

Throwback Thursday: Review of Green Day's *Dookie* (1994)

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Remember the nineties? They produced some of the best music of our time. There is nothing I would rather do on a Friday night than chill with friends, eat, and take in the alternative rock sounds of R.E.M. or Soundgarden. When I reminisce, I don't remember the guitars, the drums, or the flamboyant outfits from the seventies and eighties. I remember the lyrics and the experimentation of those bands that wanted punk back. One band who represents this era of music is Green Day. The band has been very political in recent years and their sound has evolved into something old Green Day fans may no longer recognize. However, I don't want to discuss "American Idiot" or "21st Century Breakdown." I want to talk about "Dookie."

In 1994, Green Day reached mainstream popularity with "Dookie," their first album released through their new label, Reprise Records. Until then, the band had limited success with albums like "1,039/Smoothed Out Slappy Hours" (1991) and "Kerplunk" (1992). Even though they often received criticism from the Indie scene and were frequently referred to as sellouts, singles from "Dookie" were played on the radio, MTV (back when MTV actually played music), and to all of the grateful masses of skaters everywhere.

The song "Burnout" starts off the album strong and the tracks which follow continue this contagious energy. When the fourth track, "Longview" starts, you can't help but tap along to the beat: Ba-bum ba-bum ba-bum ba-bum! Everyone remembers this song. It's impossible to deny its impact. The band's first single in 1994, "Longview," encapsulates the album's tale of living day-to-day, being bored so far out of your mind that you just have to get up and do something.

The album version of "Welcome to Paradise" brings its listeners back to the unique style of punk rock "Dookie" is known for. This track will liberate you from your boring house with nothing to do and places you in an imagined paradise. However, this song is so good it ends up making this paradise a reality.

“Basket Case” is one of the band’s biggest hits off of the album. Tracks like “Pulling Teeth” and “Sassafras Roots” are overshadowed by its intensity. Some songs are just more memorable than others. “Basket Case” is also one of the most relatable songs on the CD. It’s the one that will always be remembered and everyone wanted to learn how to play. And behold, the band has a whole Rock Band game to appease the love of plastic guitars in us all.

“When I Come Around” slows the album down just a little before “Coming Clean” and “In The End” leaves us with fast beats thumping in our hearts. Although Green Day sends us away from home in this album, the band also reminds us that the freedom we eventually saw as glorious can become unfulfilling with time. We’re getting tired of the free life. We’ve had enough of the homesickness, cheap beer and campus café food. We’re listening to “Dookie,” pondering the universe, and thinking we may have made a mistake somewhere along the line- not in the music, but something deeper inside that the music pointed us to. But hey, it’s all good. The beat’s great and we’re reminded that life’s not too bad. For providing awesome sounds of nineties punk rock and giving us the chance to hear them whine, I give Green Day’s “Dookie” 4.5/5 Hats.