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# Use of Rhetoric in 1960's Protest Music: A Case Study of Bob Dylan's Music

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USE OF RHETORIC IN 1960'S PROTEST MUSIC:  
A CASE STUDY OF BOB DYLAN'S MUSIC

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A Senior Honors Project Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of  
Requirements of the Honors Degree Program and of the Department of  
Communication Studies

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## Abstract

The purpose of this study is to analyze the use of rhetoric in protest music of the 1960s, using Bob Dylan's music as a case study. The 1960s was a time of revolution and social change in the United States. Throughout this time, protest music served as an outlet for musicians to voice their support for this change. By conducting a rhetorical analysis, this study assesses the ways in which the tools of classical rhetoric can be applied to the music of this time. The analysis focuses on the rhetorical functions of this music in the context of the protest movements of the 1960s. The study examines the ways in which this music exemplifies elements of classical rhetoric and concludes by examining the impact this music had on the protest movements of the 1960s.

## Index

Title Page.....	1
Abstract.....	2
Index.....	3
Acknowledgments.....	4
Introduction.....	5
Review of Literature.....	6
Music as Persuasion.....	6
Classical Rhetoric.....	9
Protest Music and Rhetoric.....	11
Influence of Protest Music in the 1960's.....	14
Subcultures.....	16
Protest Music of Bob Dylan.....	17
Methods.....	20
Method of Sampling.....	22
Analysis.....	23
Logos.....	23
Ethos.....	24
Pathos.....	27
Appeal to Fear.....	28
Appeal to Sympathy.....	28
Appeal to Empathy.....	30
Appeal to Hope.....	32
Refutation by Wit.....	33
Conclusion.....	34
Works Cited.....	38
Table 1.....	40
Table 2.....	41
Table 3.....	43
Table 4.....	44

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## **Introduction**

The 1960s was a time of revolution and social change in the United States. Throughout this time, protest music served an outlet for musicians to voice their support for this change. Throughout the decade, the influence of protest music grew into a driving force behind the social and civic change experienced at the time. The music was popularized due to the way in which the youth of America were able to identify with and relate to its message. Through their music, artists were able to gain social influence and convince others to join the movement. By conducting a rhetorical analysis, the present study assesses the ways in which the tools of classical rhetoric can be applied to the music of this time.

One artist with a vast influence on this genre and era of music was Bob Dylan. Throughout the 1960's, Bob Dylan gave voice to many concerns of the generation. Two of the main focuses of his protest music were civil rights and the injustices of war. Throughout this decade, Dylan proved himself to be extremely influential. He also proved to be a versatile musician with his transition from folk music to rock, both of which gained large audiences and social impact. Due to his power of influence and the variety of music he produced throughout the era, a rhetorical analysis of his music was used as a case study to describe and identify the rhetoric of protest in music of the 1960s.

The present study analyzes protest music using classical rhetoric by using Bob Dylan's protest music in the 1960s as a case study. The rhetorical functions of his music in the context of the protest movements of the 1960s are the focus of the analysis. The study examines how protest music of the 1960s exemplifies elements

of classical rhetoric and concludes by examining the impact this music had on the protest movements of the 1960s.

## **Review of Literature**

### **Music as Persuasion**

Over the course of human history, music has been used as a persuasive device. Dating back to the time of Plato, music was thought to have a large influence on society as a whole (Sellnow & Sellnow, 2001). Since then, music has played a huge role in public opinion, shaping opinions and attitudes of the public and thus influencing governmental policy (Bostrom, Lane & Harrington, 2002).

Although music is not always created with a persuasive end in mind, it often has this effect on the people of a society. One way in which music persuades is through its use of imagery and metaphors to communicate common experience with listeners. Through its linguistic styling, music is able to communicate with ease messages that might be difficult to communicate effectively by other means (Bostrom, Lane, & Harrington, 2002). Music does this by connecting the performer and listener in a created shared experience (Sellnow & Sellnow, 2001).

Music also gains much of its persuasive power in its connotative nature. Due to its nature, music is able to be interpreted and experienced differently by different listeners. This makes the experience of listening to music a very personal experience in which listeners are able to relate their own beliefs and experiences to the experiences of the musician and create new perspectives based on this experience (Quirk Cort, 2013).

Scholars have also identified three “persuasive components” that differentiate music from other forms of persuasion and thus help to explain its effectiveness. The first is its repetitiveness, which creates familiarity with the listener and often causes one to relate to and remember the music as well as its messages. This can also refer to re-recording songs or “borrowing a line” from a previous song. The second is the multi-faceted way in which music is able to communicate with the listener. Music uses many more methods than traditional spoken word to communicate a message to a listener. These include “melodies, rhythms, chord progressions, instrumentations,” and lyrics. Music reaches the listener in many different ways and thus leaves a greater impression on the listener. Lastly, music serves as an “experiential form of communication.” Through art, music relates the experiences of the musician to the experiences of the listener, forming a unique bond and creating greater opportunity for persuasive efficacy (Quirk Cort, 2013, p. 7-8).

Throughout the history of America, protest music has been used to gain support for many social causes including abolition, union formation, civil rights, and anti-war. Through music, artists are able to create an “illusion of life” through aesthetic symbolism. In this way, music connects to its listeners through creating a virtual experience through lyrics and virtual time through music. In their 2001 study, Sellnow and Sellnow explored this theory, which they grounded on Langer’s theories, which suggested that humans have an innate need to symbolize in order to understand many of life’s properties. Thus, music, through its use of symbolism, is able to function as a method for which humans can better understand their world.



Using symbols, a musician is able to share his or her experience with an audience through shared virtual experience. Although the listener is not literally present in the minds and experiences of the artists, music allows him or her to feel with the artist and to share and understand the experience. Thus, music serves as a unique form of persuasion as it allows the listener a deeper understanding of and thus a higher likelihood to align with the speaker (Sellnow & Sellnow, 2001).

