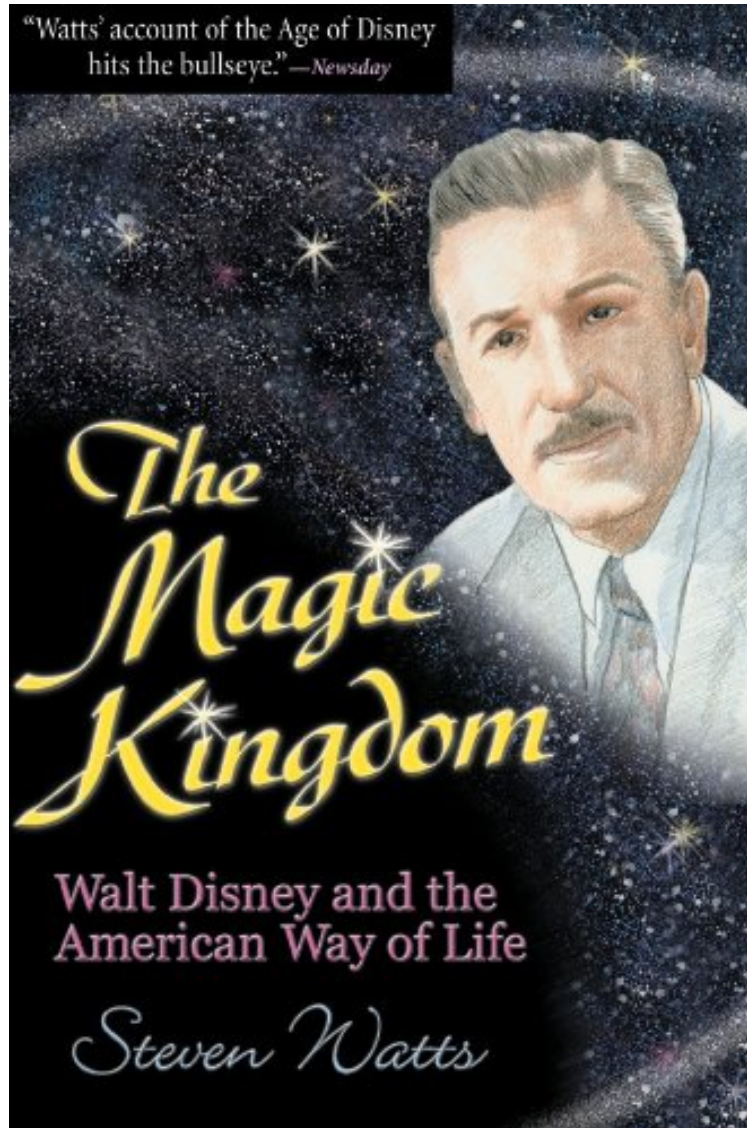


[Download] The Magic Kingdom: Walt Disney and the American Way of Life

## The Magic Kingdom: Walt Disney and the American Way of Life

Steven Watts

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**Steven Watts : The Magic Kingdom: Walt Disney and the American Way of Life** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Magic Kingdom: Walt Disney and the American Way of Life:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Cartoons, Color, Fantasy, Magic, Happy endings.....DISNEYBy Dr.Stanley ToompasA very thorough, detailed, well researched biography. For quite sometime, I have wanted to know the details of this man's life, a man who changed our entertainment culture and impacted our society. I am glad I chose this book to enlighten me.This book is not one that, "I could not put down", and in fact, did place it aside twice to "take a break" and read a light novelette. However, upon conclusion, just like with his Henry Ford biography, I

realized what a comprehensive, and masterful job, Steven Watts had done. Dr. Stanley E. Toompas, Optometrist Author of, "I'm the One the Other Isn't" 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Curious about Disney? By Katie K. I was personally surprised by the ease in reading this book. I purchased it for a course on Disney and at first was slightly disgruntled by having to read this book. However, within the first few chapters I had found the reading to be quite interesting and inclusive of the good and bad of Walt and the Disney company. It includes his years growing up and pre-Disney, but focuses mainly on his years building the empire. If this is a purchase for a class, it may be beneficial to purchase used and write all over the thing. Overall, I actually found it to be a good textbook for an odd GE.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Well balanced view of a complicated man. By Brad Kramer The book uses both chronological as well as themed exploration of Disney. Along the way we learn about key people who were instrumental in realizing Disney's dreams and ideas

The Magic Kingdom sheds new light on the cultural icon of "Uncle Walt." Watts digs deeply into Disney's private life, investigating his roles as husband, father, and brother and providing fresh insight into his peculiar psyche—his genuine folksiness and warmth, his domineering treatment of colleagues and friends, his deepest prejudices and passions. Full of colorful sketches of daily life at the Disney Studio and tales about the creation of Disneyland and Disney World, *The Magic Kingdom* offers a definitive view of one of the most influential Americans of the twentieth century.

