

WE MUST REPEAT:
CRITICAL EDITION OF DEVO'S
“JOCKO HOMO”

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By

JADE MCDUGALL

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Canada

OR

Dean
College of Graduate Studies and Research
University of Saskatchewan
107 Administration Place
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan S7N 5A2
Canada

ABSTRACT

This project sets out to create a critical edition of the DEVO song “Jocko Homo,” which is found on multiple releases throughout the band's career, most notably on their breakthrough studio album *Q: Are We Not Men? A: We Are DEVO!* The album recording was used as the base text for this edition (the words themselves determined by what is heard on the album and the formatting determined by the lyric sheet which accompanies the album), with variants from five other officially-released recordings included as footnotes. Explanatory notes are also included at the end of the text, to illuminate surrounding contexts and allusions. Finally, an appendix is attached featuring an early live performance found on the bootleg album *DEVO Ultracore 1974-77*, along with explanatory notes. While it was not included in the main body of the project on the basis of its being an unofficial fan release, it is still worth examining as an early version of “Jocko Homo.”

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

TTAD: In The Beginning Was the End: The Truth About De-Evolution

DEVO's 1976 short film, directed by Chuck Statler featuring "Secret Agent Man" and "Jocko Homo." This award-winning video encapsulates DEVO's aesthetic which, as Casale explains, was intended to be a sort of hybrid between German Expressionist film and a McDonald's commercial ("Casale and Mothersbaugh"). The film won first prize at the 1977 Ann Arbor Film Festival.

HDVI: Hardcore DEVO Version

The earliest recorded version of "Jocko Homo," a rough four-track demo used in *TTAD* and later resurrected on *Hardcore DEVO: Volume One*. Also used in the soundtrack for the game *Adventures of the Smart Patrol*.

DLMY: DEVO Live: The Mongoloid Years Version

Version taken from a memorable performance on Halloween 1975 in which DEVO was booked (allegedly as a practical joke) to open for Sun Ra, and the first time "Jocko Homo" was played live. The version on the album is abridged from the actual performance, which is rumoured to have stretched over thirty minutes and according to Jerry, incited the audience to "invade the stage" and threaten the band in an attempt to make them stop playing (Ziegler). Eventually, as heard on the album, the band's equipment is forcibly unplugged and an altercation takes place between band members and the promoters.

BBR: Booji Boy Version

Version of "Jocko Homo" released in 1977 as a B-side to the "Mongoloid" single under DEVO's independent label, Booji Boy Records, and under Stiff Records in the UK. Re-released on DEVO compilations *Greatest Misses* (1990) and *Pioneers Who Got Scalped: The Anthology* (2000).

BSEP: Be Stiff EP Version

Version of "Jocko Homo" released in 1978 as the first track on the 12" version of the *Be Stiff* EP released in the UK under Stiff Records. This track is nearly identical to the Booji Boy release, save for a few incidental musical variations.

Q&A: Q: Are We Not Men? A: We Are DEVO! Version

The version of "Jocko Homo" found on DEVO's first full-length studio album *Q: Are We Not Men? A: We Are DEVO!* The album was released in 1978 on Warner Brothers in the US and Virgin in the UK. This version is also found on the DEVO compilations *Greatest Hits* (1990) and *Hot Potatoes: The Best of DEVO* (1993).

NICBT: Now It Can Be Told Version

Taken from a live performance at The Palace in Hollywood, CA on December 9, 1988, this version of "Jocko Homo" is also known as the "Sad Version," and was released in 1989 as the first track on *Now It Can Be Told: DEVO at the Palace*.

INTRODUCTION TO THE TEXT

This project sets out to create a critical edition of the DEVO song “Jocko Homo,” which is found on multiple releases throughout the band's career, most notably on their breakthrough studio album *Q: Are We Not Men? A: We Are DEVO!* The title of the album itself is taken from the call-and-response found in “Jocko Homo,” which has been played at every live performance the band has given since the song was written. This song, perhaps more than any other, is crucial to the understanding of the band's central philosophy – though certainly not the only required text – and the lyrics are thickly layered with devolutionary meaning and mythos, perhaps surprisingly so given the relative brevity of the song and perceived (if incorrect) novelty-act reputation of the group. Examination of the lyrics and their variations adds significantly to the understanding of “Jocko Homo” and DEVO as a whole; doing so unearths additional context, references and artistic choices that may be otherwise overlooked – windows into their contradictory, warped and hideous “beautiful world.” More generally, readings of DEVO yield readings of the modern hominid; in songs such as “Jocko Homo,” humanity is confronted with a vision of itself reflected in a musical funhouse mirror – lumpy, unattractive, yet perhaps more accurate than we would like to admit.