Popular music has come to be considered a very significant source of rhetorical conversation. Few studies, however, study the aural elements of the music as rhetoric and thus miss out on the contextual piece of rhetorical interpretation. This contextual element is vastly important in the study of popular music, as music is not heard without the influence of that heard prior (Matula, 2009). It is through recounting prior works, musical style, and genres, that people fully experience a new song (Walser,; Firth). Thus, when one listens to a song, they are listening with the awareness of other music and are subconsciously relating this new musical experience to those prior. When we listen to music, we are not passive, but actively engaging in a vast discussion of all those who have listened before. It is the listeners who define the music in terms of quality and impact. Listeners give music the power of influence and in doing so give all songs a context in relation to one another.

Much of the research done on musical rhetoric focuses solely on the lyrical elements of the music. Another body of literature suggests that this research is limited in scope and that research should focus on the musical aspects of the songs as well in order to capture their full rhetorical value. Studying both elements of music allows us to put these works into context and understand the ways in which

they influence specific audiences. By contextualizing music, we can better understand the various genres that songs are associated with and the various audiences reached from these associations. Through contextualizing music, we can better understand the reach of this music and analyze its effects on listeners and social movements (Matula 2009).

### **Classical Rhetoric**

Edward P.J Corbett makes a case for the continued usefulness of classical rhetoric in contemporary studies. According to Corbett, classical rhetoric “engages the whole man in the writing process “through its simultaneous appeal to ethos, pathos, and logos,” which translate to character, emotions, and logic respectively.. The differentiating factor between classical and other theories of rhetoric is that it speaks with a specific audience always in mind, placing a greater emphasis on this specific group than other theories of rhetoric.

*“Above all other considerations –such as subject and the occasion – the audience was the consideration which gave “form” to the discourse, which dictated the means that the speaker would employ to affect his ends. It is this awareness of an audience that we must bring back to the composing process, and ancient rhetoric has much to offer us on this score” (Corbett, 1962, p. 162).*

There are a few key components of classical rhetoric that make this form of speech especially important in capturing the audience fully and personally. The first is the simultaneous appeal to ethos, pathos, and logos. (Corbett, 1962)

Another function is the use of dispositio. The term dispositio refers to the arranging and proportioning of information in order to best impress upon the audience. This means that along with possessing full knowledge of one’s information, one must acquire a comprehensive knowledge of the audience in or

order to know how to arrange one's information for best efficacy. Dispositio involves knowing which points to focus on, and in what order. It encompasses knowing what a particular audience will best respond to and arranging information in such a way to best draw a response (Corbett, 1962). Dispositio arranges a work not by sequence, but in the order that best suits the argument and conveys the point the speaker wishes to communicate to the audience. Thus, dispositio is a necessary function of rhetoric for its persuasive efficacy (Corbett & Connors, 1965).

Elocutio is another important element of rhetoric. Elocutio concerns the wording of information in order to best impress the speaker's point upon his or her audience. This includes linguistic style and use of rhetorical devices to capture the mind of the audience and impress upon them the speaker's message (Corbett, 1962). While elocution may be typically associated with elocution, or the act of speaking, classical rhetoricians associate the terms much more with style of one's message. This encompasses all stylistic elements of the work, including devices, symbols, and effective wording that all aid the rhetorical value of a work (Corbett & Connors, 1965).

Finally, the use of imitation is a very important rhetorical tactic. This exercise refers to the importance of studying the works of past rhetoricians and using aspects of their style to best suit one's employment of a message. Imitation is not simply copying previous work of another rhetorician. Rather, it is examining their work and its effectiveness or lack thereof on a particular audience. Imitation is using the work of previous advocates to further one's cause and enhance persuasive speech by learning from the work of those before. Imitation is meant to cause

progress in the field of rhetoric and enable newer rhetoricians to build upon past works (Corbett, 1962).

### **Protest Music and Rhetoric**

Throughout American history, protest music has served as a voice for the concerns and need for social change of the people. Because music is meant to be heard, it becomes communal in nature, meaning the experiences and beliefs of the artist are shared with the listener, who in turn has his or her own background of experiences and beliefs. Thus, the communication of discontent of one artist in a given song becomes the voice of an entire group of those who relate to the song. The needs illustrated by one individual become the needs of a group and a driving force behind social movements (Kizer 1983).

During the 1960s, protest music served as an outlet for expression of social inequality and for anti-war sentiment. Songs written during this era were methods of rhetorical persuasion as they “expressed dissent, appealed for changes, attracted support for the movement, and influenced attitudes.” (Kizer, 1983, p. 4)

In her article, “Protest Song Lyrics as Rhetoric,” Kizer argues that ethos and pathos are the main methods of rhetoric used in protest music, as the appeal to logic is not quite as necessary when speaking for a just cause. The author quotes Aristotle in the article, saying:

*“Things that are true and things that are just have a natural tendency to prevail over their opposites...things that are true and things that are better are, by their nature, practically always easier to prove and easier to believe in.”*  
(Kizer, 1983, p.4)

Thus, as protest music persuades us towards a just cause of social advancement of those oppressed and an end to violence, the audience is more likely

to join the cause and to be influenced by rhetorical efforts. Logical persuasion is less necessary when a cause is morally correct. In these cases, audiences are swayed much more by emotional and character-based appeals. Although appeal to logic does exist in protest music, its presence is less evident as these other methods are most effective for these particular arguments. (Kizer, 1983)

Kizer also states that protest songs fall into one of two divisions of rhetoric. These two divisions, deliberative and epideictic, are concerned with the desired outcome of the persuasion effort. The aim of deliberative rhetoric is to support doing or not doing something in the future. Thus, it is a more direct call to action than epideictic. Epideictic, on the other hand is more concerned with explaining the merit or lack thereof something. Thus, this term would refer to the songs that speak of and inform audiences of the injustices of the status quo without specifically calling them to action on these circumstances. (Kizer, 1983)

Although music may be a powerful persuasive tool, persuasion does not always have to be the purpose of the artist in creating the music. While some protest music is written for the sole purpose of aiding or beginning a social movement, other music written without this intention in mind is just as useful and influential. Rhetoric, then, is not defined by the purpose of the author but by the author's impact on a selected audience. (Kizer, 1983)

Theodore Matula, has done extensive work on the topic of musical rhetoric. In his article, "Pow! to the People: The Make-Up's Reorganization and Punk Rhetoric," Matula analyzes the ways in which the stylistic changes of The Make-Up's music during the 1990's punk popularization effected the authenticity and political

persuasion efficacy of the music. Because punk had historically been a music of alienation and rebellion, many critics denounced the popularization of the music, as they believed it to diminish the political message of the music (Matula, 2007).

