Course description, class outline and syllabus  Instructor: Peter Elman

**Title:** “A Round-Trip Road Trip of Country Music, 1950-present: From Nashville to California to Texas—and back.”

**Course Description:**
An up close and personal look at the golden era of American country music, this class will explore key movements that contributed to the explosive growth of country music as an industry, art form and subculture. The first half of this course will focus on three major regions: Nashville, California and Texas, and concentrate on the period 1950-1975. The second half will look at the women of country, discuss the making of a country song and record, look at the work of five great songsmiths, visit the country music of the 1980’s, and end with an examination of Americana music. The course will do this through lectures, photographs, recorded music, film clips, question and answer sessions, and the use of live music. The instructor will play piano, guitar and sing, and will choose appropriate examples from each region, period and style.

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**Course outline by week, with syllabus; suggested reading, listening and viewing**

**Week one: The rise of “honky-tonk” music, 1940-60:** Up from bluegrass—the roots of country music. Roy Acuff, Ernest Tubb, Hank Williams, Kitty Wells, Lefty Frizzell, Porter Wagoner, Jim Reeves, Webb Pierce, Ray Price, Hank Lochlin, Hank Snow, and the Grand Old Opry.

**Reading:**

**Listening:**
20 of Hank Williams Greatest Hits, Mercury, 1997
30 #1 Country Hits of the 1950s, 3-disc set, Direct Source, 1997

**Viewing:**
O Brother Where Art Thou, 2000, by the Coen brothers

**Week two: Country goes uptown: The Golden Years of the Nashville Sound 1960-1975:**
Eddy Arnold, Chet Atkins, Conway Twitty, Faron Young, Sonny James, Roger Miller, George Jones, Charlie Pride, Charlie Rich, Mel Tillis.

**Reading:**
Country music, U.S.A., by Bill C. Malone and Jocelyn R. Neal, the third revised edition, 2010—all about country music, with a special section on the Nashville Sound.

**Listening:**
George Jones: 16 Biggest Hits, Epic, 1998

**Viewing:**
Nashville, by Robert Altman, 1975

**Reading:**

*Outlaw: Waylon, Willie, Kris, and the renegades of Nashville, by Michael Streissguth. 2013*

*Wrong's What I Do Best: Hard Country Music and Contemporary Culture, by Barbara Ching*

**Listening:**

*Johnny Cash, At Folsom Prison, 1968*

*Honky-Tonk Heroes, Waylon Jennings, 1973*

*Red-Headed Stranger, Willie Nelson, 1975*

*Gary Stewart, Out of Hand, 1975*

*Willie Nelson and Merle Haggard, Pancho and Lefty*

**Viewing:**

*I Walk the Line. Joaquin Phoenix, Reese Witherspoon 2005*

*Payday, Rip Torn, 1973*

*Heartworn Highways, documentary, 1981*


**Reading:**

*Merle Haggard: the running kind, by David Cantwell, 2013*

*The Birth of the Bakersfield Sound, by Lawton Jiles, 2013*

**Listening:**

*Marty Robbins: Gunfighter ballads and trail songs, 1962*

*Buck Owens: All-Time Greatest Hits, Vol.1*

*Merle Haggard: 20 greatest hits*

**Viewing:**

*Billy Mize and the Bakersfield Sound, Billy Mize 2014*

**Week five: The women of country: 1955-1975; roll call at the hall of fame:** Kitty Wells, Patsy Cline, Wanda Jackson, Brenda Lee, Skeeter Davis, Loretta Lynn, Dolly Parton, Tammy Wynette.

