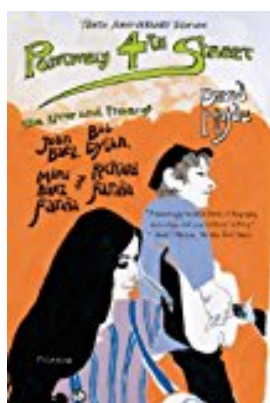


# [PDF] Positively 4th Street: The Lives And Times Of Joan Baez, Bob Dylan, Mimi Fari

David Hajdu - pdf download free book

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**Books Details:**

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**Description:**

David Hajdu (pronounced HAY-doo), the prizewinning author of the magisterial jazz biography , now steam-cleans the legend of the lost folk generation in *Positively 4th Street: The Lives and Times of*

*Joan Baez, Bob Dylan, Mimi Baez Fariña, and Richard Fariña.* What a ripping read! It's like an invitation to the wildest party Greenwich Village ever saw. You feel swept up in the coffeehouse culture that transformed ordinary suburban kids into ragged, radiant avatars of a traditional yet bewilderingly new music. Hajdu's sociomusical analysis is as scholarly as (though less arty than) Greil Marcus's work; he deftly sketches the sources and evolving styles of his ambitious, rather calculating subjects, proving in the process that genius is not individual--it's rooted in a time and place. Hajdu says Dylan heisted many early tunes (e.g., "Maggie's Farm" from Pete Seeger's "Down on Penny's Farm"): "Dylan [told] a radio interviewer that he felt as if his music had always existed and he just wrote it down ... [in fact], much of his early work had existed as other writers' melodies, chord structures, or thematic ideas." But Dylan and company made it all their own, and Hajdu vividly evokes the scenes they made.

*Positively 4th Street* is very much a group portrait. When something amazing happens, Hajdu puts you right there. The unknown Baez barefoot in the rain, bedazzling the Newport Jazz Festival and becoming immortal overnight. The irresistibly irresponsible Fariña talking his folk-star wife out of shooting him dead with his own pistol. The "little spastic gnome" Dylan transmogrified into greatness onstage, bashing Joan with the searing lyrics of "She Belongs to Me." A stoned Fariña advising Dylan to cynically hitch his wagon to Joan's rising star and "start a whole new genre. Poetry set to music, but not chamber music or beatnik jazz, man... poetry you can dance to."

The book is as delectably gossipy as *Vanity Fair* (one of Hajdu's employers). Richard married the exceedingly young beauty Mimi and helmed their career, but he might have dumped her for big sister Joan, whose madcap humor and verbal wit harmonized with his--except that he ineptly killed himself on a motorcycle first. Bob mumblingly courted both sisters, but when he cruelly taunted the insecure Joan, Mimi yanked his hair back until he cried. The account of Bob and Joan's musical-erotic passion is first-rate music history and uproarious soap opera. Hajdu's research is prodigious--even Fariña's close chum Thomas Pynchon granted interviews--and his anecdotes are often off-the-cuff funny: "[Rock manager Albert Grossman] was easy to deal with.... It wasn't till maybe two days after you would see Albert that you'd realize your underwear had been stolen." Full disclosure: Hajdu was one of my long-ago bosses at *Entertainment Weekly*, but that's certainly not why I heartily endorse this book. It's scholarship with a human face, akin to "poetry you can dance to." --*Tim Appelo* --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

**From Publishers Weekly** Sometimes, gifted people intersect at the perfect moment and spark a cultural movement. According to acclaimed biographer David Hajdu (*Lush Life*), Joan and Mimi Baez, Dylan, and Farina were of that brand of fated genius, and via romantic and creative trysts, they invented 1960s folk and its initially maligned offshoot, folk rock. But their convergence hardly emblemizes the free-loving media version of the 1960s. Egos--especially Joan Baez's and Dylan's--clashed, jealousies flared, romance was strategic. Hajdu does not dwell on Dylan's thoughtless, well-documented breakup with Joan Baez after riding to fame on her flowing skirts. Instead, he spotlights Joan's younger sister, Mimi, a skilled guitarist in her own right, and her husband, novelist-musician Farina. After divorcing leading folkster Carolyn Hester, the disarmingly groovy Farina captivated teenage Mimi via love letters, and, but for his untimely death, might have pursued Joan. Though Farina comes off as more opportunistic than Dylan, Hajdu compellingly asserts that Farina, not Dylan, invented folk rock and provided fodder for Dylan's trademark sensibilities. Hajdu provides a skillfully wrought, honest portrait that neither sentimentalizes nor slams the countercultural heyday. Photos not seen by PW. (June)Forecast: Hajdu's reputation and Dylan's 60th birthday on May 24 will win the book attention.

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