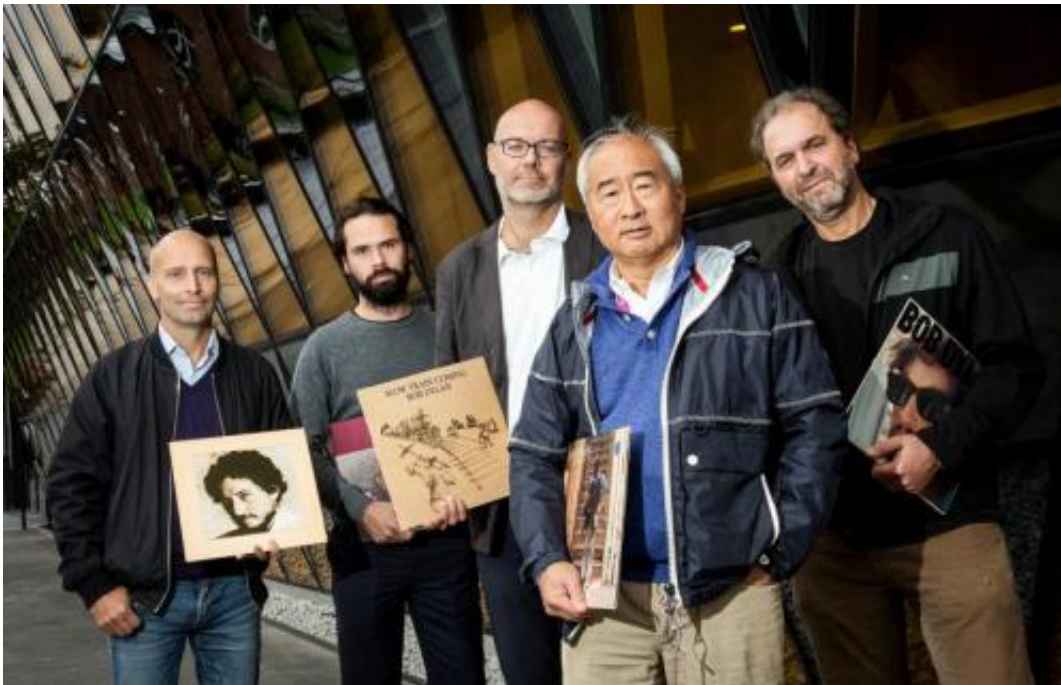


## Research band at Karolinska tuck Dylan gems into papers

September 29 2014, by Nancy Owano

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Dylan fans: Jonas Friséén, Konstantinos Meletis, Jon Lundberg, Kenneth Chien and Eddie Weitzberg. Credit: Gustav Mårtensson

(Phys.org) —A 17-year old bet among scientists at the Karolinska Institute has been a wager that whoever wrote the most articles with Dylan quotes before they retired would get a free lunch. Results included papers such as Nitric oxide and inflammation: the answer is blowing in the wind," published in 1997 in *Nature Medicine*. Then there was another cluster of members preparing an article about whether blood cells

change and become nerve cells. They entered the title, "Blood on the tracks: a simple twist of fate." The first two nitric oxide authors repeated their effort with another paper that had "The times they are a-changin' in the title. At the same time, they emailed the "blood on tracks" authors and announced an internal competition. Lisa Reimegård chronicled their multi-year wager in KI News, the publication of the Karolinska Institute.

Jon Lundberg and Eddie Weitzberg, both professors at the Department of Physiology and Pharmacology at the Karolinska Institute, were involved in the 1997 article; Lundberg laid out the rules of the bet as "The one who has written most articles with Dylan quotes, before going into retirement wins a lunch at the Solna restaurant Jöns Jacob."

Jonas Frisé and a colleague stepped up to the plate in their 2010 article published in *Cell Cycle*: "Eph receptors tangled up in two" was inspired by Dylan's "Tangled up in Blue." One year later, Lundberg and Weitzberg wrote a paper, "Dietary nitrate – a slow train coming" for *The Journal of Physiology*. As if they could stop right there. In a paraphrase of Dylan, they inserted in the paper's conclusion, "We know something is happening, but we don't know what it is – Do we, Dr Jones?" Lundberg said they were referring to a British colleague with the same surname.

The Dylan-inspired scientists have drawn attention to the articles via email. One of the competitors, Joan Frisen, said it was "important that the quote is linked to the scientific content, that it reinforces the message and raises the quality of the article as such, not the reverse."

What could draw researchers exploring cells and inflammation to Bob Dylan? Opinions reflect high esteem for Dylan among the band of scientists, opinions that include Dylan being worthy of a Nobel prize for literature to recognition of Dylan as a modern Shakespeare. A practical parallel was drawn by Konstantinos Meletis, research assistant at the

Department of Neuroscience. "A musician who merely continues down the same [highway](#) for 30 years is not one who many want to listen to," he said in KI News. "Good music is innovative, like Bob Dylan's. And the same thing applies to good research. A researcher must also try to find new and different paths."

News of their bet may also help to bolster the work of scientists who, in exploring the activities of the brain, wish to explore less simplistic notions about one side of the brain working toward art appreciation and the other toward algebra appreciation. A study on *PLOS ONE* last year from a team at University of Utah and University of Wisconsin, "An Evaluation of the Left-Brain vs. Right-Brain Hypothesis with Resting State Functional Connectivity Magnetic Resonance Imaging," said that "our analyses suggest that an individual [brain](#) is not 'left-brained' or 'right-brained' as a global property, but that asymmetric lateralization is a property of individual nodes or local subnetworks, and that different aspects of the left-dominant network and right-dominant network may show relatively greater or lesser lateralization within an individual."

**More information:** [ki.se/en/news/here-comes-the-s...ry-of-the-dylan-fans](https://ki.se/en/news/here-comes-the-s...ry-of-the-dylan-fans)

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