



Context:

Having given a talk to a Dylan audience to introduce my book: “Dylan & Shakespeare: The True Performing of It”, I now found myself, reversing the situation, when presenting a paper at the 2021 British Shakespeare Association Conference, by taking Dylan into the land of the Ultimate Bard. The conference was postponed from last year, and forced to be in virtual mode this year, because of Covid.

My customary over-estimation of time-length and last-minute technical hitches meant some trimming of my original plan. So, for example, there’s no audio which is somewhat ironic in a talk extolling the primacy of performance. Furthermore, I had originally planned to link “It Takes A lot to Laugh, It Takes A Train to Cry” back to an early part of the talk and discuss the song’s main intent, prior to the point I actually make, with resonances to another paper delivered at the conference with regards to Elizabethan tropes.

I had expected to be talking in a window visible on-screen and had determined to read without notes. I have always preferred to do this, but I fear that ageing memory means that I probably will have to change and always read from notes in the future. Even names and famous lines are becoming slippery when speaking live. I twice call Dylan “Shakespeare”, though I rather like hearing “Rough and Rowdy Ways” referred to as though it were Shakespeare’s last album. I am less fond of hearing myself call the twentieth century the twenty-first; for these and other infelicities, advance apologies.

Please also note: For a variety of reasons, it is not permitted to include audio or video involving anyone other than myself and so this begins abruptly, after a personal introduction and a touch of scene-setting re both the context and the technical situation, which had to be cut. Having said all of this, here is my talk followed by the question-and-answer session:

[Presentation: CLICK HERE](#)
[Paper on Dylan and Shakespeare](#)

Questions and Answers (Similarly to the talk itself, the answer videos have to start and end abruptly.)

*A question on which albums see most Shakespeare crossover led me to talk of the Shakespearean language on *Tempest* and the *King Lear* references on *The Basement Tapes*, with a short comment on this curious story: <http://www.a-muir.co.uk/Dylan/oando3N.pdf>*

Question one: **Which Dylan album or albums do you find the richest for cross-referencing to Shakespeare?**

[Video answer 1](#)

There was an especially insightful question re Whitman, Shakespeare and Dylan which led me to realise, in answering it, the significance of Dylan starting 'Rough and Rowdy Ways' tracks with a Whitman title and ending it with a Shakespeare one.

I wish now that I had been asked that question last year for the book's update. Oh well, I will just add it to the huge store of further things that could /should be added.

Question two: **What you said took me back to the multiple communal “I” that is there in Walt Whitman and for Shakespeare in mediaeval, early Tudor, culture. Do you think that either or both writers deliberately make use of this communal “I” as part of the kinship as part of their kinship with oral or folk culture?**

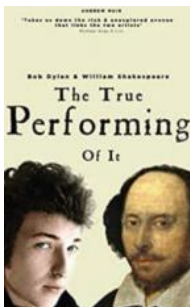
[Video answer 2](#)

Question three: **A question asking how much mileage I had found in comparative historical contexts.**

[Video answer 3](#)

Question four: *This was a question for the whole panel (three of us) this question related to Shakespeare as a brand which gives cultural legitimacy and authority. "To paraphrase Doug Larnier, what is Shakespeare doing in (these areas) which can stand without him?"*

[Video answer 4](#)



<https://www.a-muir.co.uk/tp21.pdf>