For those unfamiliar with the group, DEVO is a seminal new-wave band based in Akron, Ohio whose classic-era core members consisted of Gerald V. (Jerry) Casale, Mark Mothersbaugh, Robert (Bob 1) Mothersbaugh, Robert (Bob 2) Casale and Alan Myers, and who will likely be remembered by casual observers as the group who wrote “Whip It” in 1980 and wore unusual headgear in the accompanying music video. However, their legacy runs far deeper than a flowerpot hat – the proper terminology, incidentally, is “energy dome” – to their extensive cult following; “Whip It” hardly scratches the surface of DEVO's philosophy of “devolution” (alternately spelled de-evolution). The group's influence in the musical world is formidable; contemporaries such as David Bowie, Iggy Pop, Brian Eno, Neil Young and David Byrne have all expressed a strong admiration for DEVO, and they have been listed as a key influence upon groups from subsequent generations such as Nirvana, Black Flag, Polysics, The Black Keys and The Smashing Pumpkins. The band produced their best-loved and most-celebrated output in their first four albums, *Q: Are We Not Men? A: We Are DEVO!* (1978), *Duty Now for the Future* (1979), *Freedom of Choice* (1980), and *New Traditionalists* (1981). Only one of these albums, *Freedom of Choice*, produced anything resembling a mainstream chart-topper (“Whip It” went to #14 on the Billboard charts), and some might argue, rightfully so. The very reasons they are much-beloved by their cult following are the musical perversity, dark humour and absurdist

devolutionary philosophy of their songs, as well as the goofy-yet-disturbing imagery of their videos, all of which conspire to keep DEVO far away from mainstream acceptance. Fittingly enough, the group had its origins in an environment of turbulence and subversive thought, specifically during the Vietnam War in “a cafeteria in Kent [State University] where all the freak types went” (Warmowski).

DEVO originally came into being not as a musical group, but rather as an amorphous artistic project composed of loosely-associated students headed up by Bob Lewis and Jerry Casale. In the years leading up to 1970, the two were studying at Kent State and engaging in an unprecedented commerce of ideas amongst students and a flood of “freshly minted professors,” who “changed Kent State from a sleepy commuter campus to a hot bed of radical thought and action” (Lewis). Their first co-operative artistic project, according to Lewis, involved altering the envelopes for Kent State's literary publication with a rubber stamp featuring “a graphic of missionary position sexual intercourse” made by Jerry, and customizing each with dialogue (Warmowski). Around this time, they were also in the process of recording the first prototypical DEVO songs and refining their philosophy, which was “meant to be applied in the same way that deconstructionist theory is applied so that you could at create a DEVO spin on whatever aesthetic, event, item, product happened to be in front of you” (Warmowski). Lewis elaborates upon some of their main influences:

Well, we were more of your Noam Chomsky / B.F. Skinner types, you know, “We’re only smart monkeys, let’s not get too snotty.” Which had the ability to piss off the SDS [Students for a Democratic Society] and the Young Republicans equally. And we are. We’re the smartest, meanest monkeys. The anthro ideas worked in to the art in that way, and it was universally unexpected by both mainstream and counterculture. (Warmowski)

This anthropological slant of devolution simultaneously skewers both religious and pseudo-evolutionary concepts of human elevation and progress; indeed in DEVO's view, humanity is an assortment of the “smartest, meanest monkeys,” contrary to anthropocentric creationist views, but crucially, they also reject any evolutionary possibility of humanity achieving ever-greater degrees of intelligence or perfection. Rather, devolution theory states that humanity will regress into animalistic tendencies (most prominently a sub-human level of intelligence and empathy), contrary to the commonly-held belief in evolutionary progress.

Technically, devolution is premised upon a somewhat faulty interpretation of evolutionary theory – evolution does not countenance any idea of progress 'backward,' since even a development

toward ancestral stages is still considered forward evolution (Dougherty) – however, the regression that DEVO posits is primarily a societally-driven one. With characteristic disregard for political correctness, they predict and claim to be witnessing a process of degeneration resulting from the proliferation and tolerance of stupidity in the population, in conjunction with a corporatized mentality that favours conformity and consumerism. In DEVO's vision, the human species becomes ever more preoccupied with irrelevance, blindly submitting to authority and ignoring potential threats in favour of consumption and passive entertainment, their main aspirations centred upon products designed to meet needs that are created solely by the engine of commerce. Reptilian impulses emerge as a result of our increasing desire for indulgence, and our dependence upon superfluous technology and its attendant dehumanization. DEVO sought to reflect this state of affairs in their music and live performances, rejecting the “excesses of rock at the time” and developing their characteristic early art-punk sound; as Lewis explains, “there was a kind of an advantage to applying the DEVO philosophy to music. It could mask a myriad of musical inabilities, allowing us to say 'we want it to sound that way'” (Warmowski). Influences such as Captain Beefheart, Robert Johnson and Frank Zappa combined and devolved into the earliest DEVO songs (prior to any involvement from the Mothersbaugh family) such as “I Need a Chick,” “Be Stiff” and “Auto Modown,” all of which can be found on the *Hardcore DEVO* demo compilations (Warmowski).