The article explores The Make-Up response to this new popularization through a process known as “deliberative political action” (Matula, 2007, p. 21). Through this process, the band responded to popularization through self-examination of their own identities and obligations to such standards. In his analysis, Matula examined how the band mixed punk with elements of gospel and funk in this time of punk popularization in order to undergo this “deliberative political action” and make sense of their responsibility to carry out the traditional goals of the punk movement.

Matula cites the work of Barry Brummett, whose work was heavily influenced by Kenneth Burke’s notion of “literature as symbolic equipment for living.” Brummett argues that cultural literature, including popular music, “metonymize complex issues into understandable form”(Brummett, 1967, p. 122). Thus, popular music serves as a method for the public to understand the issues of the world around them, and to assess and assign meaning to these issues.

As historically Black music, gospel and funk embody and communicate the rebellion against oppression of this people. In combining their newly popularized punk music with this historically radical music, their music served to unify the predominantly white struggles generally represented in punk and the long held struggles portrayed in Black music. In this way, The Make-Up combines the struggles of both parties through music, reminding us that no issues are confined

solely to one population and that the same issues are experienced universally, although in different ways. Therefore, The Make-Up is able to redefine punk music and use its popularization as a way to communicate new and progressive ideas to the listening public (Matula, 2007).

### **Influence of Protest Music in the 1960s**

There were many factors that caused protest music of the 1960s to have a major impact on society at this time. Although protest music had been present in American culture long before the 1960s, the birth of the civil rights movement gave protest music a viable avenue for influence. The growth of the movement coupled with the high population of American youth at the time gave way for music to be publicized as part of a social movement and thus allowed it to gain persuasive impact (Eyerman and Jamison 1996).

Another key component in the effectiveness of this music was the “mediability” of the young population. While mainstream media was still a datable source of information in previous decades, it had been accepted as a main source of information by the 1960s. Although the young population was willing to question the messages received via mainstream media, they were also likely to refer to these sources to stay up to date with current information. This resulted in heightened knowledge of the political and social events of the country for the general population. With increased awareness would come increased perceived need for activism and an avenue of influence for protest music (Eyerman and Jamison 1996).

Along with the birth of the movement and increased drive for activism came the increased marketability of protest music. Young people were relating to the

messages of the protest songs and were willing to purchase the music that they believed in. Unlike the protest music of previous generations, the protest music of the 1960s had a large audience with the financial resources to support the music they desired. This gave musicians the ability to sell their music and allowed them to speak for a cause while earning the money to do so (Eyerman and Johnson, 1996).

Due to the availability of music and the power of young people as consumers, the older generation found that as youth culture grew, their control diminished. The 1960's were the beginning of the dominance of television in American society. By the early 1960's, "about 92 percent of all American households owned at least one television" (Farber, 1994, p. 52). Of this population, most averaged six hours of viewing per day. Thus, much more than in decades past, Americans were well informed on and became quite consumed in national affairs. This caused much more awareness of the details and atrocities of war and also caused a deeper and more developed fear throughout the American population. With the turbulence of the Cold War transitioning into the outbreak of the Vietnam War, the American people began to fear and eventually question the concept of war. Meanwhile, the opposition to the civil rights movement caused even more hardship and divisiveness throughout the nation, causing more confusion and rage throughout the American public (Farber, 1994). Using art as an outlet of self-expression, protest music of this era emerged as a response to the political and social turmoil of the time. As the American youth possessed the most power of consumption, they were able to choose what to listen to and were able to give strength and force to a music driven movement.



The movement, however, was not completely driven by commercial success. Although the movement gained its momentum in its early successes, the songs of protest were no longer chart-topping hits by the mid-1960s. Although those protest songs associated with the civil rights movement has been widely publicized, those associated with the anti-war movement were kept from meeting the airwaves. Thus, the hippie subculture emerged as a way to support this form of protest within the use of popular culture (Rodnitzky, 1999).

### **Subcultures**

An important aspect of the protest movements of the 1960s was the subculture created during this time. Throughout this era, music was a way for young people to create their own culture, regardless of race, region, or religion. Music is often used as a way for people to validate their identities and beliefs and to create a community through subcultures. Music gives voice to the concerns and feelings of a group of people and the resulting subcultures allow these beliefs to create connections with other like-minded people (Farber, 1994). Thus, music is able to speak to a group of people by reinforcing the beliefs they already have and legitimizing and strengthening these beliefs. Through music, musicians are able to give voice to the silent feelings of a group. Through radio and media distribution, this music is able to reach a majority of people and thus subcultures are formed. People feel validated when they have an outlet and a social group to relate to. Music is a way to provide this (Edwards and Singletary, 1989).

In addition to offering validation to beliefs through music, the hippie subculture had various other effects on communication. A study conducted by the

University of Gothenberg found that the Hippie subculture affected many aspects of communication. In general, the study found that those who had lived through the Hippie movement feel positively towards the experience. They also felt that the movement caused them to develop a more open communication style, improved interpersonal relationships, and improved self-esteem. Participants also shared that they associate the hippie movement with confidence, individuality and strong beliefs and that they still feel the effects of these beliefs and ideologies in the world today. The study also found that those who had lived through the movement found a negative association between the subculture and stress levels and a positive association with self-trust. As for the effects of the music specifically, participants shared that they felt the music of this subculture was “a very significant part of their youth” and that this music changed them as communicators. The study found that those who had lived during the time period believed that the Anti-Vietnam War movement would not have been possible without the birth of the hippie subculture (Vuori, 2013).

