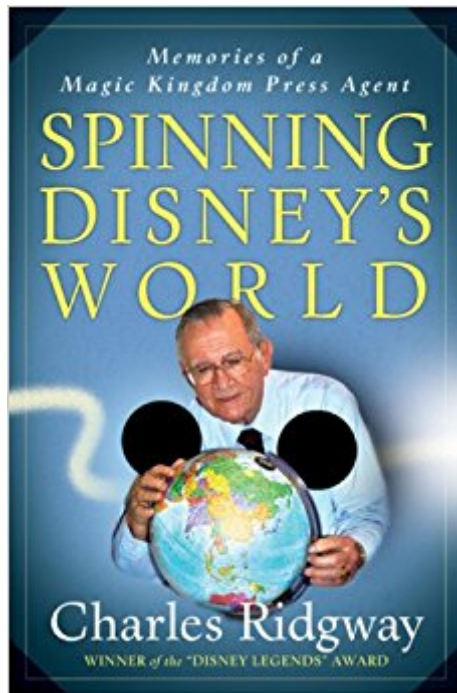


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Spinning Disney's World: Memories Of A Magic Kingdom Press Agent



Synopsis

Disney Legend Charles Ridgway looks back on over forty years of working with the Mouse, from Disneyland, to Walt Disney World, to Euro-Disney and beyond. Filled with light-hearted and hilarious reminiscences of famous people and outlandish publicity stunts, this memoir will delight Disney fans young and old.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I met Charlie Ridgeway a few times when I was a travel writer, and he was the most genial host with genuine understanding of the writer's needs of any "press flack" I ever met. This book explains the reasons why and gives the outsider, whether a pro in PR or media or merely a fan of things Disney, a fascinating look into how and why the Mouse became what it is today. This is the kind of stuff PR people never learn, and old-time reporters are mostly not around to share anymore. Vitally important education for professionals in the media and public relations/press relations, a great read for all.

Charles Ridgway was Disney's public face to the world for almost forty years. In an easy style, he takes us through some of the behind the scenes stories and anecdotes that are of interest to Disney students. Ridgway is a Disney fan which results in the book lacking any real meat. Gentle memoirs written in a gentle style do not make compulsive reading. The book is imbued with the Disney spirit where everyone loves everyone else and everyone lives happily ever after. Ridgway seems to have only met wonderful people who create wonderful experiences in his lifetime. Thus the book lacks

OOMP and bit. The author though does have a nice pleasant writing style who takes us through many enjoyable anecdotes and adventures as to how he helped create noise and media excitement around a wonderful brand.

As always we read just about anything from anyone who ever worked at Disney, in an effort to further our ongoing education about the theme park design process. Even a janitor might provide insight as to the almost mystical inner workings of the Disney corporation. However, Mr. Ridgway never really grabbed us. His writing style is pleasantly folksy, like hearing a story from a good neighbor... but he really never reveals anything of consequence that you cannot find out in any of the multitude of other books on The Disney Brothers, or their company. We suspect that if he really wanted too, he could reveal much more than he is willing to tell. Understandable, as he paints himself as a devoted employee. Personally I would like to spend a day with Mr. Ridgway, just picking his brain... but his book isn't really going to "let you in on anything". We hope he has some success because he is a likable fellow, but if you're really after information that you cannot get from other Disney "Tell all" books... you will not discover much in Mr. Ridgway's book. The title attracted us with promises, which never seemed to materialize.

I've held off for a long time reading this book, mostly because I wasn't impressed with Charles Ridgway's promotion of this book on Disney fan podcasts years ago. Ridgway told the exact same two or three stories on every show. I've now read the book, and while this book is an enjoyable read, it lacks substance or any compelling reason for a Disney fan to read it. Ridgway tells a series of partial anecdotes without really making them interesting and drops names of every famous person he's run into. While an enjoyable read, Jack Lindquist's and Marty Sklar's books are far more interesting.

As a huge Disney fan, I try to read as much Disney historic material as I can. Consequently, I was really looking forward to reading Mr. Ridgway's book. Unfortunately, half-way through the book I just wanted it to be over. For one thing, most of the really interesting stories have been told before, so there were no real surprises. For instance most people know about the issues with the opening day of Disneyland. Many of the other stories were just not interesting. What we treated to was an inventory of all the celebrities (and non-celebrities) that made their way through the park. Several times throughout the book the same information was presented. I actually thought the book might have been more enjoyable had it been 30% shorter. Most disappointing was the length at

which the Disney corporation "wined and dined" sponsors, politicians, the media, and entertainers. One wonders if Disney World would be more affordable to the average American if the company would spend less of its resources entertaining "special" guests. I always felt "special" while at Walt Disney World. It appears that some are more "special" than others.

Charles Ridgway tells the tales of what it was like to work for Disney during the early days of Disneyland and into the building of Walt Disney World. This behind the scenes tour is not a tell-all, but an honest account of what it is like to work for the most magical company in the world, during the years when magic was happening every day, as new parks were built, new attractions were designed and rolled out, even working with Walt Disney himself. Engaging and insightful, a tale any Disney addict would enjoy.

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