

**Cleansing the Past, Selling the Future:
Disney's Corporate Exhibits at the 1964-65 New York World's Fair**

**Jonathan J. M. Lillie
JOMC 242 History Paper
5/3/02**

**Park Doctoral Fellow
The School of Journalism and Mass Communication
The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill**

Abstract

This paper offers a historical analysis of Disney's corporate exhibits at the 1964-65 New York World's Fair, GE's "Carousel of Progress" and Ford's "Magic Skyway," in an attempt to consider their historical and cultural significance. The coming together of Disney's legacy of nostalgic entertainment achieved via his desire and skill in "improving" the past and future with the equally strong desire of corporate giants to sell themselves and their products is presented here as a case study of the processes of cultural creation: how and why specific discourses of technology and consumption are written in to these narratives of the past and the future.

Introduction

Between April 22, 1964 and October 17, 1965 fifty-one million people experienced the New York World's Fair.¹ The mid-1960s was a time of both turmoil and prosperity for America. President Kennedy had been assassinated only months before the Fair's opening. In southern states such as Alabama the civil rights protest movement was drawing national attention. While cold war tensions remained high following the Cuban Missile Crisis, the nation was enjoying the height of postwar economic prosperity and geo-political power. The Fair's twin themes of "Man's Achievements in an Expanding Universe" and "A Millennium of Progress" captured the exuberance of the times, celebrating "the boundless potential of science and technology for human betterment."²

The 1939 New York World's Fair was in many ways a predecessor to the 1964-65 exhibition. While both offered a distinct focus on new technologies, as has been the pedigree of World's Fairs since London's Crystal Palace in 1851, the former suffered from an overdose of corporate propaganda in

¹ The Fair closed for the winter months. Thus, it actually was open from April 22 to October 18, 1964 and in 1965 from April 21 to October 17, for grand total of 360 days. *Official Guide: New York World's Fair, 1964/1965*. New York: Time Inc., 1964. The Fair was held at Flushing Meadow in Queens, New York on the site of the 1939 fair. The 1964-65 Fair featured 140 pavilions on 646 acres. Due to a stipulation that no nation can host a World's Fair more than once a decade and that an official World's Fair was held in Seattle in 1962, the New York Fair did not enjoy the official sanction of the Bureau of International Expositions. While several Communist Bloc and European nations boycotted the Fair due to its unofficial status, many Latin American and Pacific countries did host exhibits. Stanton, Jeffrey, *New York 1964 Word's Fair*, 1997. (February 29, 2002). <<http://naid.sppsr.ucla.edu/ny64fair/>>.

² Stanton.

seeking to lift American hearts from the melancholy and suffering of the 1930s.³ Still, the 1939 corporate pavilions established consumption-based themes, introducing the American public to the latest products in the name of technological progress and a bright future. In 1964, the major U.S. corporations at the Fair sought to improve on what they had done and learned in 1939, with pavilions such as Ford's "Magic Skyway," General Motor's "Futurama," and General Electric's "Progressland."

During the years and months prior to the Fair's opening day, the challenge for companies such as Ford, GM, and GE, was to find a way entrance and entertain visitors in their pavilions all the while reflecting favorably on their corporate identity and introducing their newest product lines. Two of these companies, Ford and General Electric, hired Walt Disney and his imagineers for this task. Disney designed and produced four features for the 1964 New York World's Fair: Ford's "Magic Skyway," "The Carousel of Progress" for General Electric's "Progressland" pavilion; "Great Moments with Mr. Lincoln" for the State of Illinois; and "It's a Small World" co-sponsored by Pepsi and UNICEF. The Carousel of Progress was the one attraction that Walt Disney himself was the most involved in creating and in which his ideas of "progress and the American family" were said to be most embodied. Both the Carousel and the Skyway offered narratives that connected past technological innovation to promising, corporate-friendly futures. This paper analyzes Disney's corporate exhibits at the Fair by looking specifically at the history of these two exhibits. The purpose of this analysis is to draw attention to the unique elements of these installations and what they offered in the way of corporate versions of American popular culture, particularly how technology is deployed at a multitude of dimensions to engulf visitors within an experience of the dominant discourses of consumption, technology, and progress.

³ Mike Wallace notes that the heavy-handed social message of many of the corporate exhibits led many visitors to turn away. He quotes Walter Lippmann, noting that "General Motors spent a small fortune to convince the American public that if it wishes to enjoy the full benefit of private enterprise in motor manufacturing, it will have to rebuild its cities and its highways." Wallace, Michael, "Mickey Mouse History: Portraying the Past at Disney World," in *History Museums in the United States: A Critical Assessment*, eds. Warren Leon and Roy Rosenzweig (Urbana: U of Illinois, 1989), 41.

The coming together of Disney's legacy of nostalgic entertainment achieved via his desire and skill in "improving" the past (whether in cartoons or Disneyland rides) with the equally strong desire of corporate giants to sell themselves and their products is presented here as a historical case study of the creation of culture/experiences of culture and how specific discourses of technology and consumption are written in to these narratives of the past and the future. The commercialization of American popular culture in the mid-twentieth century was based within a context of Fordist industrialization, mass production, and the development of mass media industries in the United States.⁴ In fact, the rise of Disney's empire was based on his ability to tap into new media and advertising technologies: from producing the first synchronized sound cartoon, "Steam Boat Willie" (1929) to releasing the first full length animated feature film, "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs" (1937).⁵ However, Disney's most

