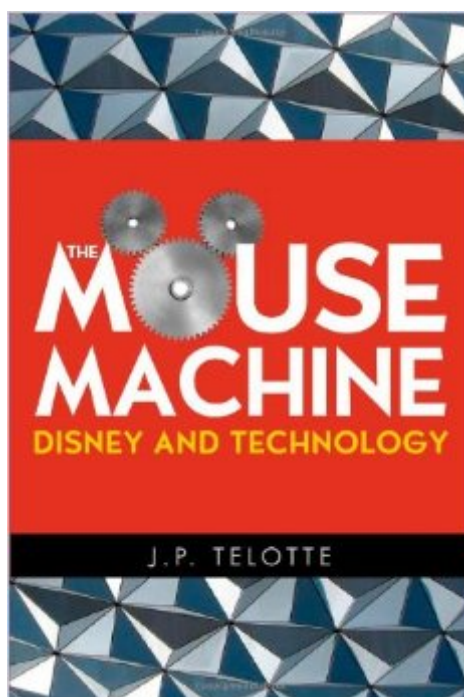


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# The Mouse Machine: Disney And Technology



## Synopsis

By exploring the technological context for Disney creations throughout its history, this title illuminates Disney's extraordinary growth into one of the largest and most influential media and entertainment companies in the world.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This academic book explores the technology behind Disney's success -- first in cartoons, then in feature films, later in theme parks. The topic is rich, and I enjoyed the book. I did feel like I was reading a textbook, albeit a textbook on a fascinating subject. Topics covered include Disney's innovations in sound cartoons, using three-strip Technicolor film, creating depth in an animated image, television, widescreen technology, theme park development, Audio-Animatronics figures, digital animation and effects filmmaking. Author Telotte goes into surprising depth; a full 13 pages are devoted to the technologically pioneering 1945 film *The Three Caballeros*, which merged animated sequences with live action. About Donald Duck's wooing of a pretty girl, the book notes "it marks a point, quickly noted by reviewers of the era, at which Disney animation becomes overtly sexualized, by depicting the animated duck as a possible suitor for a real, live woman, demonstrating what a reviewer in *Time* described as 'an alarmingly incongruous case of hot pants' that probably discomfited some viewers expecting the usual Disney family experience." Unfortunately, this interesting material is presented in an unappealing way. The book's pages look dry as dust, with blocks of text unbroken by subheads or tables or diagrams. Long paragraphs are made of long sentences, which are written in an impersonal style. There are no

photos or illustrations of any kind. But if you can slog through, you find gems. I recommend this book, with a strong cup of coffee.

The Mouse Machine was a book that I was very excited to start reading. With a lot of books, you have a certain notion of what to expect between the covers; at first, this book disappointed the theme park fan inside me. When I really got my teeth into it, I realized that this is a work geared towards two types of people: Walt Disney (Company) enthusiasts and animation/film buffs. The theme parks are covered, but in the audio-animatronics area, mainly. Most of the work is dedicated to covering the advances that the House of Mouse created or stumbled upon during its sojourn into popular culture. Obviously, several high points in the Company's history take precedence: sound, color, multi-plane and special effects are all covered in great detail. The book takes a while to get going and I was tempted to put it away several times. I am glad that I continued. After the first several chapters, you get used to the academic style and start to enjoy and think about the concepts. Telotte's intent was to create a work that showed how the technological leaps were not only to heighten the art form, but also acted as a link to technology and popular culture. "The aim of this book is to follow the company's lead in this regard, to offer a selective look at some of those, often-unseen--or unconsidered-- technological supports or developments that, in film, television, and the theme parks, have been crucial to the success of the Walt Disney Company and, at times, also a clue to its limitations." --pp. 2-3. Ub Iwerks and Walt garner special focus, but Telotte also looks at the other pioneers in the various film departments. A lot of time is spent in looking at the development of the animated shorts--how they changed the industry technologically and artistically.

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