

Multiculturalism And The Mouse



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In his latest iconoclastic work, Douglas Brode - the only academic author/scholar who dares to defend Disney entertainment - argues that "Uncle Walt's" output of films, television shows, theme parks, and spin-off items promoted diversity decades before such a concept gained popular currency in the 1990s. Fully understood, It's a Small World - one of the most popular attractions at the Disney theme parks - encapsulates Disney's prophetic vision of an appealingly varied world, each race respecting the uniqueness of all the others while simultaneously celebrating a common human core. In this pioneering volume, Brode makes a compelling case that Disney's consistently positive presentation of "difference" - whether it be race, gender, sexual orientation, ideology, or spirituality - provided the key paradigm for an eventual emergence of multiculturalism in our society. Using examples from dozens of films and TV programs, Brode demonstrates that Disney entertainment has consistently portrayed Native Americans, African Americans, women, gays, individual acceptance of one's sexual orientation, and alternatives to Judeo-Christian religious values in a highly positive light. Assuming a contrarian stance, Brode refutes the overwhelming body of "serious" criticism that dismisses Disney entertainment as racist and sexist. Instead, he reveals through close textual analysis how Disney introduced audiences to such politically correct principles as mainstream feminism. In so doing, Brode challenges the popular

perception of Disney fare as a bland diet of programming that people around the world either uncritically deem acceptable for their children or angrily revile as reactionary pabulum for the masses. Providing a long overdue and thoroughly detailed alternative, Brode makes a highly convincing argument that with an unwavering commitment to racial diversity and sexual difference, coupled with a vast global popularity, Disney entertainment enabled those successive generations of impressionable youth who experienced it to create today's aura of multiculturalism and our politically correct value system.

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