⁴ Fordism refers to the turn-of-the-century (1800/1900) development of new production, manufacturing, and management techniques geared toward the mass production of consumer goods. The term is named after Henry Ford who established assembly lines at his Model T manufacturing plants. Over fifteen million Model Ts were sold, initiating America as a motorized citizenry. Despite a reputation for ruthless employee relations, Henry Ford is also credited with the idea of raising the level of base wages in order to allow his workers to be able to become consumers of the products they made. A half-century later, during the economic prosperity of the "long boom" from 1945 to the early 1970s, Fordism was understood as no longer "just a way to organize work and production but as a broader way in which to organize society as whole. It was seen to be a way of integrating production and consumption." Hunt, Tristan. in What Ways is 'Post-Fordism' Held to Differ from 'Fordism?' UK-Learning Co., 2002, (March 20, 2002). <http://www.essaybank.co.uk/free_coursework/892.html>. Thus, Fordism also describes broader social developments, particularly the processes such as advertising geared toward product orientation aimed at middle class nuclear families in suburban neighborhoods as primary consumers. Television (itself a mass produced product) was a major vehicle around which consumption (advertisements for products, and actual programming) and domestic life revolved, becoming one of the bedrocks of popular culture.

⁵ Working out of Los Angeles, the first official year of operation for the Walt Disney Company was 1923. The first commercial success for the company was the "Alice Comedies" series, short animations mixed with live action shots of female child actress Virginia Davis in "Alice in Wonderland" type adventures. These shorts included, "Alice's Day at Sea," "Alice Hunting in Africa," and "Alice's Spooky Adventure." Smith, David, and Clark, Steven. *Disney: The First Hundred Years* (New York: Hyperion, 1999), 17. The Disney company's next animated series featured "Oswald the Lucky Rabbit." Ironically, if it was not for a copyright dispute over Oswald, Mickey Mouse may never have been created. Walt's distributor for the Oswald series decided to buyout Disney's animators in order to save money by not paying the Disney Company. In analyzing his contract, Disney discovered that he had unwittingly signed the copyright over to the distributor. He is said to have made it a point to be very protective of his creations from then on out. Smith and Clark, 24. Mickey Mouse was created soon after this failure, with a few adjustments to the anatomy of Oswald. Due to Walt's inability to sell his first Mickey short, he decided to experiment with sound, which had just been used in the motion picture, "The Jazz Singer." Smith and Clark, 24. On November 18, 1928, the third Mickey Mouse short, "Steamboat Willie" premiered in the Colony Theater in New York as the first synchronized sound cartoon. Smith and Clarke, 24. Although Disney's animated shorts were the mainstay of the company before they began producing feature-length films in the late 1930s, licensing of Mickey Mouse merchandise was another way that the company made money off of the popularity of their cartoons.

significant insight perhaps resides in his understanding of the experiential power of theme park rides and shows in effectively mediating discourses of past and future progress through technology-based and themed narratives. Corporate sponsorship became the best way for Disney to fund the actualization of his visions of a clean-cut, nostalgic yesteryear and a “great big beautiful tomorrow” of wholesome new technologies for the middle-class families of America. Corporate America, on the other hand, was overjoyed to be along for the ride, attached to the novelty of Disney’s vision, even if their products did not always take center stage. Thus, as we will see, the collaboration of Disney with G.E. and Ford at the 1964 Fair “represents an important merging of several long standing traditions of American culture.”⁶ a fore-runner perhaps to more recent immersive cultural technologies like virtual reality, the Internet, and other new media, which similarly mediate discourses of technological progress.

Literature Review

Both Disney⁷ and the World’s Fairs⁸ have received their share of scholarly examination. Existing within the overlap between these two broad areas of research is a small but significant group of essays and articles that consider the Disney exhibits at the 1964 Fair. In general, this body of scholarship understands the Disney installations as in many ways prototypical of the Fair’s strong emphasis on technological innovation. “Following in the tradition of world’s fairs and expositions,” Michael Smith writes, “the 1964 Fair’s corporate exhibits tended to fixate on the products of technology,

⁶ Wallace, 39.

⁷ See for example, Watts, Steven. *The Magic Kingdom : Walt Disney and the American Way of Life*. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1997).

⁸ David Nye, for example, has written an excellent critical history looking at narratives of electricity in literature and at World Fair’s from the 1880s to the 1940s. Nye sees “technology to be part of an ongoing conversation between generations and between social groups over their differing conceptions of what is desirable, possible, or even real... These Narratives may focus on an older world... or they may engage the future, projecting utopian visions of ease and abundance.” Nye, David E. *Narratives and Spaces: Technology and the Construction of American Culture* (New York: Columbia, 1997), 3.

rather than on the social processes that created them.”⁹ What Smith and others find interesting about Disney’s involvement in the Fair is the role he played in creating the historical and future narratives that most suited corporate marketing criteria. Smith notes that the car assembly process and the existence of autoworkers that was present in Ford’s 1939 exhibit had completely disappeared in the historical recollections of the 1964 Skyway. Disney’s design which highlighted Ford’s newest product line, “implied that those shiny new Mustangs were helping to carry, not just their passengers, but humanity itself, out of the sulfurous mists of prehistory and toward a luminous, high-rise future.”^{10 11}

Both James Bierman and Mike Wallace share Smith’s critical approach in analyzing Disney’s creative and selective approach to history. Bierman looks at “The Walt Disney Robot Dramas,” focusing on the significance of robots taking center stage for the two Disney exhibits at the Fair that featured Audio-Animatronics, the Carousel of Progress and Great Moments with Mr. Lincoln.^{12 13 14} He

⁹ Smith, Michael L. “Making Time: Representations of Technology at the 1964 World’s Fair,” in *The Power of Culture: Critical Essays in American History*, eds. Richard W. Fox and T. J. Jackson Lears (Chicago: U of Chicago, 1993), 225.

¹⁰ Smith, 228.

