

Title: American Folk Music: The Golden Age: 1950–75

Course description, outline and syllabus

The folk music that emerged in the 1950's has lasted 60 years and will last a lot longer. Why? Because of the confluence of people, politics, philosophy and social awareness that came out of the post-war era, and which ushered in a new age of enlightenment. This course will examine the soundtrack of that period and how folk music became integrated into the larger world of popular music.

Starring: Leadbelly, the Carter family, Woody Guthrie, the Almanac singers, the Weavers, Pete Seeger, Josh White, New Lost City Ramblers, Odetta, Harry Belafonte, the Kingston Trio, Bob Dylan, Joan Baez, Dave Van Ronk, Ramblin' Jack Elliott, Tom Paxton, Judy Collins. Phil Ochs, Tom Rush, Richard and Mimi Farina, Cisco Houston, Doc Watson, Kingston Trio, Peter Paul and Mary, Highwaymen, Limeliter, New Christy Minstrels, Buffy St. Marie, Ian and Sylvia, Gordon Lightfoot, Joni Mitchell, Leonard Cohen and Jesse Winchester.

Course outline

Week one: the early days: sowing the seeds of protest in a tuneful way: John Lomax, Leadbelly, Carter Family, Woody Guthrie, Almanac singers, Pete Seeger, Josh White, Weavers, New Lost City Ramblers, Odetta, Harry Belafonte.

Week two: first ladies of folk: Odetta, Barbara Dane, Carolyn Hester, Mimi Farina, Judy Collins, Sandy Denny, Joan Baez.

Week three: the Bard arrives from the North Country and takes New York by storm; the first couple of folk music; Bob Dylan and Joan Baez 1961-65.

Week four: NYC in the early 1960's: Greenwich Village, the folk magazines *Broadside* and *Sing Out*, Folkways records, Vanguard records, Jac Holzman and Elektra records, Dave Van Ronk, Ramblin' Jack Elliott, Tom Paxton, Phil Ochs, Tom Rush, Richard and Mimi Farina, Cisco Houston, Doc Watson, Judy Collins.

Week five: Folk groups who made the music accessible: Kingston Trio, Peter Paul and Mary, Highwaymen, Limeliter, Brothers Four, New Christy Minstrels.

Week six: The Canadian connection: Buffy St. Marie, Ian and Sylvia, Gordon Lightfoot, Joni Mitchell, Leonard Cohen, Jesse Winchester.

Suggested (not required) reading

1. *Bob Dylan Chronicles: Volume One* 2005, the first memoir by Dylan
2. *Bound for Glory, Woody Guthrie*. First published in 1943, this autobiography is also a superb portrait of America's Depression years, by the folk singer/activist.
3. *Folk City: New York and the American Folk Music Revival* by Stephen Petrus, 2015: A comprehensive look at the place and the period.
4. *Greenback Dollar: The Incredible Rise of the Kingston Trio* by William Bush
5. *How Can I Keep from Singing? The Ballad of Pete Seeger* by David Dunaway 2008
6. *Which Side Are You On? An Inside History of the Folk Music Revival in America*, by Dick Weissman, 2006
7. *Gone to the country: the New Lost City Ramblers* by Ray Allen, 2010