**Reading:**

*Tammy Wynette: tragic country queen, Jimmy McDonough 2010*

*Dolly: the biography, Alanna Nash, 2002*

**Listening:**

*Patsy Cline’s 12 greatest hits, 1957-63, (this record is an absolute must!!)*

*Loretta Lynn’s Greatest Hits, Volume 1, 1968*

*Tammy Wynette, Your Good Girl’s Gonna Go Bad, 1967*

*Pieces of the Sky, Emmylou Harris 1974*

**Viewing:**

*Coal Miner’s Daughter, Sissy Spacek, Levon Helm, 1980*

*Sweet Dreams, Jessica Lange, 1985*

**Week six: The country song and the country record:** How the great songsmiths can make your day—or break your heart; an in-depth look at five of the greats. A look at the “A team” and other studio musicians who created the Nashville Sound.

**Reading:**

*He Stopped Loving Her Today: George Jones, Billy Sherrill, and the Pretty-Much Totally True Story of the Making of the Greatest Country Record of All Time, by Jack Isenhour, 2011*
Listening:
I'm So Lonesome I Could Cry, Hank Williams
I Fall to Pieces, Patsy Cline
Funny How Time Slips Away, Willie Nelson
He Stopped Loving Her Today: George Jones

Viewing:
Tender mercies, Robert Duvall
I Saw the light, by Marc Abraham, 2015

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Week seven: Country music merges with rock into the 1980's: Alabama, Rosanne Cash, Barbara Mandrell, Kathy Mattea, Reba McIntire, Ronnie Milsap, George Strait, Patty Loveless, Vince Gill, The Judds, Garth Brooks, and Tanya Tucker

Reading:
River of Time: My Descent Into Depression and How I Emerged With Hope: by Naomi Judd
Behind the Grand Ole Opry Curtain: Tales of Romance and Tragedy Hardcover – October 8, 2008 by Robert K. Oermann

Listening:
Barbara Mandrell, Spun Gold, 1983
Kathy Mattea, Willow in the Wind, 1989
Ronnie Milsap, There's No Gettin' Over Me, 1981
George Strait, Right or Wrong, 1983
Patty Loveless, Honky Tonk Angel, 1988
Vince Gill, When I Call Your Name, 1989

Viewing:
Urban Cowboy, 1980
Honeysuckle Rose, 1980

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Week eight: Americana—what it is, how it developed; similarities, differences from country: John Prine, Steve Earle, John Hiatt, Patty Griffin, Nancy Griffith, Gillian Welch, Delbert McClinton, Rodney Crowell, Lucinda Williams, Emmylou Harris again!!

Reading:
True to the Roots: Americana Music revealed, by Monte Dutton, 2006
Right By Her Roots: Americana Women and Their Song by Jewly Hight, 2011

Listening:
Rodney Crowell, Diamonds and Dirt, 1988
Emmylou Harris, Pieces of the Sky
Guitar Town, Steve Earle, 1986 MCA
Stolen Moments, John Hiatt 1990 A&M

Viewing:
Lucinda Williams - Live from Austin, Texas DVD 1998
Delbert McClinton - A Musical Conversation & Journey 2008

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These audios and videos will be played in class:
**almost all videos are available on youtube

week one
Play CD #1: Hey Good Lookin’, Hank Williams — 1951
Play video #1: Blue Yodel #1, Jimmie Rodgers — 1929
Play video #2: Wildwood Flower, Carter family 1952
Play CD #2: San Antonio Rose, Bob Wills — 1938
Play video #3: Walking the floor over you — Ernest Tubb 1961
Play CD #3: Blue Moon of Kentucky, Bill Monroe — 1947
Play CD #4: Move it on Over, Hank Williams — 1947
Play video #4: Cold Cold Heart, Hank Williams, from Kate Smith show — 1952
Play video #5: I Can’t Help it if I’m Still in Love With You, w/ Anita Carter
Play CD #5: Your Cheatin’ Heart, Hank Williams — 1950
Play CD #6: If you’ve got the $ I’ve got the Time, Lefty Frizzell — 1950