¹¹ Smith is particularly interested in how the Disney’s work with corporations for the 1964 Fair was in many respect a model for Disney’s plans for future theme parks. Smith regards EPCOT center in Florida as Disney’s permanent World’s Fair installation, noting that it closely resembles the layout of the 1939 Fair in Flushing Meadow. Smith, Michael L. “EPCOT, Camelot, and the History of Technology,” in Bruce Sinclair, ed., *New Perspectives on Technology and American Culture* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1986), 69-79.

¹² Bierman, James H. “The Walt Disney Robot Dramas,” *Yale Review LXVI* (1976): 223-36.

¹³ The Carousel enjoyed three runs: two years at the 1964 Fair, seven years at Disneyland in Anaheim, California, and twenty-eight years in Walt Disney World near Orlando, Florida. It was closed permanently at the end of 2001, a casualty of the new technology whose progress over time it was designed to celebrate. The Disney Corporation claims that the Carousel has been experienced by more people than any theatrical presentation in world history. Bierman, 23.

¹⁴ The Hall of Presidents was originally conceived in 1956 by Disney as a salute to the nation’s leaders, with particular focus on the framers of the Constitution. Anderson, Paul, ed. *Persistence of Vision: An Unofficial Historical Journal celebrating the Creative Legacy of Walt Disney*. Issue 6/7. (Salt Lake City: Anderson, 1995), 83. The Hall was to be housed on Liberty Street at Disneyland. However, Disney wanted the Presidents to be more than talking mannequins, and when he heard about the upcoming New York Fair, he decided to concentrate his efforts on creating a prototype Lincoln robot for the Fair upon which to base the Hall of Presidents in the future. Anderson, 83. Both Robert Moses, the president of the 1964 New York World’s Fair, and Otto Kerner, the Governor of Illinois, visited the Disney studios before negotiations were made to bring “Great Moments with Mr. Lincoln” to the Illinois Pavilion at the Fair. Anderson, 89-91. The face for the Lincoln robot was made from a copy of an original cast of Lincoln’s face made in 1860. *Disneyland Goes to the Fair*, Walt Disney Productions Inc., 57 min., 1964, videocassette.

posits that the robot technologies of Audio-Animatronics allowed Disney to present in three-dimensions his highly-crafted narratives usually rendered through animation.¹⁵ However, Bierman argues that utilizing Audio-Animatronics to portray everyman and everywoman characters in the Carousel of Progress ends in dehumanization rather than the feeling of warmth that animation can be used to convey. This is due more in part to the scripting of the Carousel scenes than the actor's robotic nature. Bierman cites an article from the *Los Angeles Times* that also viewed the Carousel as catering to traditional stereotypes. "The G.E. Carousel," *the Times* reports, "was a sexist hymn to all-electric progress in the 20th century. Through the years, dumb old Mom would fall off ladders replacing electric light bulbs and strident little Sis would be talking on the phone all day while working off the blubber with an electrical exercise belt. Dad, of course, would be long-suffering."¹⁶ Analyzing how the Carousel script has changed over the years, Bierman observes that in the Disney World version of the Carousel Mom and Sis have begun to speak up more, while dad even tries to give a hand in the kitchen.^{17 18} Going beyond Bierman, Lynn Weiner provides the most systematic and in-depth analysis of the Carousel by analyzing four different scripts from the history of the exhibit from the 1964 Fair, Disneyland, and Disney World.¹⁹ She finds that the character of "Mother" particularly illustrates how gender roles and stereotypes are played out in the show. Inevitably social change never seems to improve mother's life as

¹⁵ This observation is particularly easy to see in Disneyland's "America Sings" and "Country Bear Jamboree" shows that use animal characters.

¹⁶ Seiler, Michael, *Los Angeles Times*, July 3, 1974, quoted in Bierman, 229.

¹⁷ Bierman, 235.

¹⁸ Rather than noting The Disney Company's propensity for altering and "improving" the past according to its own standards, as other critics such as Wallace have, Bierman concludes that the history of the Carousel represents the changing nature of historical memory, which is always based on the biases and values of the present.

¹⁹ Weiner, Lynn Y. "'There's a Great Big Beautiful Tomorrow': Historic Memory and Gender in Walt Disney's 'Carousel of Progress,'" *Journal of American Culture* (1997), Vol. 20, Issue 1, p111, 6p. Available: Academic Search FullTEXT Elite [November 13, 2001].

much as technological innovations promise to. “Feminist gains, part of the national experience a decade ago,” Weiner observes, “are erased during a time of political and social backlash. The play presents a history that forgets its own past.”²⁰

Both the Carousel and the Lincoln show from the 1964 Fair are considered in Mike Wallace’s study of Disney’s historical narratives. Wallace notes that while Disney was always trying to clean up messy and negative elements from the past, his histories evolved over the years from favoring patriotic and nationalistic themes to troupes of corporate-friendly technology. He concludes, “the Carousel of Progress is more than simply an extended commercial brake. It is a paean to Progress – defined as the availability of emancipatory consumer goods.”²¹ Disney’s ability to create cleaned-up Coney Island style installations catering to middle class American families masterfully connected nostalgic histories and amazing futures to the products and images of corporate sponsors.

Of the literature reviewed thus far, none of the authors focus on the integral details of the Disney exhibits at the 1964 Fair, how they were developed by Disney, how the corporate sponsors participated in their production, etc. One researcher who has taken up the task of writing the detailed history of these exhibits, however, is Paul Anderson. Anderson is the publisher and editor of *Persistence of Vision*: “An Unofficial Historical Journal celebrating the creative legacy of Walt Disney.” The 1995 double issue of Anderson’s journal features his extensive research on Walt Disney’s involvement in the 1964 New York World’s Fair. Much of his work on this topic amounts to an oral history since the bulk of this research is based on over a years worth of forty-plus long interviews. Among the interviewees are several of Disney’s imaginers that worked on the production of the Carousel, the Skyway, as well as General Electric and Ford employees at the time.