Suggested listening: audio CDs, vinyl, cassettes or downloadable

1. *Folk Years: Blowin' In the Wind*: two-disc set featuring various artists, Peter, Paul and Mary, Serendipity Singers, Brothers Four, Trini Lopez, Harry Belafonte, New Christy Minstrels, Kingston Trio, Joan Baez, Johnny Cash, Glenn Yarbrough, Pete Seeger, Tom Paxton, Chad Mitchell Trio 2002. Time Life records.
2. *Folk Songs* (that is the title): a ten-disc box set featuring Pete Seeger, Almanac Singers, Woody Guthrie, Paul Robeson, Harry Belafonte, Burl Ives, Weavers, Kingston Trio, Peter Paul and Mary, Glen Campbell, 2007, Documents
3. *The Folk Years: Yesterday's Gone: Various Artists* mainly from the 1960's: The Kingston Trio, The Rooftop Singers, The Seekers, Glen Campbell The Turtles Joan Baez Bobbie Gentry Bob Lind Trini Lopez. 2002. Time Life Records.
4. *The Golden Age of American Popular Music - The Folk Hits from the Hot 100: 1958-1966*: a 28-song CD that captures the big radio hits of the era. A fine snapshot of “what the fuss was all about” that holds up today.
5. *The Very Best of Peter Paul & Mary*: 25 of their greatest songs, released in 2005, by Rhino records. A must have for all fans of the legendary trio.
6. *Bob Dylan (1962), Freewheelin' Bob Dylan (1963), The Times they are a-changin' (1964), Another Side of Bob Dylan (1964)*. Columbia. Enough said.
7. *Pete Seeger, Broadside Ballads, Volume 2, 1963*, Folkways. A legend.
8. *Phil Ochs, I Ain't Marching any more, 1965*, Elektra. The prince of folk music.
9. *Tom Rush, The Circle Game, 1968*, Elektra. One of the greats of the folk era.
10. *Woody Guthrie – Dust Bowl Ballads 1940*, Sony Legacy. America's conscience.
11. *Tim Hardin, Tim Hardin 1, 1966, Verve forecast*. An incredible debut album by an amazingly gifted—and tortured—singer/songwriter.
12. *Gordon Lightfoot - Complete Greatest Hits—20 songs by the king of all Canadian folk singers. 2002*, Rhino records.

Suggested viewing: DVD or streaming, you tube clips

1. *The other side of the mirror: Dylan live at Newport Folk Festival 1963-1965*
2. *American roots music*; documentary, 2001, directed by Jim Brown. PBS
3. *The Carter Family--Will the circle be unbroken*, American Experience, PBS 2005
4. *The American folk blues festival, 1962-1966*, Hip-O Records 2003, Muddy Waters, Sonny Boy Williamson, Buddy Guy, John Lee Hooker,
5. *Inside Llewyn Davis, 2014*, CBS films, directed by the Coen brothers.
6. *A Mighty Wind, 2003*, Warner Brothers, directed by Christopher Guest.
7. *O Brother, Where Art Thou*, Touchstone, 2000, dir. by the Coen brothers
8. *Bound for glory, 1976*, dir. by Hal Ashby, MGM, starring David Carradine
9. *Alice's Restaurant, 1969*, dir. by Arthur Penn, starring Arlo Guthrie
10. *Phil Ochs: There but for Fortune 2010*, dir. by Kenneth Bowser
11. *No direction Home. 2005*, dir. by Martin Scorsese—traces Bob Dylan's career from 1961-1966--208 minutes but worth it.

In-class playlists (what I will play or show in class)

week one:

CD #1. This Land is Your Land to start class (Woody Guthrie)

CD #2. Rock Island Line (Leadbelly)

CD #3. Cotton Fields (Leadbelly)

video clip #1: Leadbelly, Goodnight Irene 1938

Live: Pete, Midnight Special

CD #4. Can the Circle be Unbroken—(Carter Family)

video clip #2—wildwood flower—carter family, 1949

video clip #3---John Henry/Woody G/Brownie McGee/Sonny Terry 1946

CD #5—Do Re Mi, Woody Guthrie

CD #6. Round and Round Hitler's Grave (Almanac Singers)

video clip #4: Paul Robeson sings to Scottish miners 1949—Joe Hill

CD #7. Pay Me My Money down (The Weavers)

video clip #5: Pete Seeger, "Wasn't There a Time" (7 minutes)

CD#8. They call the wind Maria—Leon Bibb 1963

CD #9. Freedom Road (Josh White)

CD #10. Ain't Got No Home (Cisco Houston)

video clip #6: Belafonte: Mama Look a Boo Boo w/ Nat Cole 1957

video clip #7 :Belafonte: on racism, patriotism and war CBC 1967

week two:

CD #1—Ain't got no grave—Odetta

video #1---Freight Train—Libba Cotten

CD #2—Trouble in mind—Barbara Dane

CD #3—900 miles—Barbara Dane

CD #4—Carry On—Carolyn Hester

CD #5—Pack up your sorrows—Mimi and Richard Farina

video clip #2—Someday Soon—Judy Collins

CD#6—Both sides now—Judy Collins

CD #7—Who Knows where the time goes?—Sandy Denny

CD #8. John Riley—Joan Baez, 1960, from her 1st album

CD #9: House of the Rising Sun—Joan Baez

video clip #3: Joan Baez *Don't think twice* 1964 awesome solo version

video clip #4: "Festival" 1965--*Farewell Angelina*, Joan Baez

CD #10: *Love is just a four-letter word*-- Joan Baez

week three:

CD #1. Hard Rain's Gonna Fall—starts class—

CD #2: Song for Woody

video #1: Pretty Boy Floyd Dylan 1988 in Oakland

CD #3: Blowin' in the Wind

CD #4: Don't think twice

video #2: Only a pawn in their game live at Newport 1963

CD #5—Times they are a changin'

CD #6: When the Ship Comes In—with lyrics

video #3: Mr. Tambourine Man—Newport 1965

video #4: Chimes of Freedom from Newport Folk Festival 1964

video #5: It's all over now, Baby Blue, Newport 1965

week four:

CD Track #1—I ain't marchin' any more—Phil Ochs

CD Track #2—Sittin' on top of the world—Doc Watson

CD Track #3—He was a friend of mine—Dave Van Ronk

CD Track #4—Careless Love—Dave Van Ronk

video clip #1--Portland Town/Mule Skinner Blues— Pete Seeger & Ramblin' Jack Elliott

CD Track #5—Last Thing on my Mind—Tom Paxton

CD Track #6—No Regrets—Tom Rush

video clip #2—Phil Ochs #1 When I'm Gone

video clip #3-- Phil Ochs #2 Feud with Dylan

video clip #4-- Phil Ochs #3 Love me I'm a Liberal, There but for Fortune

CD Track #7—Changes—Phil Ochs

week five:

CD #1--*Greenback Dollar*, Kingston Trio

CD-#2—*Early in the Morning*—Peter, Paul and Mary

CD-#3—*Roll In My Sweet Baby's Arms*—Lost City Ramblers

CD-#4—*Greenfields*--Brothers Four

CD-#5—*Wayfaring Stranger*--Limeliter

CD-#6—*500 Miles*--Journeyman

video clip #1-- Kingston Trio Story--el matador/ shady grove, lonesome

CD-#7—*Tom Dooley*--Kingston Trio

video clip#2--Kingston Trio Story *Gambler*

video clip#3—KT, *Where have the Flowers Gone*

video clip #4—*Green, Green/New Christy Minstrels*

CD-#8—*Today*—New Christy Minstrels

CD-#9—*Michael Row the Boat Ashore*—Highwaymen

CD-#10— *Walk Right in*--Rooftop Singers

video clip #5--Festival: *Hammer song*/Peter Paul Mary

#11— *Blowin' in the Wind*--Peter Paul & Mary

video clip #6—Festival, *Times they are changing*, Peter, Paul, and Mary

week six:

CD #1—Universal Soldier-- Buffy Saint Marie—starts class

video clip #1—Codeine--Buffy Saint Marie

CD #2—Four Strong Winds—Ian and Sylvia

video clip #2--Early Morning Rain--Ian and Sylvia

video clip #3--BBC live 1972 Lightfoot--Affair on 8th avenue

CD#3—Wreck of the Edmund Fitzgerald—Gordon Lightfoot

play live—The Losin' End

CD #4—Only love can break your heart

CD #5---Heart of Gold

video clip #4—Helpless, Neil Young, from The Last Waltz 1976

CD#6—Suzanne—Leonard Cohen,

CD#7—Hey, that's no way to say Goodbye—Leonard Cohen

video clip #5—Hallelulah, Leonard Cohen live