The event that had the most significant impact upon the emerging DEVO philosophy occurred May 4th, 1970 when a group of Kent students protesting on-campus were subjected to gunfire from the National Guard, killing four and injuring nineteen. Jerry was among the protesters, and witnessed the deaths of two of his friends – Allison Krause and Jeffrey Miller. Jerry describes the effect the shooting had upon him: “All I can tell you is that it completely and utterly changed my life. I was a white hippie boy and then I saw exit wounds from M1 rifles out of the backs of two people I knew. [...] I stopped being a hippie and I started to develop the idea of devolution. I got real, real pissed off” (Knight). Many punk musicians describe the point at which they 'cut their hair' and for Jerry it was this event. Pacifist ideals were replaced by the anger, contempt and cynicism that roil beneath the surface of DEVO's music, masked by detachment and irony but always threatening to overturn the group's carefully-maintained veneer of absurdity.

It was also around 1970 that Mark Mothersbaugh joined the group. Jerry recalls, “The reason I even found out who Mark was is that I saw an art decal plastered on a trophy case in one of the buildings at Kent State of a man puking on the moon, and then I said, 'Who is this guy?’” (Doherty).

Mark brought musical and lyrical virtuosity to the group, as well as the magnetic stage personality that he would later develop. He would, in essence, become the public face of DEVO: abstracted, awkward, somehow vulnerable but protected by his own ludicrousness – a combination that served as foil to Jerry's incisive wit, confrontational bombast and barely-contained rage against humanity. Together they, much like DEVO as a whole, skirted the boundaries of an acceptable public persona, at once repellent and endearing. The band changed lineups periodically over the course of the next few years, for a time playing as a quartet consisting of Mark on keyboards and vocals, Bob Mothersbaugh (later on known as Bob 1) on guitar, Jim Mothersbaugh on drums, and Jerry on bass and vocals – with Bob Lewis occasionally joining in on guitar. During this time, they regularly played in the Kent and Akron areas, including a performance opening for the cult John Waters trash film *Pink Flamingos* (Prufer).

It was in their four-piece incarnation in 1976 that DEVO produced their award-winning short film *In the Beginning Was the End: The Truth About De-Evolution*, starring Mark as the iconic, baby-headed Booji Boy (pronounced “boogie boy”). The film's primary title is derived from a thoroughly absurd pseudoscientific publication by Oscar Kiss Maerth, *The Beginning Was the End*, which posits that humans emerged as a result of certain apes cannibalizing the brains of other apes, leading to a disproportionate development of brain tissue and sex drive in humans and which, through the insanity caused by pressure on the inside of their skulls, will ultimately result in the self-destruction of humanity – a prototypical articulation of devolutionary theory. The film itself opens with the band dressed in industrial jumpsuits and clear plastic faces – mass-produced identical copies that belie the man beneath – apparently finishing up a long day at the factory. They pile into a smashed-up car and travel to a jam space before proceeding into a warped rendition of “Secret Agent Man” with Jim on a home-rigged electronic drum kit, Jerry on bass, Bob 1 on lead guitar and lead vocals, and Mark/Booji Boy on keys. Intercut with the band's performance are brief scenes such as two ape-headed men in boxer shorts spanking a woman who wears a grotesque sad-faced mask, using Nixon/Mao ping-pong paddles; Mark wearing a JFK mask and garish clothing, dancing awkwardly with a young woman; Jerry as the “Chinaman” character, wearing a set of novelty glasses and gesturing toward a coat-hanger styled as a woman's spread legs. Here the strong undercurrent of repressed sexuality run amok throughout DEVO's oeuvre makes its visual debut. There follows a scene in which Booji delivers important papers from the Chinaman to his father, General Boy – played on multiple occasions by Robert Mothersbaugh Sr., who must certainly qualify as one of the most supportive fathers in music – and after a brief interlude of neon lights spelling D-E-V-O to a riff from “Mechanical Man,” the group

launches into its video for “Jocko Homo.”

In the segment for “Jocko Homo,” Mark stands at the front of a lecture hall decked out in a white lab coat and speed-swimming goggles, and recites the lyrics to an audience who all wear medical caps, hygienic masks and sunglasses, which conspire to obscure their faces and lend a disturbing sense of anonymity to the group. At the end of each verse, Mark asks, “Are we not men?” and the camera cuts away to a close-range shot of the other three members of DEVO against a blank background, each wearing sunglasses and pantyhose over their faces, their features flattened and distorted as they reply, “We are DEVO.” However, when the song moves into its final call-and-response section, it is not the band that chants “We are DEVO,” but rather the audience, who become increasingly agitated and rowdy, pounding on their desks and flinging their arms in the air. For their part, the band members – pantyhose and all – are shown situated on a table in the middle of the room, bundled up in sacs from the neck down and writhing about, having seemingly regressed to a larval stage from which they are trying to break free. The film ends shortly after this segment, with a tied-up Booji Boy being abruptly stabbed and unmasked before the credits roll.