²⁰ Weiner.

²¹ Wallace, 39.

Although Anderson's research is extensive, it is not academic in nature.²² The scholarly work conducted to this point describes the discursive regime and cultural significance of Disney's involvement with the Fair, but does not consider the in-depth contexts of the history of these exhibits. Thus, given that there is no detailed scholarly account of Disney's corporate exhibits at the 1964-65 World's Fair, this paper will attempt to fill this gap. The following two sections offer accounts of the production and installation of the General Electric Carousel of Progress and Ford's Magic Skyway. In the Conclusion, I consider what this detailed analysis might add to scholarly understandings of the historical and cultural significance of Disney's corporate exhibits at the 1964 Fair.

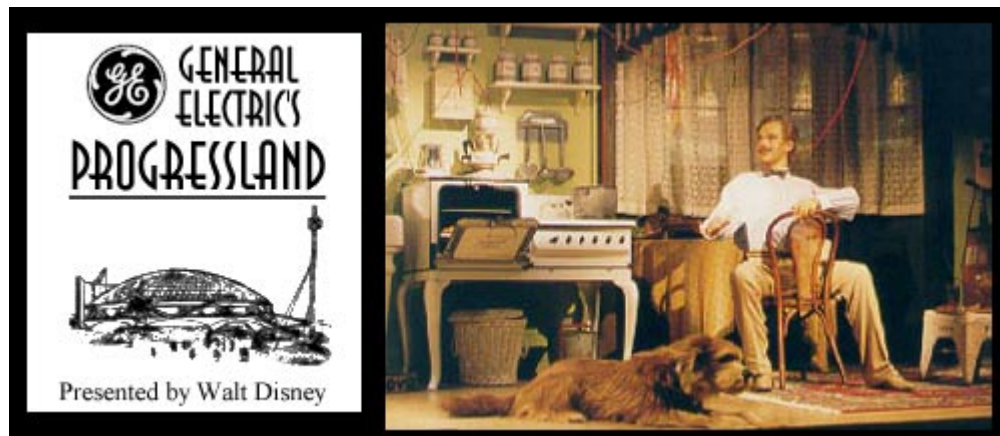


Figure 2. Father and dog from Carousel show.

²² Unlike the critical approach Weiner, Wallace, Bierman, and Smith take, Anderson is explicitly celebratory, which is a caveat taken into consideration in this paper where his research was utilized. The importance of Anderson's work lies in the difficulty of finding useful primary resources from this time period. I emailed Anderson to ask if typed-transcripts were available from his interviews. But he only typed-up the quotes and information that he used in the journal. However, perhaps not surprisingly, I found several web sites with excellent primary materials such as transcripts of the Carousel and Magic Skyway scripts from the Fair, as well as first-person recollections of visitors to both exhibits, and scanned photographs and illustrations from Fair pamphlets. Thus these sites also supplied excellent primary resources.

The General Electric Carousel of Progress

Walt Disney's involvement in the 1964-65 World's Fair was based in many respects on the successes of Disneyland.^{23 24} Disneyland opened in 1955 near the Southern California city of Anaheim.²⁵ Disney's theme park departure from animated films was ridiculed by many as a risky move. But, as this 1963 *Look* magazine article notes, developing family-oriented exhibits was one dream that Disney was particularly devoted to:

They laughed when Walt Disney sat down to the drawing board and drew neither Mickey Mouse nor Snow White. Instead, he sketched plans for an amusement park he had dreamed of ever since the days when he used to take his two daughters to Kiddylands. He judged the parks to distasteful for them, boring for adults. To make them over in his own image, he poured \$17 million into Disneyland, in Anaheim Calif., and supervised every detail of the 170-acre Pollyanna version of carnival ...Disneyland is an automated, cotton-candy world that warms everybody save those who demand their own kind of realism, even in a place dedicated to kiddish fantasies.^{26 27}

In order to pay for some of the larger exhibits at Disneyland, Disney brokered deals with some of the largest and most well known American companies to be sponsors. It was in the spirit of these sponsorships for several of the original Disneyland features that one year before the announcement of the 1964 Fair General Electric's Land Division approached Walt Elias Disney Enterprises Inc., the

²³ Disney's motivation for participating in the 1964 Fair was threefold. First he wanted to experiment with new theme park innovations, specifically Audio Animatronics, and corporate sponsorship at the Fair would give him the funds for this. Second, he wanted to expand Disneyland, and planned to bring the New York exhibits back to California after the Fair was over. Lastly, he wanted to test Disneyland-style entertainment on "sophisticated" Eastern audiences because he wanted to build a park on the East coast in the future. Marty Sklar, president of Walt Disney Imagineering in the 1990s commented that, "the Fair was one of the great stepping stones to Walt Disney World." Anderson, 30.

²⁴ When the Fair was announced Disney set up a task force to contact companies to propose Disney designed exhibits. Coca-Cola and General Motors were among companies that talked with the Disney Company, but did not contract with them. Anderson, 31.

²⁵ Admission to the park which boasted over twenty attractions was one dollar. Smith and Clark, 77. The opening day festival was covered in a 90-minute live television special by ABC, who had been also aired a Disneyland series hosted by Walt during the months and years prior to the opening. Smith and Clark, 74-75.

²⁶ Zimmerman, Gereon. "Walt Disney: Giant at the Fair." *Look*, February 11, 1964, 28-32.