### **Protest Music of Bob Dylan**

One extremely influential musician of the era was Bob Dylan. Dylan, born Robert Zimmerman, began his journey as a folk singer in New York City after leaving his home in Minnesota to pursue a career in music. Dylan received his first contract from Columbia Records in 1961 and released his first album, *Bob Dylan*, in March of 1962. By the release of his second album in 1963, Dylan had started to write and release his own protest songs in response to the civil rights movement raging at this time.

One key to Dylan's success and impact on the society of the 1960s was his openness with imitation. When Dylan first started his career in the early 1960's, he performed a multitude of known blues and folk songs, especially those of Woody Guthrie, one of his biggest role models and reasons for pursuing a career in music. For Dylan, music did not have an owner. It was meant to be reshaped and redeveloped in various forms by various artists. Recording the works of others gave the songs new life and allowed them to reach the minds of new audiences. In performing the songs of older more renowned artist, Dylan gained publicity and stardom in his own career and began to be recognized by those who recognized the music and enjoyed what he had added to it (Blanton, 2001).

Likewise, Dylan's career continued to grow through others emulating his music through re-recordings. In a recent speech Dylan gave special thanks to those who recorded his music early on. In his words they took a song "that had been recorded before that had been buried on one of my records and turned it into a hit song" (Stone). In this way, Dylan encouraged and appreciated the rerecording of his music and embraced the fame it gave others as it in turn brought the recorded songs as well as others into the light of the public (Stone, 2015). Thus, Dylan's career both began and continued to thrive through this re-recording and sharing of music.

In the wake of the civil right movement and later as the anti-war movement began, Dylan used what he had learned in folk music to relate to the feelings and emotions of the American population of the time. Dylan had originally fallen in love with folk music because it had a way of relating to people and communicating in a very genuine and human way. Dylan put this communication style into his work as

well. When describing his style, Dylan explained, "I don't think when I write. I just react and put it down on paper...what comes out in my music is a call to action." (Blanton, 2001, p.6-7) Thus, Dylan's music became so important and impactful for the protest movements of the 1960's because it related directly to listeners and engaged them in a very human capacity to take action against such things that were immoral and in need of change in American society (Blanton, 2001).

Another way in which Dylan gained influence in this tumultuous time was through his appeal to traditional American values that were relatable and had an emotional connection with the people of the United States. One such appeal was the appeal to the "common man." This appeal centered around the notion that all American citizens should be valued equally and that one's merit should be based on virtues and characters rather than status or ethnicity. Through appeal to this value, Dylan was able to condemn to immorality of racial segregation and the military draft that upper class individuals were exempt from. By calling on the long held value of equality, Dylan was able to appeal to the morals and values of the American people on a personal and human level (Dunlap, 2006).

Further, Dylan's appeal to American idealism, also present in many of the folk songs he performed during the early years of his career, helped his music become a pivotal part of the 1960's protest movements. In a nation that was founded on the principles of meritocracy and social advancement, it seemed quite hypocritical for certain populations to be marginalized in the late twentieth century. Through his music, Dylan drew attention to this hypocrisy and gained momentum from listeners who took notice as well and felt a need for social change. Through drawing on these

historically American beliefs and calling into question the ability of American society to provide them, Dylan appealed to the many people who desired to be a part of a nation true to the values inherent in its people (Dunlap, 2006).

### **Method**

Classical rhetoric is a method of inquiry aimed at explaining the ways in which spoken or written messages inform and persuade specific audiences. A work is thought to be a good example of effective rhetoric when it has a noticeable effect on a selected audience. Thus, an audience must accept and believe the message being communicated for a work to be considered effective through use of rhetoric (Corbett). In the protest music of the 1960s, artists conveyed messages through song, using many elements of classical rhetoric in their lyrics. The present study uses the protest music of Bob Dylan as a case study for the use of classical rhetoric in 1960s protest music. The music is analyzed in terms of its utilization of classical rhetoric techniques.

Over the course of the analysis, a selected list of Bob Dylan's protest songs serve as a case study for the use of rhetoric in protest music of the 1960s. This music is assessed in terms of its appeals to ethos, pathos and logos, and is also examined in terms of the specific linguistic elements of rhetoric employed throughout each song.

One important element in the effectiveness of this type of rhetoric is the time at which it was communicated. Throughout the 1960's, music created a subculture among the American youth. At this time, musicians targeted youth as they held the highest purchasing power of any demographic. The youth of the 1960's used music

as a way to overcome the barriers set in place by the society around them. Music was a way for the American youth to form its own identity, regardless of race, religion, or region. Young Americans embraced this newfound identity and purchased music rapidly. Music at this time gave voice to the concerns of the American public. It was a way for the youth to make sense of the revolution that surrounded them and to bring their latent beliefs to fruition (Farber). Thus the 1960s was a key period for artists to share their messages through music. With a conscience audience hungry for knowledge and answers on the turmoil around them, artist sought to provide this audience with just this.

Throughout the 1960s, Bob Dylan created an extensive amount of protest music. Bob Dylan has been continuously praised for his use of language in his lyrics. Due to his emphasis on lyrics and his significance throughout the protest movements of the 1960s, this study focuses on a selected list of Bob Dylan's protest songs as a case study for the use of rhetoric in 1960's protest music.

The selected songs, listed in Table 1, were categorized according to their mode of persuasion through "artistic proof." The songs are categorized based on their emotional appeal (pathos), logical appeal (logos), and ethical appeal (ethos). There is also a focus on the use of refutation by wit, which was a common theme throughout much of Dylan's music. Further, lyrics of these songs are broken down in order to examine the stylistic elements that aid in the persuasive efficacy of the songs. Rhetorical terms used in the analysis are listed are defined in Table 2.

Because many of these songs include multiple appeals, the study focuses on the dominant appeal in each song. Focusing on the dominant appeal throughout

each individual song will help to organize the songs based on themes and will help us to understand which appeals were used most frequently in Dylan's protest music. Although multi-dimensional appeals are quite useful and practical in rhetoric, categorizing the songs by their dominant appeal helps with the organization of the main thematic elements present in the works.