“Jocko Homo” carries a special significance with DEVO's fan base, and Jerry Casale refers to it as their “manifesto,” a conclusion further reinforced by the group including it as the centerpiece of what might be considered the film version of their manifesto (“Casale and Mothersbaugh Interview”). It is the ultimate expression of devolutionary philosophy: the initial composure with which the first verse begins soon gives way to the rising tension of the succeeding verses, finally dissolving into a ritualistic chant. DEVO's protest against the sterility and mechanization of human life is expressed in the music itself: angular guitar riffs and stilted drum beats lurch along amid a grinding swirl of analog synthesizers, as Mark yelps out jaunty catchphrases, affirmations of the repressed simian. The odd 7/8 timing of most of the song demonstrates that DEVO were “well aware of the ways in which their use of rhythms could act directly on the body, encouraging a rigid, robotic, and discomforting reaction in their audiences” (Cateforis 567). When their first album was released, *Rolling Stone* critic Tom Carson noted that their sound was reminiscent of early-1960's garage rock and fellow early New Wave bands, but “flattened into an arid, deliberately fragmented science-fiction landscape.” He further elaborated: “There's not an ounce of feeling anywhere, and the only commitment is to the distancing aesthetic of the put[-]on,” concluding that “it's impossible to tell whether these guys are satirizing robotlike regimentation or glorifying it. The answer seems to be that there isn't any difference” (Carson). Apparently not in DEVO's vision, where, as Jerry is fond of stating, they occupy the place of the house

band on the Titanic; the ship is inexorably sinking, and all the group can do is acknowledge this and continue to play.

“Jocko Homo,” along with much of DEVO's surrounding lore and catchphrases, is heavily influenced by the rather eccentric anti-evolution tract *Jocko-Homo Heavenbound* by B.H. Shadduck. Mark came across it early in the band's developmental stage, and saw its applicability to DEVO's concept. Jerry describes it as “right-wing evangelical religious propaganda that says man is not the highest form at all,” before outlining some of the key ideas DEVO saw in it: “[Man] is the only one that is against nature, he's the only one that fights nature, he's the only one that has to suppress nature in order to be dominant over it, he can't fit in with it” (“Casale and Mothersbaugh Interview”). The pamphlet is a ripe source of absurd quotations such as, “The next generation will make fun of what we now call science. That is why it is not really science” (Shadduck 9). Considering DEVO's love for the absurd, their affinity toward quoting the pamphlet is easily understood. In one of the pamphlet's primary illustrations, a devil-like figure labelled “D-EVOLUTION” points toward a list of vices (presumably Shadduck's view of the implications of evolutionary theory) while an ape crouches at his feet and gnaws on a bone (1). The term “D-EVOLUTION” quickly became “the defining point of [DEVO's] little hipster epistemology” (“Casale and Mothersbaugh Interview”).

The other most significant influence on the shaping of “Jocko Homo” is *Island of Lost Souls*, a 1932 film directed by Erle C. Kenton which was an adaptation of H.G. Wells' novel *The Island of Doctor Moreau*. Jerry calls it “an important piece of the puzzle of a little cosmology that was forming” during the development of the concept of devolution (“Casale and Mothersbaugh Interview”). Much of DEVO's work is essentially a pastiche of incongruous slogans, and “Jocko Homo” is no exception, fittingly devolving into an extended call-and-response chant lifted from the film, which varies significantly depending on which incarnation of the song is playing at a given time. In addition, the film is invoked aurally in the instrumental break, where animalistic vocalizations converge in the cacophony of the synthesized jungle, before giving way to the march-like flourish of the bridge. The end of the break and the few bars before the call-and-response chant are dominated by a synthesized approximation of a cracking whip which also punctuates the chant, evoking the image of Moreau lashing the beast-people during the corresponding scene.

Given the centrality of “Jocko Homo” to the band's philosophy and fan base, as well as the many incarnations it has seen over the years, I have attempted to compile an edition that takes significant textual variations into account and also elucidates the lyrics and their surrounding context.

NOTE ON THE TEXT

In editing “Jocko Homo,” one of the main challenges is the baffling assortment of recordings to choose from, including demos, live versions (both official and bootleg), and of course the studio recording from *Q: Are We Not Men? A: We Are DEVO!* The *Q&A* recording and accompanying lyric sheet will be employed as the base text in large part simply because it will in all likelihood be the only version heard by most listeners, being included on an influential album which is widely available, now on sites such as iTunes and YouTube in high definition, remastered form. Most uninitiated listeners will be directed toward the *Q&A* version first if they are pursuing a traditional album-based approach (and quite possibly end their listening experience then and there), though it is also possible that a curious listener might end up encountering the film version alongside the album version on a site such as YouTube.

