

The Kandy-Kolored Tangerine-Flake Streamline Baby

By Tom Wolfe

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"An excellent book by a genius," said Kurt Vonnegut, Jr., of this now classic exploration of the 1960s from the founder of new journalism.

"This is a book that will be a sharp pleasure to reread years from now, when it will bring back, like a falcon in the sky of memory, a whole world that is currently jetting and jazzing its way somewhere or other."--*Newsweek*

In his first book, *The Kandy-Kolored Tangerine-Flake Streamline Baby* (1965) Wolfe introduces us to the sixties, to extravagant new styles of life that had nothing to do with the "elite" culture of the past.

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The Kandy-Kolored Tangerine-Flake Streamline Baby By Tom Wolfe Bibliography

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review
The "streamline baby" in Tom Wolfe's 1965 debut book is a hot rod, but the car's candy colors and wild lines can't match the prose style Wolfe devised to describe them. The title essay--Wolfe's first magazine article--launched the New Journalism, partly because its original title was "There Goes (Varoom! Varoom!) That Kandy-Kolored (Thphhhhhh!) Tangerine-Flake Streamline Baby (Rahghhh!) Around the Bend (Brummmmmmmmmmmmmm)..." His voice was more shocking than any subculture he uncovered. Until Wolfe (Ph.D., Yale), nobody struck gold by applying Ph.D.-speak to lowbrow subjects. Kurt Vonnegut famously called this an "excellent book by a genius who will do anything to get attention."

Now that everybody does what Wolfe did, his early essays smack less of genius. But attention must be paid to this pioneering peek into King Pop's tomb. The most startling thing is how soberly sensible most of the prose now appears, except for the title of the first essay, "Las Vegas (What?) Las Vegas (Can't Hear You! Too Noisy) Las Vegas!!!" which anticipates the far superior *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas*. Mostly, these articles seem like straightforward introductions to some of the signal figures of the early '60s: hot-rod designer Big Daddy Roth, surf guitarist Dick Dale, teen recording tycoon Phil Spector, Andy Warhol debutante Baby Jane Holzer, the Cassius Clay-era Muhammad Ali. We even glimpse the Beatles in a profile of the yappy DJ Murray the K in "The Fifth Beatle."

The last half of the book focuses more on New York and its denizens' endless combat for social status. The last piece, "The Big League Complex," is like a 1964 warm-up exercise for *The Bonfire of the Vanities*. --*Tim Appelo*

Review

“Might well be required reading in courses with names like American studies.” ?*Time Magazine*

“I'm always rereading Tom Wolfe's *The Kandy-Kolored Tangerine-Flake Streamline Baby*.” ?*David Gates*

“Tom Wolfe is a terrific writer.” ?*The Washington Monthly*

“Wolfe can do things with words and settings that few writers are capable of matching.” ?*Tom Walker, The Denver Post*

“The man's done the impossible. He--Yes!--understands America!” ?*Houston Chronicle*

“His eye and ear for detailed observation are incomparable; and observation is to the satirist what bullets are to a gun.” ?*The Boston Sunday Globe*

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Users Review

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