Using NVIVO, the songs are coded in order to examine common themes and stylistic elements presented throughout the music. Through use of this software, the lyrics can be coded and analyzed in order to compile data based on the frequency and coding density of these rhetorical devices.

### **Method of Sampling**

In order to decide which songs to analyze, a clear method for song selection was developed. To make sure that the sample is consistent and useful for this study, only those songs released by Bob Dylan between 1960-1970 relating to the anti-war and civil right movements were included. Although Dylan did record other songs during this time period, the research is only based on these songs released during this time relating to the topic of this research. This is because only songs released were available to the general public and were thus able to influence the movements of this time.

Distinctions also had to be drawn between types of protest. While certain songs released by Dylan at this time protested the media, gender roles, and society in general at this time, these songs were left out of the sample because the focus is specifically on protest songs that focused on civil rights and/or war.

## Analysis

### Logos

The first group of songs that I analyze are those that appeal to logos, or reason. These are the songs that use human logic to ground arguments and to convince the audience of the meaningfulness of these arguments. Appeals to reason are derived from logic and adapted in such a way as to appeal to and have an effect on an audience (Corbett).

One song in particular that relies predominately on an appeal to logic is “With God On Our Side.” This song, released in 1964 on the album, *The Times They Are a-Changin*, explores the illogical nature of the traditional way of thinking at the time.

Throughout the song, Dylan uses the enthymeme, or an argumentative statement that contains a conclusion and one of the premises, the other premise being implied” (Corbett 73) to logically criticize the traditional way of thinking about war and justice. In various stanzas of the song, Dylan draws attention to various injustices of nations traditionally thought to be in the right, or to ‘have God on their side.” In the case of these songs, the stated conclusion is the nations have God on their side and the premise would be that this is what the speaker has been taught to be correct. The missing premise is what makes it this way and this is what the speaker is calling into question.

Throughout the song, Dylan calls to attention the discrepancies between the ways in which history is communicated and the ways in which events actually took



place. Through use of anaphora, he recounts different events through different points of view.

*“The cavalries charged  
The Indians fell  
The cavalries charged  
The Indians died”*

In this way, Dylan calls to attention the ways in which language and word choice effect public opinion of events and challenges the listener to rethink the way history is told. In a similar way, he uses various examples of antithesis throughout the song to draw attention to the lack of sense and logic present in historical decision making.

The speaker also uses ironic statements in order to further the message. In the closing stanza of the song, Dylan writes, “If God’s on our side, he’ll stop the next war.” This draws attention to the irony of relating God to war as, logically speaking, God would not be accepting of its practice.

## **Ethos**

The second type of appeal is the appeal to character, also known as an ethical appeal. In this mode of persuasion, the orator seeks to relate to audiences by presenting his or herself as an ethical being with high regard for morals and human dignity. In this form, the orator must display, through discourse, a high regard for the audience and strong moral compass. This form of rhetoric encourages audiences to act in a manner that is ethically correct and is only effective if the orator is able to present his or her self, through the work, as a genuinely concerned person with very high moral regard (Corbett).

The first song that focuses predominantly on an ethical appeal is “Masters of War.” In this song, Dylan denounces those who were fueling the war at the time. Throughout the song, the speaker uses aporia (Harris) to express doubt in the morality of those in positions of power. Through use of apostrophe, the song is worded so that the speaker is speaking directly to the “masters of war” he denounces. The tone is confident and strong. Words are articulated clearly and sharp sounds are used in accompaniment to further the sense of displeasure and condemnation of the ways of those engaging in war. In this way, Dylan draws on his own authority as a moral person by identifying and denouncing immorality he observes in society.

The direct nature of this song offers great rhetorical value. In the opening stanza, Dylan uses apposition to clarify who exactly these “Master of War” are. In this first stanza, Dylan writes,

*“Come you masters of war  
You that build all the guns  
You that build the death planes  
You that build the big bombs  
You that hide behind walls  
You that hide behind desks”* (Dylan)

Through employing this rhetorical scheme, Dylan makes clear his purpose. The speaker employs apostrophe by directly addressing those he believes to be in the wrong. He further reinforces this element of blame on these parties through use of anaphora and apposition. When Dylan repeats “you that build” and “you that hide,” he is identifying the groups he is addressing to solidify the blame he places on these masters of war and thus justifying his protest of their actions.

In order to relate to the audience, Dylan employs synecdoche in a few lines throughout the song. In one instance, he writes,

*"You put a gun in my hand  
And you hide from my eyes"*

In this wording Dylan allows himself to stand for all those being enlisted in the war to fight battles for the sake of those in control. In this wording, he is able to personalize the experience of war and allow himself to speak for those affected by it.

Throughout the lyrics, Dylan included Biblical allusions to gain familiarity and attention of the listener. He also includes instances of oxymoron and aporia to express the doubt and senselessness of the situation in which he finds himself. Through use of these devices, Dylan establishes himself as a credible speaker who denounces the unethical actions of those being addressed in the song.

The melody of the song also adds to its rhetorical nature. Dylan uses imitation by borrowing the melody of a traditional folk song "Nottamun Town." By including this strong folk melody, Dylan evokes the sound of a music traditionally associate with protest. In this way, he associates this song with the historical traditional of protest in folk music.

A second song that draws on an appeal to character is "A Hard Rain's A Gonna Fall." Stylistically, the song uses imitation quite heavily to engage the listener and better communicate its message of protest. The song imitates the style of Lord Randall, a traditional English ballad, which takes the form of a conversation between mother and son as the son after the son has been poisoned by his lover (Marqusee). Through this imitation, Dylan encapsulates the ways by which the spirit of war and racial tension is poisoning the American youth. Through mirroring this mother-son

interaction, Dylan captures the raw emotion and appeals to the character of the listener. Throughout the interaction, the mother and son seem to explain the senseless violence that surrounds them, recognizing the evil of the situation and knowing that more destruction will ensue if things do not change.