week two
play CD #1: I Walk the Line, Johnny Cash, 1956
play CD #2: Make the world go away, Eddy Arnold
play CD #3: Why Baby Why, Webb Pierce 1956, by George Jones
play video #1: In the jailhouse now, Webb Pierce/Red Sovine
play CD #4: Help Me I’m Falling — Hank Locklin, 1960
play video #2: Crazy Arms, Ray Price, 1956 / Ralph Mooney
play CD #5: He'll Have to Go - Jim Reeves, 1959, by Joe Allison
play video #3: Hello Walls, Faron Young, 1961
play CD #6: It's Only Make Believe, Conway Twitty, 1958, by Twitty
play video #4: Hello Darlin’, Conway Twitty, 1970
play CD #7: Green Green Grass of Home, Porter/1965 — by Curly Putnam
play CD #8: The Race Is On -- George Jones — 1964 — by George Jones
play video #5 White Lightning, George Jones, 1962
play video #6: The Grand Tour, George Jones, from TV show 1974
play CD #9: Folsom Prison Blues — Johnny Cash — 1968
play video #7: Ring of Fire, Johnny Cash, 1968, with Carters
play CD #10: Is Anybody Goin’ To San Antone, Charlie Pride
play CD #11: King of the Road, Roger Miller, 1965, by Roger Miller
Last date by Floyd Cramer (live)

week three
play CD #1: Red-headed Stranger: Willie Nelson
play video #1: Funny How Time Slips Away, Willie Nelson, 1997
play CD #2: Only Daddy That'll Walk the Line, Waylon Jennings 1968
play video #2: From Lost Highway: Willie Nelson
play CD #3: Are you sure Hank done it: Waylon w/ lyrics/desktop!!
play CD #4: Good-hearted Woman: Waylon and Willie 1976
play video #3: Lost Highway: Waylon, Billy Joe,
play video #: Lost Highway--Sunday AM: John/Kris
play live: Me and Bobby McGee
play CD #5: Luckenbach, Texas: Waylon/Willie—1976
play CD: Pancho and Lefty, Townes Van Zandt 1975
play video #5: Mr. Bojangles--Jerry Jeff Walker, 2002
play CD #6: Desperadoes Waiting for a Train—Guy Clark
play CD #7: Highwayman: Highwaymen—1985

week four
play video #1--California Cotton Fields—Merle 1971
CD #1 Wishful Thinking - Wynn Stewart 1959
play live: Six Days on the Road--Dave Dudley—1963
play video #2---Lost Highway: Buck Owens 16:17
CD #2 Love's Gonna Live Here - Buck Owens 1963
play video #3---Together Again—Buck Owens 1967
CD #3 Buckaroo (instrumental)—Buck Owens 1964
CD #4 Streets of Bakersfield—Buck Owens (with lyrics) 1973
CD #5 Guitars, Cadillacs—Dwight Yoakam
play video #4--From Lost Highway: Merle Haggard
play live--Mama Tried/Lonesome Fugitive--Merle Haggard
CD #6 Today I Started Loving You Again—Merle Haggard
play video #5---It’s All Going to Pot—Willie and Merle—2015
play video #6---That’s the Way Love Goes--Merle Haggard 2009
CD #7 Singing the Blues--Marty Robbins
CD #8 Big Iron—Marty Robbins
play video #7, El Paso, Marty Robbins 1960