²⁷ Zimmermann, 31.

production unit for Disneyland, WED, with the idea of sponsoring a future Disneyland attraction. Disney and his team of production imagineers set to work on a proposal that would appeal to GE's interests. What they came up with was, "Edison Square," a dramatic presentation, circa 1898, of the innovative world of Thomas Edison.²⁸ The central feature of Edison Square was a series of four interconnected theaters. Each stage would hold a different theatrical feature showing off the latest innovations and home appliances of a certain time period, with the first play depicting 1898, the second 1918, the third 1958 (the present), and the last was saved to show technologies of the future.²⁹ Each play would be narrated by an "electro-mechanical" host. Comments by some of the WED imaginers reveals that the real motivation for this project was Disney's desire to raise money to start researching and developing Audio-Animatronics technology.³⁰

Despite Disney's eager pitch and multi-page, color proposal, the Edison Square project was not accepted by General Electric even though the working relationship between WED and GE remained positive. When GE heard the announcement for the 1964 New York Fair, they asked Disney to create a "show that will interpret in an educational and entertaining way, the role electricity had played in bettering man's living conditions, and dramatize where man's work with electrical power will go from here."³¹ Disney and his WED staff decided to start with the ideas developed for Edison Square which had already been conceived around GE's motto, "Progress is Our Most Important Product." In a series of meetings Disney and the WED staff produced new ideas and revisions for a Fair show, and Disney

²⁸ The following quote is from the WED proposal to GE, quoted in Anderson, 60: "as they enter Progress Place in Edison Square, where they will find out that Progress is Our Most Important Product, visitors will see two separate plaques on which General Electric's symbol and appropriate words setting forth the theme of Edison Square will appear."

²⁹ Anderson, 60.

³⁰ Disney told one of the WED workers that his goal for Audio-Animatronics was "I'd like to not be able to tell them from real people." Anderson, 60.

³¹ Anderson, 61.

artists created several thematic sketches.³² A script was developed and GE was brought in see what Disney had planned. The four acts from Edison Square were expanded to six, but the basic concept of highlighting the contributions of electricity to human life was still the core.^{33 34 35} GE thought it was “a genius creation” due to the extensive details that Disney highlighted in his sales pitch.³⁶ A “Kaleidophonic”³⁷ introduction and the end of the show framed as the “gateway to progress” where visitors exited and entered the remaining sections of the GE pavilion, were the two acts added to the four

³² *Disneyland Goes to the Fair*, videocassette.

³³ Anderson, 61.

³⁴ This is the description of the Carousel of Progress from the *Official Guide*: “In the first part of the program, separate auditoriums, each holding 250 people, circle into position and are carried past stages on which life-sized, three-dimensional, animated human figures move, talk, laugh and act out the story of electricity in the home from the gay 1890s to the present: A late 19th Century home is shown. Its inhabitants struggle with all the latest luxuries: telephone, gas lamps, gramophone, kitchen pump, a hand-cranked clothes washer and a hand-pumped, air-suction vacuum cleaner. [20s] A home of the '20s comes next, with coffeemakers and sewing machines, "monitor"-topped refrigerators and a homemade cooling device for hot weather: an electric fan that circulates air over a cake of ice. [40s] The '40s are recalled with the little, round television screen, plus some odd applications of electricity: e.g., house-wives mixing wallpaper paste with cake mixers. [present] The glories of today glitter in a living room at Christmastime, a glass- enclosed, electrically heated patio, a kitchen that all but runs itself.” *Official Guide: New York World's Fair*.

³⁵ The Audio Animatronics family consisted of eight characters:

John: The father, husband, and narrator of the largest part of our show.

Sara: The mother, wife and laborer throughout the production.

Judy: Known as "Jane" in the original version, the teenage daughter.

Jimmy: Not given any name in the original, the son and annoying little brother.

Rover: The family dog. Also called "Sport" and "Queenie" in different versions.

Uncle Orville: Visiting relative we hear from only twice. Invents "air-cooling" with a block of ice and a fan.

Grandma and Grandpa: Both remain mostly silent through the production until "modern times" scene, where they speak freely in the updated version. In the original version, both lived in a retirement community, and were being picked up at the new Jet-Airport. Addison, Jacob. *Carousel of progress.com*, 2000, (March 23, 2002).

<<http://carouselofprogress.tripod.com/>>.

³⁶ Anderson, 62.

³⁷ The transparent kaleidophonic screen covered the entirety of the introductory stage. Large color patterns appeared created by Christmas lights behind the screen while visitors entered their seats and a narrator's voice offered the following “prologue:” Welcome to the General Electric Carousel of Progress. Now, most carousels just go ‘round and ‘round without getting anyplace. But on this one we’re really going places – and that is progress!... Yes, and it’s a great deal more than that ... Progress is the fulfillment of man’s hopes and dreams for a better way of life. It is measured by our ability to harness electric energy for the betterment of mankind... Progress is the sound of a motor...[sound of motor]... The hum of a turbine [Electric turbine humming]... The heart-beat of a factory... [Machinery running]... The sound of a symphony... [musical strings]... The roar of a rocket... [Rocket taking off]... And because of man’s dreams, tomorrow will find us further than today. [Narrator and voices start to sing theme song] There’s a great big beautiful tomorrow. 1967 script of Carousel of Progress at Disneyland.

proposed for Edison Square. According to Anderson, the capacity estimation for Edison Square was a very “generous” 2,125 visitor per hour.³⁸ Even this number would not satisfy the needs for the large crowds expected at the Fair. Thus, WED engineers proposed and developed the first revolving audience theater. A “doughnut on railroad wheels” containing six compartmentalized sets of seats would revolved around the center that contained six stages. Capacity was boosted to 3900 people per hour within this design.³⁹ Due to its revolving nature the exhibit was called the Carousel Theater, and finally, “The Carousel of Progress.”