Through use of imitation and anaphora, Dylan maintains the question and answer style, which works to question society and human nature, urging the listener to examine his or her moral perspective and the direction of society. Dylan also utilizing antithesis to draw attention to the lack of compassion observed by the speaker, One such instance is found in the line: "Heard one person starve, I heard many people laughin'". In this way, he calls in to question various unethical instances that many people do not think to consider on a daily basis.

## **Pathos**

Pathos is an appeal to emotion. As it is a natural part of the human condition to be driven by one's emotion, emotionally appeals can be very effective when used correctly. The most effective use of emotional appeals is when they are coupled with logical appeals. Although the focus may be emotional, it is very important not to make claims that cannot be backed up with logical evidence. Thus, although people are moved by emotion, we are logical being and in order for rhetoric to be effective it must contain elements of each (Corbett). I have further broken this appeal down into specific emotions in order to conduct a more in-depth and organized analysis. The subcategories are as follows: appeal to fear, sympathy, appeal to empathy, and appeal to hope.

## Appeal to Fear

The first type of emotional appeal I will discuss is the appeal to fear, which is exemplified in "The Gates of Eden." Throughout the song, Dylan makes various allusions to William Blake's "Gates of Eden", meant to remind the listener of the dismal fate to be met by society in its states of corruption (Jurek). Throughout the song, Dylan represents various metaphors in which characters search for meaning and answers in their lives and are repeatedly met by confusion and meaninglessness. This lack of sense mirrors the war-saturated society of the time and urges listeners to question their own fate if society does not change. Dylan also uses irony in stating that people are "free to do anything they wish to do but die," inferring that the chaos of the world is becoming too much for people to bear. In this way, the song uses a sense of moral fear to communicate its message of protest.

The song also uses a haunting folk melody in order to carry the fear appeal further and to evoke a spirit of traditional folk protest. In this way, a mixture of lyrics and melody are used to appeal to a sense of fear in the listener.

## Appeal to Sympathy

The second type of emotional appeal I will discuss is the appeal to sympathy, which is demonstrated through "The Lonesome Death of Hattie Carroll." Throughout this song, Dylan alludes to a factual event in which the wealthy tobacco farmer William Zantziger killed a black maid, Hattie Carroll. By employing epistrophe, Dylan concludes each verse with the same lines

*“But you who philosophize disgrace and criticize all fears  
Take the rag away from your face  
Now ain't the time for your tears”*

In these lines, Dylan evokes a sense of sympathy in the listener through denouncing the viewpoint that racial issues are to be thought about as objective matters.

Through repetition of these lines at the end of each verse, Dylan is reminding the audience of the central purpose of the song as the story progresses. Thus, he reminds listeners that racial issues are to be addressed as human issues. He builds upon this point by providing a detailed account of the story, which arouses more and more sympathy as it unfolds.

Dylan also draws on irony to show the absurdity of the issue at hand. When describing the sentence placed upon Zanziger for his crimes, Dylan states that the judge “handed out strongly, for penalty and repentance, William Zanzinger with a six-month sentence.” These lines, as less as those preceding, show the absurdity of assigning such a weak sentence after Dylan’s descriptive account of the horrific crime committed. In calling out the unfairness of the justice system and encouraging listeners to think of this crime as a human issue, rather than a race issue, Dylan appeals to the sympathy of listeners and gives voice to his protest.

“Oxford Town” is another of Dylan’s songs that uses the same type of appeal. This entire song is an allusion to an actual event in which James Meredith, a black student, fought to gain entry into the University of Mississippi and was met with adversity and discrimination. Upon his arrival at the university, many community members held violent riots, in which two people were killed. Drawing on one of the

most notable and relatable new stories of the time Dylan was able to gain interest from listeners and appeal to the sense of sympathy felt in regards to this story.

Stylistically, this song uses a folk melody in order to invoke the sense of traditional folk protest. Dylan also uses erotema and metaphors to encourage the listener to think critically about the real issues occurring at the time.

### Appeal to Empathy

In a few of Dylan's songs, an appeal to empathy is quite apparent. The first of these is "The Times They Are a-Changin'". As one of Dylan's most famous and notable songs, "The Times They Are a-Changin'" draws the listener in from the first line by using apostrophe to directly address the audience. In this way, the listener engages the speaker in a clear and direct fashion. Through this direct way of addressing the audience, Dylan forms an emotional connection with the listener and seems to ask the audience to feel with him and move toward social change as he begins to discuss the various issues for which he is protesting.

Throughout the song, Dylan uses metaphors to stylistically emphasize the changes occurring in society. One example is the line, "Your old road is rapidly agin'; Please get out of the new one if you can't lend your hand". In this way, Dylan protests those who are preventing positive social change. He calls listeners to empathize with his point and to become part of the progressive society of equality beginning to form at this time.

In the closing lines of the song, Dylan uses antithesis to allow the changes to resonate with the listener, saying:

*“The line it is drawn  
The curse it is cast  
The slow one now  
Will later be fast  
As the present now  
Will later be past  
The order is rapidly fadin’  
And the first one now will later be last  
For the times they are a-changin’”*

In this way, Dylan speaks to the progressive listener and encourages others to accept the radical changes occurring at the time, such as racial equality and expressed opposition to war, which was not common before this time.

Similar sentiments are expressed through the same means in Dylan’s “Blowin’ In The Wind”. One of Dylan’s most notable and far reaching songs, “Blowin’ In The Wind” uses a number of rhetorical devices to engage the reader in empathetic listening.

Through use of erotema, or rhetorical questions, Dylan encourages introspective thought in the listener. The song opens with the lines:

*“How many roads must a man walk down  
Before you call him a man?  
Yes, ‘n’ how many seas must a white dove sail  
Before she sleeps in the sand?  
Yes, ‘n’ how many times must the cannonballs fly  
Before they’re forever banned?  
The answer, my friend, is blowin’ in the wind  
The answer is blowin’ in the wind”*

As the song progresses, Dylan continues in this style, using erotema to elicit introspective questioning and through epistrophe, ending each verse with the same lines, reminding listener to search themselves and the world around them for the answers to the injustice facing society.



