealing conversations with the singer, gathered in one definitive collection. Among the highlights are the seminal Rolling Stone interviews -- anthologized here for the first time -- by Jann Wenner, Jonathan Cott, Kurt Loder, and Mikal Gilmore, as well as Nat Hentoff's legendary 1966 Playboy interview. Surprises include Studs Terkel's radio interview in 1963 on WFMT in Chicago, the interview Dylan gave to screenwriter Jay Cocks when he was a student at Kenyon College in 1964, a 1965 interview with director Nora Ephron, and an interview Sam Shepard turned into a one-act play for Esquire in 1987. Dylan expert Jonathan Cott writes an introduction to this must-have collection of the artist in his own words.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

As an interview subject, Bob Dylan is notorious for his unpredictable moods and evasive, impish answers. Yet this priceless collection teems with honest, open, and thoughtful musings from a man described by editor Cott (Dylan; *Back to a Shadow in the Night*) as a "playful expositor of his munificent and inspiring thought-dreams." Organized chronologically, the interviews illuminate Dylan's changing views of music, life and his career, so readers can watch how a cocksure young man, reluctantly occupying the spotlight ("I'm really not the right person to tramp around the country saving souls," he told Playboy in 1966), remains forever uneasy with his status as he becomes one

of the most influential musicians in history ("If I wasn't Bob Dylan, I'd probably think that Bob Dylan has a lot of answers myself," he tells Playboy in 1978). Most notable is Dylan's unwavering conviction in his instincts despite disapproval from other musicians, music critics and fans; after getting booed during his electric debut, he told Nora Ephron "They can boo till the end of time. I know that the music is real, more real than the boos." Those who have been touched by Dylan's songs will find this collection a fascinating window into his one-of-a-kind mind. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

Bob Dylan has been interviewed probably thousands of times, yet especially because he has a reputation for being a difficult subject, particularly in his rebellious younger years, it is gratifying to discover how substantive and compelling music journalist Cott's 29 selections are. Included are most of the key conversations, from early sessions with sympathetic interlocutors Studs Terkel and Nat Hentoff to recent colloquies marking his majestic comeback albums, *Time Out of Mind* and *Love and Theft*. Other interviewers include self-proclaimed "Dylanologist" A. J. Weberman, notorious for rummaging through his subject's trash cans, and playwright Sam Shepard, who later turned his interview into a one-act play. Because the dates of the pieces distribute pretty evenly throughout Dylan's career, they roughly chronicle it. Interestingly, the book has a gap between 1971 and 1978, a period during which Dylan took to the media to defend his short-lived born-again Christianity. Informative and readable, the collection well complements Dylan's unexpectedly sincere memoir, *Chronicles, Volume One* (2004), which offered details that he shielded in his interviews. Gordon Flagg Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved

A good book

I learned more about Bob Dylan and his music in reading these interviews than I ever did from either his several biographies or "analyses" of his work. VM Riccardi

I have read and enjoyed this book but didn't purchase it so wonder that it is listed here as if I had.

Why is this fascinating book that features probably the best living songwriter in the world in his own words only available in this small print, bulky and heavy edition? I'm not as young as I used to be and my eyes don't work as well. In other words it's hard to read the print even with glasses. It's also difficult to carry this book around. I wish it were available in Kindle where I could adjust the font to

the size I need and would be lightweight as well. Chronicles is available in Kindle, as well as Suzy Rotolo's wonderful book *A Freewheelin' Time* and Keith Richard's masterpiece *Life*. Why not this book? It would be a way of attracting an even larger readership. That aside, this is one of the best Dylan books ever. I much prefer the autobiographical style--which this book of Dylan interviews, while not fitting the usual description of an autobiography, is the next closest thing with Dylan answering questions from the beginning of his career through many years. It's a must read for anyone who wants to know more about Dylan's history than any biography by an outsider who wasn't there through all of this could ever tell us. But to the publishers, please release this book in Kindle.

This book is one of the best Dylan books that I've read. It begins with interviews in the early 60's when Dylan had just started to get noticed in the music world/folk scene, and they continue chronologically until 2004. The interviews give the reader a look at the emotions and thoughts of Bob Dylan through the eyes of many different reporters. However, most of the interviews are verbatim dialogue between Bob and the reporter. Bob starts out as an enthusiastic young man in the recording studio talking about his music and his tours. You begin to notice a shift in his thoughts in the mid to late 70's. He describes the making of his movie "*Renaldo and Clara*" and his thoughts seem unclear. However, it may simply be a look inside the mind of a genius. In addition, there are several interviews that discuss his conversion to Christianity. He seems obsessed with his new found religion. This phase quickly passes and the reader will begin to notice a shift to a more rational, thoughtful Bob Dylan. He begins to talk about his music and family (son, Jakob). Bob seems more sure of himself, his music, and his career in the late 90's and beyond. I thoroughly enjoyed this book!!!

Thirty interviews over a forty year span are included in this volume. Dylan fans will thus have a lot of fun here. Dylan can be very funny and he also can be just plain kookie. One of his best gigs is his responses to questions that would make him a kind of Savior, political or otherwise of mankind. Here he is usually self-effacing and ironic. One of the touching bits for me was his telling how as a nineteen year old youngster he took a Greyhound bus each day from Midtown Manhattan to visit Woody Guthrie who was dying of 'Huntington's Chorea'. Guthrie could barely speak. All he could do was give a name of his own song. Dylan says he knew them all and whatever Woody asked he played him. Dylan really knows and loves popular music and talks in an interview with Sam Shepherd as well as in others of tens of groups I myself and I suspect most people never heard of.

In another interesting piece someone asks him about contemporary songwriters and surprisingly he names Shel Silverstein as a real favorite. Also Randy Newman. And he mentions a couple of Paul Simon songs like 'A Bridge over Troubled Water' but then says that Simon has written a lot of flack. But who hasn't?" I in general believe the Interviews are very interesting when Dylan talks about what he really loves, the Music, and how he makes it and plays it. In one interview he says that he has to play a certain time each day, but that he cannot do twelve- hour practice sessions like a Segovia. There is a bit about the born- again Dylan which I found a bit disturbing, but I did not find him talking about his alleged reconversion to Judaism. Supposedly one topic he has pretty much avoided is his parents and parental home in Hibbing. Dylan talks about his songwriting, about how he often throws out the most inspiring lines. It is interesting that the person who along with the Beatles has written the 'lyrics' most song- listeners of the latter part of the twentieth century 'know', begins his songs also with the music, the melody. The words come later. I have no doubt that fans of Dylan will love this collection of interviews and learn much from it.

I always love a good read about an interesting person. Filled with great poetry and musical talent, Bob is Bob and you have to love the fact he does and says what he wants not what the public wants. He may never play the same song the same way twice, why should he. He is who he is, love him or not at least he is true unto himself. I admire that in a person.

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