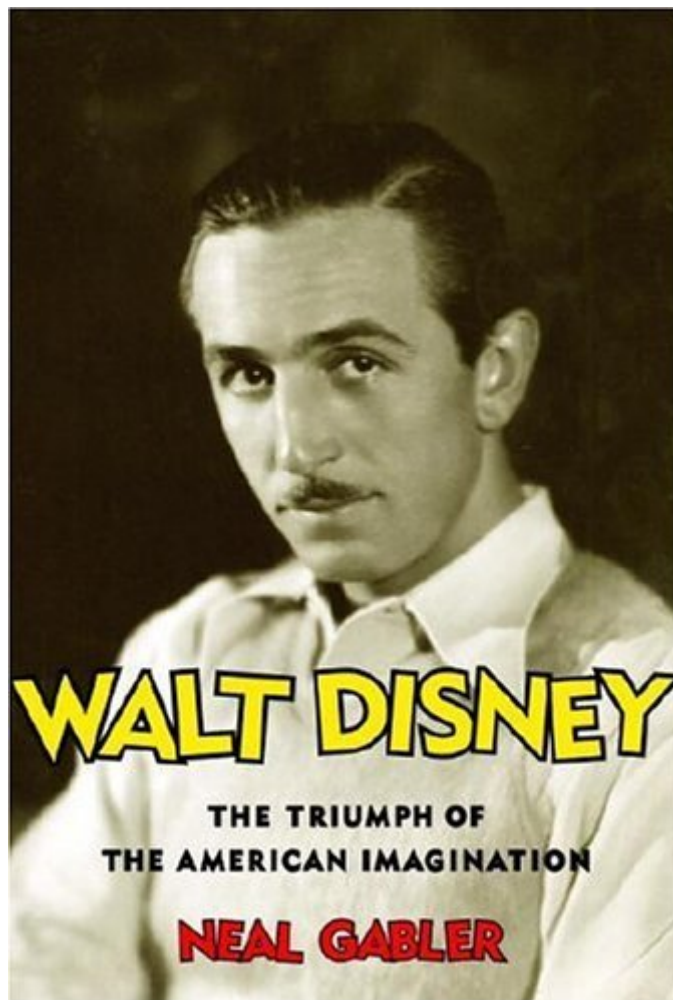


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Walt Disney



Synopsis

The definitive portrait of one of the most important cultural figures in American history: Walt Disney. Walt Disney was a true visionary whose desire for escape, iron determination and obsessive perfectionism transformed animation from a novelty to an art form, first with Mickey Mouse and then with his feature films—most notably Snow White, Fantasia, and Bambi. In his superb biography, Neal Gabler shows us how, over the course of two decades, Disney revolutionized the entertainment industry. In a way that was unprecedented and later widely imitated, he built a synergistic empire that combined film, television, theme parks, music, book publishing, and merchandise. Walt Disney is a revelation of both the work and the man—of both the remarkable accomplishment and the hidden life. Winner of the Los Angeles Times Book Prize for Biography USA Today Biography of the Year

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Customer Reviews

This is a deep dive on one of America's icons. The flow of the book is seamless it's rich content and perspective. This book could have been several volumes given Walt Disney's amazing life and

accomplishments and the author does an exceptional job of pulling this together. Wonderful.

The definitive biography of one of America's giants. Rather than sheer adulation, Gabler looks deeper into a complex man who was driven to create something wonderful, something that touched the hearts of hundreds of millions of people across the globe. Even Walt's defects (and he did have some) are illustrative of a man who used every ounce of his energy and creativity to advance his art.

I enjoyed reading about Walt Disney's life, and appreciated Neil Gabler's attention to detail in writing this biography. It is meticulously researched! However, I felt that the author failed in really capturing Walt's spirit -- at times it seemed that he lacked admiration for Walt -- and all of the information from his unprecedented access to the Disney Archives could not make up for this, and left me feeling somewhat disappointed and still wanting. For those who feel similarly, I would recommend reading the biography written by Bob Thomas in addition to this version, for a more complete sense of Walt Disney.

