

## Jack and Diane

(John Mellencamp)

Little ditty about Jack and Diane  
Two American kids growin' up in the  
heartland  
Jack, he's gonna be a football star  
Diane's debutante backseat of Jacky's car

Suckin' on a chili dog outside the Tastee  
Freez  
Diane's sittin' on Jacky's lap  
He's got his hand between her knees  
Jacky say, "Hey Diane, lets run off behind a  
shady tree  
Dribble off those Bobby Brooks slacks  
Let me do what I please"  
And Jacky say

Oh yeah, life goes on  
Long after the thrill of livin' is gone  
Oh yeah say life goes on  
Long after the thrill of livin' is gone  
They walk on

Jacky sits back, collects his thoughts for the  
moment  
Scratches his head and does his best James  
Dean

"Well then, there Diane, we ought to run off  
to the city"  
Diane says, "Baby, you ain't missin'  
nothing"  
But Jacky say

Oh yeah, life goes on  
Long after the thrill of livin' is gone  
Oh yeah say life goes on  
Long after the thrill of livin' is gone

Gonna let it rock  
Let it roll  
Let the Bible belt come and save my soul  
Hold on to sixteen as long as you can  
Changes come around real soon  
Make us women and men

Oh yeah, life goes on  
Long after the thrill of livin' is gone  
Oh yeah say life goes on  
Long after the thrill of livin' is gone

Little ditty about Jack and Diane  
Two American kids doing the best they can

"Jack & Diane" is a 1982 hit rock song written and performed by American singer-songwriter John Mellencamp, then performing as "John Cougar." It appears on Mellencamp's album *American Fool*. It was chosen by the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) as one of the Songs of the Century. The single spent four weeks at number one on the *Billboard Hot 100* in 1982, and, to date, is Mellencamp's most successful hit single.

According to Mellencamp, "Jack & Diane" was based on the 1962 Tennessee Williams film *Sweet Bird of Youth*. He said of recording the song: "'Jack & Diane' was a terrible record to make. When I play it on guitar by myself, it sounds great; but I could never get the band to play along with me. That's why the arrangement's so weird. Stopping and starting, it's not very musical." Mellencamp has also stated that the clapping wasn't supposed to be included in the finished song. It was recorded with the clapping in order to help keep tempo and then it was to be removed. However, he realized the song did not work without it.

The song was recorded at Criteria Studios in Miami, Florida, was produced by Mellencamp and Don Gehman (with Gehman also engineering), and backing Mellencamp were guitarists/backing vocalists Mick Ronson, Mike Wanchic, Larry Crane, drummer Kenny Aronoff, bassist/backing vocalist Robert Frank, and keyboardist Eric Rosser.

In 1982, producer and guitarist Mick Ronson worked with Mellencamp on his *American Fool* album, and in particular on "Jack & Diane." In a 2008 interview with *Classic Rock* magazine, Mellencamp recalled:

"Mick was very instrumental in helping me arrange that song, as I'd thrown it on the junk heap. Ronson came down and played on three or four tracks and worked on the *American Fool* record for four or five weeks. All of a sudden, for 'Jack & Diane,' Mick said 'Johnny, you should put baby rattles on there.' I thought, 'What the fuck does put baby rattles on the record mean?' So he put the percussion on there and then he sang the part 'let it rock, let it roll' as a choir-ish-type thing, which had never occurred to me. And that is the part everybody remembers on the song. It was Ronson's idea."