Through syndecote, Dylan repeatedly uses the phrase “one man” to stand for any man, thus appealing to the individual through universalizing these social issues. He pairs this technique with the use of various metaphors, as seen in the lines above. By relating concepts, both metaphorical and literal, Dylan artistically calls to question the values of modern society and calls listener to feel the sadness and confusion expressed in the lyrics.

### Appeal to Hope

Throughout “Chimes of Freedom,” many of the stylistic elements of classical rhetoric are at work in order to appeal to the hope of the listener in a time of political and social unrest. Through use of anaphora and epistrophe, repetition is used to reinforce themes of the song. Throughout each verse, Dylan points out different marginalized groups which are negatively impacted by war and social injustice. Each verse then concludes with the line, “An’ we gazed upon the chimes of freedom flashing”. This appeals to the hope of the engaged listener during this time of injustice. By presenting this idea of impending freedom and through use of various stylistic appeals, the lyrics of this song, coupled with its upbeat melody, appeal to the emotion of hope. In this time of conflict in United States history, presenting the opportunity for a better future without suffering was a valuable way to gain support for the movement.

Likewise, “Only A Pawn In Their Game” appeals to the listener’s sense of empathy as it speaks of the lack of control lower class people have on society’s racial tensions as poor people of all races find themselves at the mercy of those in power.

This song draws on the empathy of the listener and the lack of control they feel in the goings on of the society. The song alludes to the assassination of civil rights leader Medgar Evers by a poor white man. The song suggests that the assassination is the result of a larger social issue in which poor white people were turned against blacks by politicians in order to distract from their own lack of rights and disable any progress from happening.

Through use of epistrophe, Dylan repeats the following lines at the end of each verse:

*"But it ain't him to blame  
He's only a pawn in their game."*

The repetition of these lines reinforces the point that it is not individuals to blame for the societal hatred, but rather greater social and political systems at work. The song also includes various metaphors and similes comparing the poor white man to things such as "tools" for political gain on the part of those rich white men in power. In this way, the song not only protests the injustices of the black community, but questions greater sociological issues that cause these injustices.

### Refutation By Wit

Refutation By Wit is another appeal that is pertinent to the study of protest songs in the 1960's. Due to the nature of protest, much of the music produced in this genre was refuting the idea of war and inequality. An effective way to convey disapproval for this ideology was through the use of wit. Refutation by wit involves conveying one's point through "jests, sarcasm, and irony," of the other's claim (Corbett 326).

One song, “Talkin’ World War II Blues” is categorized as ironic due to its sound. By applying an upbeat melody to this song, Dylan conveys a spirit of ironic nonchalance to the real and imminent fear of a third world war. In conjunction with the comical and heavily ironic lyrics, this song serves as a way to contest the general acceptance of war as part of American culture at the time. Throughout the song, the speaker is relatedly told he is crazy for dreaming of a third world war until eventually the psychiatrist admits to having similar dreams. This story serves as a metaphor for the deniable of fear expressed in the American population at this time.

Another song, “It’s Alright Ma (I’m Only Bleeding)”, uses an appeal to wit as well in order to convey a strong, persuasive message to the listener. In drawing on both fear and irony, the song uses litotes to ironically understate the magnitude of the destruction caused my war. The song also uses aporia quite heavily, expressing doubt in various aspects of American society in order to point out flaws in commonly accepted beliefs.

### **Conclusion**

The results show a clear the connection between classical rhetoric and protest music of the 1960s. Starting with my review of literature, I identified previous research dealing with the relationships between protest music and persuasion and music and rhetoric. I also covered research dealing with the usefulness of classical rhetoric, which is the type of rhetoric I chose to build by analysis around. Finally, I reviewed literature dealing with the impact of protest music on the movements and cultures of the 1960s

Through my research, I was able to analyze protest music in order to identify specific rhetorical devices at use in this music. This analysis shows how exactly rhetoric was used in order to communicate the messages to the listener. By separating my analyses into themes, I was able to show clearly which specific appeals

Through use of NVIVO, I coded for rhetorical devices throughout the songs and was able to determine which devices were used and which were used the most prominently as shown in Table 4. I was also able to run a query for word frequency, as shown in Table 3, in order to determine which words reoccurred most frequently in the songs. The following two tables show the frequency of both words and rhetorical devices used throughout the songs analyzed.

Through this word frequency analysis, themes throughout the songs became more apparent and understandable. While the analysis itself gave a detailed explanation of which rhetorical devices were at work in the various songs, these data show how the frequency of devices and the frequency of devices relate to one another throughout the sample group. A number of these frequencies reflected the use of rhetorical devices throughout the songs. The words “one” and “man” occur quite often in instances of synecdoche in which “a part stands for a whole.” In this way singular words are used to create a personal connection with the listener and thus relate to the listening public as a whole. The frequency of the words “people” and “come” are a reflection of the use of apostrophe, where Dylan directly addresses a specific audience in a song. By speaking directly to a specific audience,

Dylan relates more effectively and creates a vested interest in his cause within the listener.

Other patterns reflect themes present throughout the works. First, the repetition of the word hard communicates a theme of force, hardships, and harshness through the songs. For example, throughout “A Hard Rain’s a –Gonna Fall” the preeminent “hard rain” symbolizes the hardships society will continue to face if proper action is not taken to combat societal injustices. The frequency of “now “ and “must communicate the urgency with which the movements are to take place if they are to be most effective. As these songs were written as a call to action in reaction to the atrocities Dylan observed in American society, these songs were meant to call the listener to immediate action against such injustices. The frequent use of the word war shows that although figurative language and metaphors are quite abundant throughout the songs, that Dylan is still clear and upfront when addressing the reason for the music. The high frequency of war throughout the music shows the direct nature of Dylan’s protest music as it clearly addresses the issue at hand. The frequency of “just” and “God” have moral value attached to them when used in the songs and thus exemplify the use of appeal to character. Through use of these terms, Dylan appeals to the listener’s morals and values and builds an emotional connection with the listener.