Week five
Play CD #1: Sweet Dreams—Patsy Cline—starts the class, play piano in Ab
Play CD #2: It wasn’t god who made honky-tonk angels—Kitty Wells
Play CD #3: Right or Wrong—Wanda Jackson
Play CD #4: I’m Sorry—Brenda Lee
Play CD #5: End of the World—Skeeter Davis—play piano in Bb
Play video #1: Walkin’ after Midnight—Patsy Cline
Play CD #6: I Fall to Pieces—Patsy Cline
Play CD #7: Crazy—Patsy Cline
Play video #2: She’s Got You—Patsy Cline
Play video #3: Loretta Lynn--Don’t Come Home a-Drinkin’
Play CD #8: I’m a honky-tonk girl—Loretta Lynn
Play CD #9: Your Good Girl’s Gonna Go Bad—Tammy Wynette
Play video #4: I Don’t Wanna Play House--Tammy Wynette
Play CD #10: Stand By Your Man—Tammy Wynette
Play CD #11: Jolene—Dolly Parton
Play video #5: Coat of Many Colors—Dolly Parton
Play video #6: I will always love you—2006—Dolly Parton/ play piano C
week six
CD #1: She’s acting single, I’m drinking’ doubles—Gary Stewart 1975
Play video #1: I Can't Keep You in Love with Me—Louvin Bros, 1961
CD #2: The Christian Life—The Byrds 1968, by the Louvins
Play video #2: When I stop dreaming—Henley/Parton 2015, by Louvins
CD #3: If I could only win your love—Emmylou Harris 1975, by Louvins
CD #4: Love Hurts—Gram Parsons and Emmylou Harris/Felice/Boudleaux Bryant
play live: Bye Bye Love, by the Bryants
play video #3: Rocky Top—Osborne Brothers—1967 by the Bryants
CD #5: Oh Lonesome Me—Don Gibson, 1957, by Don Gibson
CD #6: I Can't Stop Lovin' You—Ray Charles, 1962, by Don Gibson
CD #7: Heartaches by the number—Ray Price, 1959, by Harlan Howard
CD #8: Streets of Baltimore—Bobby Bare, by Harlan Howard, Tompall Glaser
CD #9: He Stopped Loving Her Today—George Jones, 1980, by Bobby Braddock and Curly Putnam
play live: Queen of the Silver Dollar, by Shel Silverstein
Play video #4: Catfish John—Alison Krause, with Nitty Gritty Dirt Band and Randy Scruggs, 2003, by Bob McDill and Allen Reynolds

week seven:
play CD #1: Don Williams/Emmylou Harris, If I needed you 1981
play video #1: Don Williams, Good Ole Boys Like Me 1980
play video #2: Alan Jackson: Gone Country, by Bob McDill 1994
play CD #2: Rosanne Cash, Seven-year Ache, 1981
play video #3: Rosanne Cash, My baby thinks he’s a train, 1988
play CD #3: Ronnie Milsap, Daydreams about night things 1975
play video #4: George Strait, Amarillo by Morning 1983
play video #5: Reba McIntire, Fancy 1991
play CD #4: Judds, Grandpa…the good old days w/lyrics 1986
play CD #5: Kathy Mattea, 18 wheels and a dozen roses 1988
play CD #6: Patty Loveless, Blame it on your heart 1993
play video #6: Patty Loveless/Kathy Mattea, Someday Soon 1993
play CD #7: Trisha Yearwood, She’s in love with the boy 1991
play CD #8: Lacy J. Dalton, Losing kind of Love w/lyrics 1980
play CD #9: Vince Gill, I still believe in you 1992
play CD #10: Vince Gill, Whenever you come around 1994, by Vince
play video #7: Randy Travis/Josh Turner 3 wooden crosses 2006
week eight
play CD#1: Bluebird Wine, Emmylou Harris
play video #1: I couldn’t leave you if I tried—Rodney Crowell
play CD #2— Back when we were Beautiful Emmylou/Crowell
play video #2: Passionate Kisses Lucinda Williams
play video #3: Car Wheels on a Gravel Road: Lucinda
play CD #3—Thing called love—John Hiatt
play CD #4—Buffalo River Home—Hiatt
play video #4 Have a Little faith—Hiatt
play CD #5—Miss Ohio—Gillian Welch
play video #5—Gillian Welch, from “Lost Highway”
play CD#6 two more bottles of wine, Delbert McClinton
play video #6: Guitar Town—Steve Earle
play video #7: Copperhead Road—Steve Earle
play video #8: love at the five and dime--Nanci Griffith
play CD#6—Paradise by John Prine
play video #9—Souvenirs, John Prine with Steve Goodman
play CD#7—Angel from Montgomery—John Prine