The key to the nostalgia that was Disney’s trademark was in his obsession with details.^{40 41} A majority of WED workers were engineers or artisans of some kind: painters, sculptors, carpenters, etc. To create the robot actors of the Carousel, human models were caste to make molds, plastic mock-ups were made, the exterior of the final cast were made out of synthetic materials, and Audio Animatronics machinery had to be fit into each, designed to make the specific movements needed for each character.⁴² Disney insisted that a full-scale mock-up be created to help work out the concepts, costuming, props and

³⁸ Anderson, 62.

³⁹ Anderson, 62.

⁴⁰ Anderson’s interviews uncovered one chilly moment in Disney’s relations with G.E., when a G.E. vice present came to California to see how things were going with the Carousel. After hearing WED’s plans from Disney, the VP snipped, “Well, that’s not exactly what we had in mind. We’re in the business of selling progress. What do we want with all that nostalgia?” Walt replied in anger, “I spent my whole life telling stories with nostalgia, and this is the way you communicate with people?” Anderson, 63.

⁴¹ One detail that Disney insisted on, perhaps due to his success in animation, was the use of animals in the show. He came up with the idea of a dog that would ham to the audience in every act. It was a WED joke that the dog had different names in each act. A robin was also to appear in one act, and Disney wanted a real bird skin. He petitioned Washington for the Act of Congress necessary to kill a Robin, a Federally protected bird. When this failed, he had an assistant trade a Robin skin from a museum for Disneyland tickets. It was a daunting task, however, for WED engineers to figure out how to fit Audio Animatronics machinery into the tiny robin skin. The task was finally completed, and the same AA robin was used in the “Spoonful of Sugar” song scene in the Disney movie “Mary Poppins.” Anderson, 67-8. Interestingly, in the “Disneyland Goes to the Fair” broadcast that was part of NBC’s “Walt Disney’s Wonderful World of Color” series, Disney tells the audience that the feathers used on the Small World birds are synthetic, failing to mention the origins of the Carousel bird.

⁴² In a *National Geographic* article that appeared before the Fair’s opening a WED engineer describes the animatronics that had to be fit into the Lincoln robot to make it move: “16 airlines to the Lincoln head, 10 airlines to the hands and wrists, 14 hydraulic lines to control the body, and two pairs of wires for every line. The Lincoln robot had fifteen different expressions. Duroflux skin was used for most of the Audio Animatronics characters used in the Disney exhibits at the Fair. De Roos, Robert. “The Magic Worlds of Walt Disney.” *National Geographic*. Vol. 124. No. 2, August 1963, 159-207.

any kinks in each act.^{43 44} Make-up artists and hair stylists were brought in to work on the robot actors for the Carousel as well as the Skyway.⁴⁵ He also went to great lengths to keep general electric updated on WED's progress on the Carousel by regularly producing "update films" on the set of their production facilities in California. One WED employee recalls that in one GE update film, "Walt had Bob and Dick Sherman at the piano singing 'Great Big Beautiful Tomorrow' (the Carousel's theme song). When they got up and left they had big G.E. monograms on the back of their coats."⁴⁶ Disney's attention to details was also evident in his role in developing the ending act for the Carousel, by turning the unloading area into "the gateway to future progress." Fully aware of the importance the concept of "a better future" that the Fair embodied, he wanted this to be send-off note to the show. Thus, visitors were ushered into the remaining sections of Progressland with these words, "And now, a new springtime of progress awaits you...so get your packages, coats, hats, purses, and 'spring up' out of your seats and head for the doorway to the future!... And please keep moving – don't stand in the way of progress."⁴⁷

The excerpt from the Carousel show above illustrates the importance of the script to conveying the constant themes of technological innovation and human progress to visitors. The script was developed by a team of writers early in the concept phases of the show to help with the creation of the

⁴³ Anderson, 65-67.

⁴⁴ One oft recounted memory of the Carousel mock-up was when Disney took his shoes off and jumped into a bath tub that was to hold "cousin Orville" in one act. He hammed around in the tub, suggesting that cousin Orville would be hanging his feet out of the tub, wiggling his toes.

⁴⁵ WED routinely contracted services from other companies due to the rigorous labor demands of working on four exhibits for the Fair as well as projects for Disneyland and Disney movies. *Disneyland Goes to the Fair*, videocassette.

⁴⁶ Anderson, 64. Parenthesis added.

⁴⁷ "GE Carousel of Progress." Typescript, 1964. From *Carouselofprogress.com*. <<http://carouselofprogress.tripod.com/>>.

sets and actors.⁴⁸ Even at these early stages Disney insisted on the insertion of “Midwestern values” and optimism that he felt was at the core of American culture.⁴⁹ Furthermore, as well as being a canvas for portraying certain ideals and nostalgia, Disney’s enthusiasm and hard work on the Carousel was also based on belief that his involvement in the Fair was vital for the success of the Disney Company’s innovations and future plans. “Walt was really ‘into’ the Carousel of Progress show...He was really excited with what was happening with Audio Animatronics. It enabled him to do things he had never done before...there was more of Walt in the characters of that show than anything done.”⁵⁰ The Carousel also allowed Disney to connect his and WED’s skills at creating nostalgic versions of the past with his optimism for the future: “The theme song, ‘Great Big Beautiful Tomorrow,’ had a wonderful positiveness about it. In a way, it was Walt’s theme song, because he was very positive about the future. He really felt that there was a great big beautiful tomorrow shining at the end of every day.”⁵¹

By January, 1963, construction was underway in New York on the Progressland pavilion. One month later the Carousel sets for each act began arriving and were slowly assembled, one-by-one.⁵² General Electric and WED staff were apprehensive, as Audio Animatronics problems persisted up until the Pavilion’s opening day.⁵³ Once the Pavilion opening however, on April 21, 1964, the response by

⁴⁸ One reason for the early development of the script was the need to record the voices of each character and then to sync the mouth and facial gestures of the robot actors with the audio. The voices for the actors came out through speakers hidden in each set. *Disneyland Goes to the Fair*, videocassette.