There are some DEVO fans who express a preference for the film version, and though a rough recording – such as the Booji Boy version recorded in mid-winter in an unheated garage (Reynolds 116) – would constitute an earlier authoritative version as preferred by traditional textual scholars (i.e., Greg's “copy-text”), *Q&A* is very much an extension of their earlier work, shaped by intermediary live performances and methodically recorded in Konrad Plank's studio. As an attempt to improve upon earlier versions, the *Q&A* version constitutes a “horizontal” revision as outlined by Tanselle, unlike the later reworkings which could be considered “vertical” revisions (Tanselle 193). DEVO retained a surprising level of control in the studio, largely due to the fact that they had yet to be actually signed to a label and that Brian Eno, who admired their vision despite undergoing artistic clashes with them, produced and initially financed the album. Mark has acknowledged that they were perhaps “overly resistant” to Eno's input: “He made up synth parts and really cool sounds for almost every song on the album, but we only used them on three or four songs. . . like the loop of monkey chanters that's on 'Jocko Homo.' I'd kind of like to hear what the album would have sounded like if we'd been more open to Eno's suggestions. But in those days we thought we knew everything” (Reynolds 119). “Authorial intention” was in this case clearly – even obstinately – upheld, despite the involvement of an external producer.

Also included in this edition are footnote variants from five other recordings that have been officially released by the band. Four of these versions (*Hardcore DEVO* version, Booji Boy version, *Be Stiff* version and *DEVO Live: The Mongoloid Years* version) are dated before the recording of the album, and as such are important developmental stages that feature several textual variations from the

eventual “final” product. I use the term “final” in a tentative manner because “Jocko Homo” has since been officially re-worked on at least two occasions. One of these, a live recording from *Now It Can Be Told: DEVO at the Palace*, is included among the alternate versions used in this project because it varies lyrically (albeit in a relatively minor way) from the others featured. A mutated instrumental version of “Jocko Homo” exists as well, released in 1987 on *E-Z Listening Disc*, along with many other classic (and less-than-classic) DEVO songs. It will not be included in this study, simply because there are no lyrics with which to contend.

In constructing the text, a logical place to begin is to turn to the CD insert, as any first-time listener might do, to look at the officially printed lyrics. Interestingly, the actual lyrics provided on the album's lyric sheet are incomplete. There is a substantial discontinuity between what is read and what is heard, so I have sought to reconstruct, as accurately as possible, a complete transcript of the words as heard on the album, while maintaining the formatting of the original lyric sheet. The auditory lyrics will be treated as the substantive textual elements – to simply read a lyric sheet without listening to the song, particularly when there are such discrepancies, is a betrayal of the form itself, and it would be impossible to listen to the recording without encountering the additional lyrics – and the lyric sheet will be used to determine formatting, spelling and punctuation (accidental elements) since music by its very nature excludes such textual concerns from the recording process, leaving the album insert as the only available visual reference. Additions to the lyric sheet text from what is heard on the album will be enclosed [in square brackets]. The sheet specifically avoids the use of any capitalization except in the case of the word DEVO, which will be maintained throughout, even in the case of lines that have been added in. The band's aesthetic and philosophy of devolution could be interpreted to be present in their abandonment (or near-abandonment) of grammatical conventions such as capitalization and punctuation – the same typography is present in the lyric sheets for other DEVO albums such as *Duty Now For the Future* and *Oh, No! It's DEVO!* – and as a result I am highly reluctant to impose these conventions upon them. Given the band's penchant for shaping everything that related to their concept and image, including written propaganda materials, journals penned by Booji Boy, costume design, video production and album art (Mark and Jerry both self-identify as visual artists), and given their enduring stubbornness with regards to their project, it is reasonable to treat this as their intention. All aspects of DEVO (aesthetic, musical, filmic, verbal, etc.) are meant to be taken as a part of the integrated, self-contained whole, everything feeding back into the central concept of devolution, and the lyric sheet is no exception.

In addition, the call-and-response sections will be reproduced unabridged in all their repetitive glory. Whereas the original liner notes omitted most of these sections, their essential nature is that of a ritualistic chant, making repetition key. There is one exception, in the case of transcribing one particularly long modified chant section in the footnotes. Otherwise, the texts transcribed are reproduced in the most complete possible manner. Textual variations, along with any relevant accompanying commentaries, are marked with Arabic numerals (1, 2, 3...) and catalogued in the footnotes to each page, and explanatory notes are marked with Roman numerals (i, ii, iii...) and located at the end of the edition. Though it lies beyond the scope of this project, it is worth noting that a far more ambitious project would certainly include a musical comparison in addition to a textual one, since there are interesting variations across all versions, particularly in the synth effects.

