



# Recombo DNA: The story of Devo, or how the 60s became the 80s

*Kevin C. Smith*

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Devo may have become synonymous with the crass commercialism of 80s new wave, but many of their inspirations and guiding principles are firmly rooted in the idealism of the 60s. They took a willfully non-traditional approach to the surprisingly conservative world of rock music, seeking inspiration instead from Dada and Pop Art, comic books and homemade electronics, and in the process becoming a sort of musical Zelig, crossing paths with everything from late 60s psychedelia to punk, krautrock to new wave. Their idiosyncratic philosophy may not always have been consistent, but it served as a deep well of inspiration, and led to them working with such legendary characters as art-rock pioneer Brian Eno and Beatles/Bowie engineer Ken Scott. Published to coincide with the groups 40th anniversary in 2013, *Recombo DNA* is the first book to evaluate in the proper context the innovations and accomplishments of this truly groundbreaking band. Beginning in 1970, with the transformative effects of the Kent State University shootings which the band-members witness firsthand, and ending a decade later with Devo on the cusp of superstardom (with "Whip It"), it traces the sounds and ideas that the group absorbed and in turn brought to prominence as unlikely rock stars. For anyone who has ever wondered where the band who fell to earth came from, here it the answer.

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