From *Library Journal* Although the Disney studio was hailed as a dream factory, there was plenty of hard work and hard-nosed business deals behind the facade. Drawing on interviews and research from Disney archives, Watts shows how Disney and mid-America influenced each other, from the birth of the animation empire, through the "libertarian populism" of the Fifties film, TV, and theme-park efforts, to Walt's untimely death in 1966. Other topics include Disney's pioneering role in business "integration" (using one side of the business to promote another side), his idealization of small-town life, his contagious creative enthusiasm, and his growing conservatism and abiding contempt for unions. Whether selling World War II to an anxious home front, lifting spirits in the Depression, soothing America's Cold War fears, or catering to the new leisure and consumer society, Disney had a unique rapport with average Americans. Portrayed as neither devil nor saint, Disney emerges as a human and sometimes sympathetic figure. This lively, witty, and insightful study is likely to become a standard. Highly recommended for academic and public libraries. [Two other Disney biographers in recent years have accused the Disney family of attempting to undermine criticisms of him; for a more critical appraisal see Marc Eliot's *Walt Disney: Hollywood's Dark Prince*, LJ 5/1/93. Ed.] Stephen Rees, Levittown Reg. Lib., Pa. Copyright 1998 Reed Business Information, Inc. From *Booklist* Today's Disney entertainment empire might rephrase Watts' subtitle to read "Walt Disney IS the American Way of Life" as part of its seeming dedication to crafting sanitized versions of aspects of the American ideal and then selling the bejesus out of them. Watts' biography of the creator of Mickey, Donald, and Goofy examines Disney's role in the creation of American consumer culture and his and his company's successful commercial feeding of that culture's voracious entertainment appetites. The book, Watts says, exemplifies "something of a hybrid genre: part biography and part cultural analysis, an anatomy of Disney's productions as well as an anatomy of their consumption." Fully referenced and forcefully and cogently argued, it does an excellent job of tying together all the facets—artistic, commercial, and personal—of the Disney saga. "Walt Disney has been, arguably, the most influential American of the twentieth century," Watts concludes. This valuable, unique book about him will be greatly valued by fans, cynics, and semioticians alike. Mike Tribby Watts' account of the Age of Disney hits the bullseye. "Newsday" A captivating portrait of a complicated man. "St. Louis Post-Dispatch" Requires us to acknowledge two essential truths that are easy to forget: That where Disney ended up is not where he began and that his stupendous success arose from . . . his heartfelt understanding of and sympathy with average Americans and their hopes, fears, and values. "Washington Post" Steve Watts is both a scholar and a Disneyphile, which makes him an ideal author for this much-needed volume about Walt Disney's place in American culture. It told me things I didn't know before, but even more important, it made me think about things I already knew. "Leonard Maltin, author of *The Disney Films*" *The Magic Kingdom* is a most impressive achievement. . . . More than a first-rate biography, this extraordinarily lucid book—a work at once of genuine empathy and unsparing criticism—is cultural history at its best. "Robert Westbrook, author of *John Dewey and American Democracy*" As true a picture as I could have imagined. "Fess Parker" This exhaustively researched and remarkably judicious volume should remain our best source on Walt Disney and his manifold enterprises for many years to come. "Journal of American History" This lively, witty, and insightful study is likely to become a standard. "Library Journal" Mr. Watts is to be congratulated for producing a subtle, generous-minded account of [the Disney] legacy, and for reminding readers, after so much Disney-bashing, that there was a bright as well as a dark side to the magic kingdom. "The Economist" The most responsible and comprehensive book on Disney's relationship to American culture in a long while. "Seattle Times" An immensely thorough, thoughtful survey and syntheses of some sixty years of commentary about Disney, intertwined with Watts' own remarkable perceptive assessments. "Cleveland Plain

Dealer"Relying on a mountain of archival and interview material, Watts does a masterful job of keeping the sometimes contradictory strands of Disney's life and work together."mdash;Milwaukee Journal Sentinel"A thoughtful and well-researched biography . . . which also provides a starting point for thinking about the Disney legacy today."mdash;Commentary"A fine example of academic research that is fully accessible to a nonacademic audience."mdash;Dallas Morning News"An admirable even-handed work. . . . Stands well above the current, permissively silly academic standards for the discussion of pop culture. . . . A new perspective."mdash;Washingtonian Monthly"A very thoughtful, reasoned, and entertaining view of a great American success story--two brothers from the Middle West who came to symbolize everything good about America."mdash;Roy Disney"Forcefully and cogently argued, it does an excellent job of tying together all of the facetsmdash;artistic, commercial, and personalmdash;of the Disney saga. . . . This valuable, unique book will be valued by fans, cynics, and semioticians alike."mdash;BooklistThe first truly balanced account of Walt Disney's life and work. Fascinatingly detailed, intellectually vigorous, and candid, Watts's exhaustive research presents a human portrait of this extraordinary ordinary' man and his profound influence on American culture."mdash;John Canemaker, author of Treasures of Disney Animation Art and Before the Animation Begins: The Art and Lives of Disney Inspiration Sketch Artists"Reveals why the man who created Mickey Mouse reigns as one of the most important cultural influences of the 20th century. [Written in] a lively, accessible tone."mdash;USA Today"An invaluable mine of material on how the American century became the Disney century."mdash;Los Angeles Times"Gives us a vivid portrait of the man behind Mickey Mouse, while at the same time situating his anomalous achievement within a social and esthetic context. . . . A terrifically readable and illuminating book."mdash;New York Times