JOCKO HOMO

they tell us that
we lost our tailsⁱ
evolving up
from little snails
i say it's all
just wind in sails
are we not men?ⁱⁱ
we are DEVO!^{1 iii}
[are we not men?
D-E-V-O]
we're pinheads now
we are not whole
we're pinheads all^{iv}
jocko homo^{2 v}
[are we not men?
we are DEVO!]
are we not men?
D-E-V-O
[are we not pins?³
we are DEVO!]
monkey men all^{vi}
in business suits
teachers and critics
all dance the poot^{vii}
are we not men?
we are DEVO!
are we not men?
D-E-V-O
[are we not pins?⁴
we are DEVO!
are we not men?
D-E-V-O]⁵
[An indecipherable line serving as a lead-in. Other versions indicate "all together now."]
[god made man⁶
but he used a monkey to do it^{viii}
apes in the plan

1 *NICBT*: This line is followed by a simple “whoa-oh,” after which the band proceeds into a short musical break before going directly into the “monkey men all” verse.

2 *NICBT*: The “we’re pinheads now” verse is relocated to after the “god made man” bridge.

3 *DLMY*: The line delivered in this version is “are we not pinheads?”

4 *DLMY*: The line is “are we not pinheads?” once again.

NICBT: The line is replaced by “are we not men?” to which Mark answers himself “we are DEVO!” followed by another “whoa-oh” rather than the usual “D-E-V-O” response.

5 *DMLY*: After this line is a subdued musical break, during which Mark says, “all right everybody, get down”

6 *BBR/BSEP*: The “god made man” bridge is preceded by a call-and-response: “i’ve got a rhyme that comes in a riddle/O-HI-O!/what’s round on the ends, high in the middle?/O-HI-O!” leading into the break with the line “all together now!”

NICBT: There is no vocal lead-in to the bridge, simply a change from a country-ballad feel to more of a reggae feel. Here the line is “well god made man.”

and we're all here to prove it⁷
i can walk like an ape
talk like an ape
i can do what monkeys do⁸
god made man⁹
but a monkey supplied the glue¹⁰
are we not men?¹¹
we are DEVO!¹²
are we not men?

7 *BBR/BSEP/NICBT*: This line simply says “we're all here to prove it”

8 *BBR/BSEP/NICBT*: Once again Mark abridges the line somewhat, changing it to “do what monkeys do.”

9 *NICBT*: The line is “well god made man.”

10 *HDVI/DLMY*: The bridge section beginning at the first “god made man” through to line “but a monkey supplied the glue” was not present in this recording, proceeding directly from the musical shift (from 7/8 timing into 4/4 timing) to the final chant section.

11 *DLMY*: This is where the performance begins to break down. Mark sings “are we not men?” followed by silence. He then asks, “well, are we?” seemingly hoping to encourage some audience participation. In a later interview, Mark notes that they were in the habit of performing this section “directed at people in an aggressive enough manner that even the most peace-lovin' hippie wanted to throw fists,” and acknowledges: “We were in a negative-energy vortex back in the mid-'70s” (Ziegler). Again Mark repeats “are we not men?” with the answer “we are DEVO” from the band. A call to the audience happens once again before Mark simply begins chanting with interjections mostly from Jerry, but possibly also Bob 1 (marked in parentheses), as well as audience members [marked in square brackets]. In the interest of conserving space, I will not fully transcribe the overly repetitive sections, simply marking them out {with curled brackets} and indicating how many repetitions, though unfortunately it does not quite properly convey how much the band was trying to annoy the audience (and succeeding):

{are we not men?} x3
(no we are DEVO)
are we not men?
what is the law?
{are we not men?
(we are DEVO)} x16
[you're not even musicians(?) you're just a bunch of assholes]
are we not men?
(we are DEVO)
is he not a man?
(we are DEVO)
is he not a man?
(we are DEVO/D-E-V-O)
is he not a man?
(gee i don't know)
is he not a man?
(he's not a man)
are we not men?
(they are not men)
are we not men?
(they are DEVO)
[... get off the stage ... *The rest is drowned out by either Mark or Jerry's incoherent screaming.*]
{are we not men?
(he is DEVO)} x9
are we not men?
(repeated grunting noises, continuing over the next 4 lines)
{are we not men?} x4

we are DEVO!¹³
are we not men?
we are DEVO!
are we not men?
we are DEVO!¹⁴
are we not men?
we are DEVO!
are we not men?
we are DEVO!
are we not men?

(... DEVO! *Jerry continues grunting directly after*)
{are we not men?} x3 (*grunting continues*)
high-pitched laughter from Mark
{he's goin'!} x4
{bye!} x4
D-E-V-O!
(is he not a man?)
they are not men
(we are DEVO)
we are not men
{you are DEVO} x2
{(are we not men?)
you are DEVO} x2
(are we not men?)
we are DEVO
(are we not men?)
you are DEVO
(are we not men?)
you are DEVO
(are we not men?)
we are DEVO
(are we not men?)
you are DEVO
(are we not men?)
we are DEVO
(are we not men?)
we are DEVO
(we must repeat)
we are DEVO
(we must repeat)
D-E-V-O
we must repeat
o.k. let's go!