⁴⁹ According to one WED employee, “Walt picked the voices personally. He wanted that Midwestern drawl, because the show represented Midwestern values.” Interview with Harriet Burns. Anderson, 68.

⁵⁰ Interview with Sklar. Anderson, 68.

⁵¹ Interview with Richard Sherman. Anderson, 68.

⁵² *Disneyland Goes to the Fair*, videocassette.

⁵³ The Carousel was never fully assembled before arriving bit-by-bit to New York. After assembly in New York it was discovered that the audio tape that coordinated the signal controlling the movements of the AA characters needed to be re-recorded. Although Disney was alerted that the show was still not ready the day before a press conference and tour of the Carousel, he decided that his staff would be able to fix the errors by then, which they purportedly did. Anderson, 80.

the press, the public, and General Electric was very positive, and contributed to the companies' continued collaboration in Disneyland, Disney World, and EPCOT Center. One GE VIP summed up what the Carousel meant to the company: "GE was a very highly traditional company, and we loved that show because it showed not only what the products of the company were today, but actually the products of yesterday. We were thinking of the public in an extremely broad span of time...going back to the time where most of the audience could relate to their own parents doing these things and being aided by GE."⁵⁴ Another GE employee added, "it was viewed as one of the most successful subliminal advertising campaigns in history. It sold a heck of a lot of refrigerators!"⁵⁵

The Ford Magic Skyway

In 1964, as soon as Disney heard of the New York Fair, he began approaching possible corporate sponsors. He hoped to use the Fair as an opportunity to work on new innovations and to see how "sophisticated" Eastern audiences would react to Disney-style entertainment. General Motors was one of the first companies he talked to. GM was interested in Disney, but decided to develop their own organization to replicate the company's successful "Futurama" exhibit from the 1939 Fair. However, they suggested that Ford really needed Disney's help.⁵⁶ Henry Ford II, was indeed very interested in working with Disney. For his part, Disney delivered an attractive sales pitch: "What we want to provide guests at the Ford Pavilion is an entirely original experience, something no one has ever seen or done before. It could never happen in real life, but we can achieve the illusion by creating an adventure so realistic that visitors will feel they have lived through a wonderful, once-in-a-lifetime experience."⁵⁷

⁵⁴ Anderson, 63.

⁵⁵ Anderson, 63.

⁵⁶ Anderson, 31.

⁵⁷ *Ford Times*, December 1963.

Soon after negotiations began between WED and Ford, it was decided that the exhibit would take off from themes used in the 1939 Fair: in this case Ford's "Road of Tomorrow" that ran visitors around and through their 1939 pavilion in new Ford cars. "Ford felt that if they could get people in their cars," one imagineer recalled, "they would make a sale. They kept telling this to us over and over!"⁵⁸ In fact, Ford wanted their salesmen to be the chuffers, but Disney insisted that the ride be automated to increase capacity. Initially, both Ford and WED machinist worked on ideas to move the cars without drivers separately: Ford in Detroit, WED at their production studios in Glendale California. Disney and his imaginers came up with the brake-through idea. "We can make your car work on our system," he told Ford, "we just use the booster brakes from the Matterhorn."⁵⁹ This idea, to move vehicles around on a system of revolving wheels, was the basis for what came to be known as the "WED PeopleMover."⁶⁰ To make Ford cars work on the system, each car was emptied of all heavy components such as the engine and transmission, and metal plates were attached underneath to be sure that the PeopleMover wheels were able to make contact to move the car along.⁶¹

With the PeopleMover under development, the imagineers set to the task of finding a theme for the ride. The first idea was to drive the visitors through scenes of the American landscape, the Everglades, Grant Canyon, Redwood Forest, etc. But Ford wanted something more spectacular. Henry Ford II was rumored to have noted that a popular ad campaign slogan of the day was, "See the USA in a Chevrolet?"⁶² Thus, driving through American landscapes did not work for Ford and WED went back

⁵⁸ Interview with John Hench. Anderson, 33.

⁵⁹ Anderson, 33.

⁶⁰ The WED PeopleMover technology was used at rides in Disneyland and Disney World after it was developed for the Magic Skyway.

⁶¹ Anderson, 34.

⁶² Anderson, 34.

the drawing board. As a second, more fantastic theme they came up with “the history of the World.” “We designed the first Jurassic Park.”⁶³ Early on with this new theme it was decided that the first group of scenes would focus on the era of the dinosaurs, and the second would focus on early humans, “Cavemen,” and their propensity for innovation.⁶⁴ Many of the artists working with WED had worked on Disney films. Their job was to draw sketches of the individual scenes from which small scale and then full scale models were created. The final step was to put the Animatronics machinery needed to allow for each character to move.⁶⁵ However, it was in the sketches the trademark Disney nostalgia and “fun” humor were added. For example, in one classic scene sketch, a caveman points in horror at a cave bear that is sneaking up behind the back of his companion who is sheepishly enjoying a meat bone.⁶⁶ Once small scale models were made from these sketches WED prepared to present a full small scale model to Ford in Detroit. After the presentation, Disney returned with the news that the show would go on.⁶⁷

As development of the full scale dinosaur and cavemen models began, both attention to design details and security became big issues. WED modelers consulted with experts on the plants and animals of the specific eras they were trying to present. As for security, WED felt competition with GM's

⁶³ Anderson, 34.

⁶⁴ *Disneyland Goes to the Fair*, videocassette.

