

# Folk singer achieves postmortem popularity

*Nick Drake's poetic folk songs are resurfacing decades after his premature death.*

By Max Socol  
Reporter

He was regarded as a musical genius all of his life. All 26 years of it.

Nick Drake was a quasi-famous folk musician of the late 70's, and his music, while it sold poorly, impressed nearly everyone who listened to it. Drake recorded three albums, "Five Leaves Left," "Bryter Layter," and "Pink Moon." The critics hailed all as musical masterpieces. Said "Best Magazine" of the album Pink Moon: "The songs of Nick Drake are like whispered poems, and their profound charm, all in nuances where humor and emotions are confusedly entwined, has something ethereal."

Drake, who loomed at the height of 6'3", was a self-criticizing introvert, described by his parents as hating his imposing appearance and spending a good amount of time by himself, practicing his music. He often spent late nights

awake, playing songs over and over again on his guitar.

Tragedy was destined to strike the Drake family. Only three years after the recording of "Pink Moon," Drake killed himself with an overdose of Tryptizol, a drug he took to fight his chronic insomnia. The coroner, and those who knew Drake best, pronounced it a suicide.

Now, 30 years later, Drake's music is beginning to make a comeback as it rises in popularity with the general public.

A good deal of Drake's newfound popularity can be attributed to television. Two of his songs have recently been used in TV commercials: "Know" from Pink Moon was used in the past year in a Nike commercial, and, more recently, "Pink Moon," the title track to the album of the same name, was used in a Volkswagen ad.

"Pink Moon" has been described as one of Drake's eerier pieces of music. It was written only three years before his suicide in 1974, and the lyrics seem to speak of an encroaching lunacy: "I saw it written and I saw it say, Pink moon is on its way. None of you will stand so tall. Pink moon is gonna get you all. Pink, pink, pink, pink,

pink moon. It's a pink, pink, pink, pink, pink moon."

These lyrics, accompanied only by Drake's acoustic guitar and the occasional piano key combine to form an unsettling tune, and seem to give clues as to what Drake's mind was going through during his final years.

The few years before Drake's death were punctuated with irregularity for himself and those who knew him. When Pink Moon was released, it came with a statement by Island Records, Inc., included with each album. The statement explained that no one at Island knew where Drake was or where he was living, nor how they had even come to be in possession of his third album.

Drake was actually living with his parents at the time, as his breakdown progressed further and further. He would on one day become interested in such random hobbies as violin and fishing, and happily inform his parents that he would take these up as careers. The next day, he would be entirely unaware of ever having said any such thing.

Quirks like these continued throughout the final years of Drake's life. On the evening before his death, he said good night to his mother unusually early, and then took all of the sleeping pills he could find. His mother found him dead late the next morning.

Drake's unusual and malleable style, combined with these recent exposures, has brought his music to the attention of students at Grimsley. Travis Diehl, a sophomore said, "His music is really good. I think it is making a comeback, and it should. It's worth listening to."

Diehl added, "I found out about him through that VW commercial, and then I went and got some more of his music."

Drake, while still one of the lesser-known artists of his time, is clearly back on the rise, and while he may no longer be alive, his music has bested the test of time.



Internet graphic

"Pink Moon," filled with poetic lyrics and simple melodies is characteristic of the enigma that was Nick Drake.



Dunlap photo

ROTC representatives at the Veterans Celebration at Guilford Courthouse Park. Quentin Murrey and Nick Cline (second and third from left) look on as "General Lee" shakes the hand of LTC McKayhan.

## ROTC molds members' lives beyond military

*With a new leader and a new plan, Grimsley ROTC offers valuable life training.*

By Manecia Dilworth  
Reporter

Marching and merging from left to right is not the basis of ROTC. This auxiliary advised by Sergeant Major Dunlap and Lieutenant Colonel McKayhan is a rigorous course of learning how to unite. Functioning as a team is the foundation of this class. "Like being on a football team or in Madrigals, it is more than a course. ROTC is a sense of belonging," said SGM Dunlap.

There are many misconceptions about JROTC. For starters, this is not a class to practice being GI Joe or to dress out in green attire everyday. Most importantly, you are not obligated to join the Army.

However, if you decide to join the Army or another military branch, you can be placed at a higher rank and receive a scholarship to the school of your choice.

Our new ROTC teacher, Lieutenant Colonel McKayhan has spent 23 years in the Army and is trying to put a new turn to ROTC by encompassing both technology and more productive leadership skills.

"I want to motivate young people to be better citizens," said Colonel McKayhan.

According to Colonel McKayhan, these students are learning the necessities for everyday life situations, in which knowing how to communicate with people of different backgrounds as well as different social groups can prepare the students for the "real" world.

Some activities that Colonel McKayhan has included are peer-led class discussions. This way students can learn from a peer and in turn the peer leader can get the experience to prepare and organize a lesson or class discussion. Most importantly, the student in charge of the lesson or group activity learns how to articulate and speak out in front of a class.

Senior Gerald Durham, a Cadet Major, said, "I was a Company Commander and was in charge of a large group of people. If someone failed, it was reflected on me."

According to the students of this class, JROTC does not only help to develop true leadership skills, but it also implements responsibility.

JROTC also prepares students for the future according to Gerald Durham. "Because JROTC teaches you respect, integrity, social skills, and other character traits that you will need to be successful in life, it is the first approach towards beginning a new path," said Durham.

JROTC is involved in an array of activities. From repelling and navigating to setting fundraisers for veterans, JROTC is absolutely

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-SGM Dunlap

involved. They also help with the Special Olympics by displaying the flags and passing out awards. JROTC is saliently a part of the parades in Greensboro and in other counties.

Despite the inspiring qualities this class offers, not many girls are interested. Out of 90 ROTC students at Grimsley, only 30 are girls.

Shaquita Shuler, a junior and Second Lieutenant, has been in JROTC for 3 years. Shuler is also the only girl on staff. "I would strongly encourage girls to join JROTC because you do not have to be physically fit, it is not based on muscles, but how you use your brain."

ROTC members take pride in what they do, and they reflect this pride through medals and uniforms. "Earning awards and wearing your uniform is not a punishment, but a display of your accomplishments and distinction," said SGM Dunlap.

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