It sounds as though Mark and Jerry switched call-and-response roles shortly after the second interruption from an audience member. This does not happen in any other recordings I have encountered.

12 *NICBT*: Whereas the responses in this section are normally delivered by the other band members, in this version Mark does all the singing, including both call-and-response roles.

13 *NICBT*: The line is changed to “D-E-V-O,” and the rest of the chant is also altered. After the current line, it proceeds:

we must repeat
we are DEVO!
we must repeat
D-E-V-O

we are DEVO!
are we not men?
we are DEVO!
are we not men?
we are DEVO!
are we not men?
we are DEVO!
are we not men?
we are DEVO!
are we not men?
we are DEVO!
are we not men?
we are DEVO!
are we not men?
we are DEVO!
are we not men?
we are DEVO!
we must repeat^{ix}
[D-E-V-O
we must repeat
D-E-V-O
we must repeat
D-E-V-O
we must repeat
D-E-V-O
we must repeat
D-E-V-O
we must repeat
D-E-V-O
we must repeat
D-E-V-O
we must repeat]
o.k. let's go!

are we not men?
we are DEVO!
are we not men?
we are DEVO!
whoa-oh

- This is followed by the final break down, omitting the line “o.k. let's go” which normally signals the end of the song.
- 14 *HDV1*: These four repetitions were the extent of the “are we not men?/we are DEVO!” call-and-response, immediately followed by five repetitions of “we must repeat/D-E-V-O” before the final “we must repeat/o.k. let's go!”
- BBR/BSEP*: Like the *HDV1* version, there are four repetitions of “are we not men?/we are DEVO!” before “we must repeat”; however, on this recording there are seven repetitions of the “D-E-V-O” response before “o.k. let's go!”

EXPLANATORY NOTES

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- i *they tell us that/we lost our tails*: In one of his main points in *JHH*, Shadduck argues that the “consummate folly of [evolution] is, that our ancestors lost their tails *because they did not use them* and the rattler developed a rattle box on one end and a deadly contraption on the other *before he could use them*” (7, emphasis in original). Elsewhere, there is a small illustration accompanying a paragraph detailing the various appendages that have evolved and been discarded, which shows a variety of animal tails with the inscription “4 tails our ANCESTORS lost.” Shadduck notes, “We have had four kinds of a tail that has served as a propeller, rudder, guy-rope, swing and hitching strap. If they will tell us what we *are to get* in the next distribution, a million years hence, we may forgive evolution for the mean tricks it has played on us” (24, emphasis in original).
- ii *are we not men?*: Both Mark and Jerry attribute a great deal of influence to the 1932 film *Island of Lost Souls*, particularly the scene in which Bela Lugosi's character, the Sayer of the Law, along with Moreau, recite the Law, Moreau demanding “What is the Law?” to which Lugosi replies, “Not to run on all fours,” and “Not to eat meat,” among others, followed by, “That is the Law. Are we not men?” which the beast-people also intone in a semi-coherent manner. Hence the repetitive chanting of the call-and-response sections.
- iii *we are DEVO!*: This response may simply be interpreted as the band's name, but is also a term they developed to describe the state of devolution itself. Mark explains it thus: “You could say, 'Those two people over there in the polyester double-knit body suits driving that gas-guzzling Cadillac are more DE-vo than we could ever be.' Or you could say, 'That young girl who just had surgery to her ears so they look like Spock's, and had a Pan-Pacific slant put to her eyes on purpose even though she's from Europe—she's very de-VO.' So it has kind of more of a French feel when you're talking about high de-VO, and it has more of a hillbilly feel when you talk

about low DE-vo” (Garden). Accordingly, in *TTAD*, Booji Boy cries out, “Oh Dad! We’re all DEVO!” before the “Jocko Homo” segment featuring the *BBR* version of the song.

iv *we’re pinheads all*: See note to *we accept you [...] one of us* in the Ultracore version below.

v *jocko homo*: In *JHH*, Shadduck glosses the term “Jocko-Homo” as “Monkey Man” (5).

vi *monkey men all*: See the note to *jocko homo* above.

vii *all dance the poot*: The “Poot Dance” has been briefly explained by Bob Lewis as having its origins in Jerry Casale’s practice of attending art shows with a friend “who would wear a rubber ape mask, a real garish thing. [J]erry had this guy on a leash, literally. When they came to a piece that they liked, the guy in the mask would leap up and down. But if they didn’t [...] he’d dance the poot,” which Lewis describes as a “squatting, loping rondo” (Warmowski). Jerry describes it thus: “I had a sidekick, Poot Man, and every time Poot Man would pretend to take a s--- on one of the terrible pieces of art in the gallery, I’d feed him milk from an enema bandolero that I wore, and I’d last maybe five or ten minutes before security came and kicked me out. This is what we were doing then – 1972” (Doherty).