Using this method of analysis, I was able to better understand which methods of classical rhetoric were most important in these songs. I was also able to better understand themes through the word frequency table.

Through my preliminary research, I was able to show that protest music did have an effect on the progress of the revolutions of the 1960s. The music of Bob Dylan in particular had high rhetorical value in the protest movements of the 1960s. In an article published in 1967, Dylan was cited as “the leading cultural force among young people today” (Wenner). Dylan also showed passion for the movements he gave voice to during the 1960s. In 1963, he performed several of his protest songs at the March on Washington in order to give voice to the movement and persuade young people to take action against social injustice (The New Yorker). Clearly, Dylan has left an impact on American culture as just this year he was named as the Musicares Person of the Year, in order to celebrate his career and impact in the United States and worldwide.

Through this study, I was able to analyze a selected group of songs protesting both war and civil rights violations. In this way, I was able to show how elements of classical rhetoric were at use in these works, explain how protest music is an example of music as persuasion and had a significant effect on the civil rights and anti-war movements of the 1960s.

Through analysis of the songs, I showed the persuasive impact they had on the movements of the 1960s. This analysis is important because it allows us to better understand the monumental impact that protest music had on the movements of the 1960s. It also allows us to observe the importance of the foundations of rhetoric in important social movements of the twentieth century.

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Table 1

*The Study Sample of Bob Dylan's Protest Music During the 1960's*

Song	Year	Album
Masters of War	1963	The Free-Wheelin Bob Dylan
A Hard Rain's a-Gonna Fall	1963	The Freewheelin Bob Dylan
Oxford Town	1963	The Freewheelin' Bob Dylan
Talkin World War III Blues	1963	The Freewheelin' Bob Dylan
The Lonesome Death of Hattie Carroll	1964	The Times They Are A Changin
Blowin in the Wind	1964	The Times They Are a-Changin
The Times They Are a-Changin	1964	The Times They Are a-Changin
Only A Pawn In Their Game	1964	The Times They Are a-Changin
With God On Our Side	1964	The Times They Are a-Changin
Chimes of Freedom	1964	Another Side of Bob Dylan
Gates of Eden	1965	Bringing It All Back Home
It's Alright Ma (I'm Only Bleeding)	1965	Bringing It All Back Home

Table 2

*Conceptual Definitions of the Rhetorical Terms Adopted in the Analysis of the Lyrics*

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Alliteration <sup>1</sup>	repetition of initial or medial consonants in two or more adjacent words
Allusion <sup>2</sup>	reference to a famous person or event
Anaphora <sup>1</sup>	repetition of word or group of words at the beginnings of successive clauses
Antithesis <sup>1</sup>	the juxtaposition of contrasting ideas, often in parallel structure
Apophasis <sup>2</sup>	brings up a subject by pretending not to bring it up
Aporia <sup>2</sup>	expresses doubt about a fact, idea, or conclusion
Apostrophe <sup>2</sup>	a direct address to someone, whether present or absent, and whether real, imaginary, or personified
Apposition <sup>1</sup>	placing side by side two co-ordinate elements, the second of which serves as an explanation of the first
Epistrophe <sup>1</sup>	repetition of the same word or group of words at the end of successive clauses
Erotema <sup>1</sup>	(Rhetorical Question) asking a question, not for the purpose of eliciting an answer but for the purpose of asserting or denying something obliquely
Hyperbole <sup>1</sup>	the use of exaggerated terms for the purpose of emphasis or heightened effect
Irony <sup>1</sup>	use of a word in such a way as to convey a meaning opposite to the literal meaning of the word
Litotes <sup>1</sup>	deliberate use of an understatement, not to deceive someone but to enhance the impressiveness of what we say
Metaphor <sup>1</sup>	an implied comparison between two things of unlike nature that yet have something in common
Metonymy <sup>1</sup>	substitution of some attributive or suggestive word for what is actually meant – crown for king
Oxymoron <sup>1</sup>	the yoking of two terms which are ordinarily contradictory

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<sup>1</sup> Corbett, E. P., & Connors, R. J. (1965). *Classical rhetoric for the modern student* (pp. 86-94). New York: Oxford University Press.

<sup>2</sup> Harris, R. A. (2003). *Writing with clarity and style: A guide to rhetorical devices for contemporary writers*. Pyrczak Pub.

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Periphrasis <sup>1</sup>	(antonomasia) – substitution of a descriptive word or phrase for a proper name or of a proper name for a quality associated with the name
Simile <sup>1</sup>	an explicit comparison between two things of unlike nature that yet have something in common
Synecdoche <sup>1</sup>	A figure of speech in which a part stands for a whole

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Table 3

*Word Frequency in Song Sample*

<b>Word</b>	<b>Length</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Weighted Percentage</b>
hard	4	25	1.07%
one	3	25	1.07%
see	3	16	0.68%
now	3	15	0.64%
time	4	15	0.64%
got	3	14	0.60%
man	3	14	0.60%
war	3	14	0.60%
many	4	13	0.56%
people	6	13	0.56%
ain't	5	12	0.51%
come	4	12	0.51%
well	4	12	0.51%
young	5	12	0.51%
never	5	11	0.47%
tolling	7	11	0.47%
town	4	11	0.47%
god	3	10	0.43%
just	4	10	0.43%
must	4	10	0.43%

Table 4

*Use of Rhetorical Devices in Song Sample*

<b>Device</b>	<b>Number of Songs</b>	<b>Total References</b>
Anaphora	4	18
Allusion	7	17
Metaphor	5	15
Epistrophe	4	15
Erotema	3	11
Antithesis	4	9
Apostrophe	3	9
Irony	6	8
Aporia	4	7
Synecdoche	2	6
Alliteration	3	4
Litotes	1	2
Simile	1	2
Apposition	1	1
Oxymoron	1	1
Hyperbole	1	1