This biography portrays Disney's immense drive, imagination and perfectionism. As with any creative business, he seems to have struggled with making animated features profitable and artistic at the same time and he could be tyrannical at times. Daughter Diane Disney may not have felt this book was altogether fair, but what emerges is a fitting tribute to the man who was "Uncle Walt" to many of us children growing up in the 1950s and '60s.

After reading this book, there will be NOTHING you will need to know about Walt Disney. What an imagination and inspiration he was and continues to be. (the Steve jobs of his generation) You will not find this book @ this price ANYWHERE except . LOVE THIS BOOK

Mr. Gabler is an excellent writer and I highly recommend this read. To this day, I continue to be in awe at the genius and perseverance of Walt Disney. It was fascinating to read the machinations that went into the development and design of Disneyworld in Orlando. The book covers in great detail the story of Walt's life and I did not know many of the facts revealed in this outstanding work. Just as with Steve Jobs, it is sometimes hard to believe that all of this brilliance and vision came from one single entity!

As a baby boomer I grew up with millions of other children enamored of the Wonderful World of

Disney and the Mickey Mouse Club. Now Neal Gabler, the brilliant biographer of Walter Winchell and the Jewish men who made Hollywood what it is, has turned his considerable biographical skills to the subject of Walt Disney (1901-1966) This book is valuable because Gabler is adept of showing us the real Walter Elias Disney warts and all. Walter E. Disney was born in Chicago but grew up in the small town of Marceline Missouri. He also lived for long periods in Kansas City and Chicago. Disney's father ran a Kansas City paper route which kept Walt busy delivering copies of the Kansas City Star. The lad had a variety of jobs but his love was cartooning., Walt had three brothers and a sister named Ruth. He was closest to Roy Disney who would be the money man while Walt handled artistic matters in the Disney Studios. Walt dropped out of high school and set up as a cartoonist. He moved to Hollywood where he was able to set up a small cartooning studio. His biggest problem was always money. Disney was a perfectionist who finally achieved fame with the creation of Mickey Mouse in "Steamboat Willy" in 1928. Other major hits followed including "Snow White" the first feature cartoon; "Pinocchio" "Sleeping Beauty" "Peter Pan "Lady and the Tramp" "101 Dalmatians"" and many shorts. During World War II the Disney studios filmed educational and propaganda films for the Defense Department. Following the war Disney saw his dreams of Disneyland realized and was deep in the planning of Disney World in Orlando Florida and EPCOT Center when he died. Disney was a complicated folk genius. He was faithful to his wife Lilly. The couple had two children Diane and Sharon (who the couple had adopted). Disney could be very harsh and judgmental on his stable of cartoonists. He was a virtual dictator at the Disney studios whose word was law. Disney was also a right wing conservative. When his studio employees struck in 1941 he accused them of being Communists. Disney also spoke in derogatory ways towards African-Americans and Jewish persons. Disney made stars of Mickey Mouse, Donald Duck, Goofy as well as making living action films such as the big hit "Mary Poppins" which netted a Best Actress Oscar for its star Julie Andrews. Disney won 34 Oscars which is an all time record. He was cremated not frozen as an urban myth has it. Much of the book deals with the business aspects of Disney's Studio. Some readers may enjoy this less than the chapters showing how such classics as "Snow White" would produce. There are, for us non-business types, many dull pages. But, overall I give Gabler a star for this wonderful biography. Walt Disney was a Horatio Alger story in the flesh. He rose from poverty to being one of the most honored (and criticized) artist in the United States. This book is one of the best biographies I have ever read. Anyone interested in the movies, cartoons, American business or the life of a genius will be enlightened by it. Highly recommended!

He built an entertainment empire that not only pioneered a new field of animation and theme parks,

but did it without support from the banking industry and movie moguls. Mr. Disney had a dream and he found a way to spoon feed the American public until they finally saw the light and transformed the Disney Studios into a success story of all times. It was truly magical and it all began on the back of a mouse. Who would have thought? It's a big volume but it is worth every minute you spend reading it. Let Walt's story work its magic on your mind.

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