viii *god made man/but he used a monkey to do it*: In *JHH*, under a section labelled “AN ALIBI FOR SIN,” Shadduck denounces the “epigrams” that “devotees” of evolution (based on his previous statements, he more specifically means those who attempted to reconcile a religious/creationist view with evolutionary principles) supposedly co-opted to suit their purposes, among them, “God made man, but he used a monkey to gather the dirt” (11). Interestingly, one common self-identification term for a DEVO fan is a “DEVOTEe.”

ix *we must repeat*: This phrase is featured prominently in the beginning of *TTAD*, along with four other principles which were inspired by *Jocko-Homo Heavenbound*, and together make up what is commonly referred to as the Devolutionary Oath. A version of these principles is also recited

in *The Men Who Make the Music*. The principles of the Oath are, as they appear in *TTAD*:

1. wear gaudy colors or avoid display
2. lay a million eggs or give birth to one
3. the fittest shall survive yet the unfit may live
4. be like your ancestors or be different
5. we must repeat!

The corresponding “TRICK RULES” in Shadduck's pamphlet are:

- I. Be like your ancestors or be different.
- II. The fittest shall survive and the unfit may live.
- [...]IV. That your family may survive, lay a million eggs or give birth to one.
- [...]X. Wear gaudy colors or avoid display, so shall your family survive. (21)

APPENDIX: *DEVO ULTRACORE 1974-77 VERSION*

This version was performed live during the band's formative years, before the production of Q&A, but was never officially released. The song exists in bootleg form along with several other tracks recorded in Akron. This version is particularly interesting, with a few key musical differences as well as some variations in the pre-bridge and chant sections. I have included it as an Appendix because it was not an official release, but is still worth examining.

they tell us that
we lost our tails
evolving up
from little snails
i say it's all
just wind in sails
are we not men?
we are DEVO!
are we not men?
D-E-V-O
we're pinheads now
we are not whole
we're pinheads all
jocko homo
are we not men?
we are DEVO!
are we not men?
D-E-V-O
are we not pins?
we are DEVO!
monkey men all
in business suits
teachers and critics
all dance the poot
are we not men?
we are DEVO!
are we not men?
D-E-V-O
are we not pins?
we are DEVO!
are we not men?
D-E-V-O
white dopes on punkⁱ
white dopes on punk
white dopes on punk

white dopes on punk
white dopes on punk
white dopes on punk
white dopes on punk
white dopes on punk
i've got a rhyme that comes in a riddle
O-HI-O!
what's round on the ends, high in the middle?
O-HI-O!ⁱⁱ
i've got a rhyme that comes in a riddle
O-HI-O!
what's round on the ends, high in the middle?
O-HI-O!
all together now
god made man
but he used a monkey to do it
apes in the plan
we're all here to prove it
i can walk like an ape
talk like an ape
i can do what monkeys do
god made man
but a monkey supplied the glue
are we not men?
we are DEVO!
are we not men?
we are DEVO!
are we not men?
we are DEVO!
are we not men?
we are DEVO!
are we not men?
we are DEVO!
are we not men?
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are we not men?
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are we not men?
we are DEVO!
are we not men?
we are DEVO!
are we not men?
we are DEVO!
are we not men?
we are DEVO!
are we not men?
we are DEVO!
well, alright
we accept you, we accept you
one of us, one of usⁱⁱⁱ
we accept you, we accept you
one of us, one of us
we accept you, we accept[reject] you
one of us, one of us
we accept you, we reject you
one of us, one of us
we accept you, we reject you
one of us, one of us
we accept you, we reject you
one of us, one of us
we accept you, we reject you
one of us, one of us

we accept you, we reject you
one of us, one of us
are we not men?
we are DEVO!
are we not men?
we are DEVO!
are we not men?
we are DEVO!
are we not men?
we are DEVO!
are we not men?
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are we not men?
we are DEVO!
we must repeat
D-E-V-O
we must repeat
D-E-V-O
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we must repeat
D-E-V-O
we must repeat
D-E-V-O
we must repeat
D-E-V-O
we must repeat
o.k. let's go!

EXPLANATORY NOTES TO APPENDIX

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- i *white dopes on punk*: An inversion of The Tubes' song "White Punks on Dope," and possibly a tongue-in-cheek description of the band itself. At one point there were pins available saying "DEVO: white dopes on punk" (Pilmer).
- ii *i've got a rhyme [...] O-HI-O!*: A relatively well-known rhyme. Originally a song written in 1922 by Alfred Bryan and Bert Hanlon ("Round on the End and High in the Middle O-HI-O Sheet Music"). DEVO include this rhyme in most live performances as a segue from the bridge.
- iii *we accept you [...] one of us*: A reference to the famous scene in the 1932 film *Freaks* in which the circus people chant various permutations of "We accept her, one of us!" The Ramones were also inspired to include the chant in their song "Pinhead," which begins with the line "Gabba Gabba, we accept you, we accept you, one of us." DEVO's reference to "pinheads" in "Jocko Homo" likely refers back to the same source.

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