⁶⁵ The animatronics for the Magic Skyway characters were generally not as complicated as for the Carousel or Mr. Lincoln. The dinosaurs and cavemen usually only moved one or two arms, turned their heads, etc. *Disneyland Goes to the Fair*, videocassette.

⁶⁶ This scene both as sketch, model, and as presented in the pavilion was frequently photographed, appearing in several publications.

⁶⁷ Anderson's interview with WED designer Bill Cottrell reveals that the presentation almost did not go over well. After Walt's “brilliant” presentation, “Henry stood up and said, ‘Thank you very much. We'll let you know!’ and walked out of the room. We were baffled. Because this doesn't say when, or why, or anything else. No one was saying it was positive or anything good about it, because Henry didn't say it was positive...So we set down and mumbled among ourselves as to whether they liked it or not.” However, Cottrell recalled that what saved the day was that a Ford “Public Relations man,” realizing that the Disney people were miffed, went and told Henry Ford II that a decision was needed, and he returned in a few minutes saying, “you're in!” Interview with Bill Cottrell. Anderson, 44.

Futurama pavilion, and did not want any information on the Magic Skyway to be leaked.⁶⁸ The problem was that at the time WED used studios at the Disney lots near Disneyland, and all sorts of employees and visitors would walk through. Eventually, Disney moved WED to its own spot near Glendale, California where they would have more space and privacy.⁶⁹ In April 1963, the secrecy was still on, as the *New York Times* tried to scope the GM and Ford pavilion rides, but without much success.⁷⁰ However, as the time for the Fair grew nearer, secrecy gave way to the need to publicize the Ford pavilion and Disney's involvement. In 1963, magazines and newspapers began carrying stories on the Skyway. One of the first glimpses the nation had of Disney's life-sized dinosaurs and comical cavemen was in the popular NBC television series, "Walt Disney's Wonderful World of Color."⁷¹ Magazine such as *Look*, *National Geographic*, and *Science Digest* ran articles emphasizing Disney's involvement with the Fair with photographs of him mugging with the full-sized dinosaur and cavemen figures in the California studios.⁷² By the end of 1963, Disney's dinosaurs became a regular news item. In January,

⁶⁸ Both GM and Disney tried to get information on each others work for the Fair. Anderson, 48.

⁶⁹ Anderson, 36.

⁷⁰ *New York Times*, April 14, 1963, sec A.

⁷¹ Television had been a vital marketing and money making tool for Disney since the early 1950s. In 1950, Disney studios produced two television specials that showed off their cartoons and were hosted by Walt. Watts, 364. However, in 1953 Disney signed a significant seven year deal with ABC where the Disney agreed to produce a weekly show called, "Disneyland," and ABC agreed to help finance the construction of Disneyland. Watts, 365. The ABC series was constructed around publicity for upcoming Disney films, and more importantly, for Disneyland. Show often featured tours of the park under construction, moving TV Guide to remark, "there will be hardly a living soul in the United States who won't have heard about the Disneyland amusement park and who won't be dying to come see it. Yessir, television is a wonderful thing." Watts, 366. The show was also widely popular, occupying a space in the Nielson top ten for several years. Watts, 367. For his part, Disney was very aware of the commercial power of television, noting "television today should command our utmost respect as a medium for exploiting our wares." Watts, 367. The Disney-ABC partnership ended in a bitter lawsuit in 1959. When the feud was brokered, Disney went to NBC, and the 60s phenomena of "Walt Disney's Wonderful World of Color" was born. Watts, 374.

⁷² In the *Look* and *National Geographic* articles Disney mugs with the Dinosaurs and cavemen. In the *Science Digest* article he mugs with one of the Carousel characters and with the cavemen. Cohen, Daniel. "Preview of Disney's World Fair Shows." *Science Digest*. Vol 54., No. 6, December 1963, pp 9-15. Zimmerman. De Roos.

as the Skyway models were being shipped to New York, “Four Cavemen And A Woolly Mammoth Lost in Snowstorm,” became another serendipitous opportunity for publicity.⁷³

Although construction began on the Ford Pavilion in early 1962, WEDs models and equipment from California did not start arriving until January of 1964, giving them only a few months to build the Skyway before the scheduled opening day, April 22.⁷⁴ As with the Carousel, WED engineers were working out major and minor kinks in the PeopleMover right up to the deadline. For example, after an incident where a red Mercury got crushed by the service elevator used to raise cars onto the track, a group of “Ford people” showed up to see a test run of the track.⁷⁵ “We only ran it about 15 minutes, and then we shut it off. Then we went over the hotel and everybody got drunk. They told use that they were scared to death that this Disney thing wouldn’t work – they were so relieved.”⁷⁶ As opening day approached Ford paid 800 people to ride the Skyway to see how they reacted to it.⁷⁷

As it turned out the Ford Pavilion had two opening days, the opening day for the Fair, April 22, and ten days earlier, the National Press Premiere for the Ford Pavilion, April 12. On press day, Disney, Henry Ford II, and the Fair’s president Robert Moses all made speeches before they rode the Skyway along with members of the press and their families. Disney called the Skyway “a parable of man’s journey through time from his primordial beginnings to an unknown tomorrow lighted by the fires of science.” He remarked that the exhibit “marks a the beginning of an entirely unique form of art and

⁷³ Headline from January 14, 1964, *New York Times*. A Ford spokesman was quoted as saying, “It could be the hands of mammoth-jackers. Or it could have been shanghaied by our competitors, who shale remain nameless.” On January 17, the *Times* reported that “Ford breathed a sigh of relief yesterday when its wandering wooly mammoth finally arrived at the World’s Fair.” Anderson, 50.

⁷⁴ *Official Guide: New York World’s Fair, 1964/1965*. New York: Time Inc., 1964.

⁷⁵ Anderson, 51.

⁷⁶ Interview with Bob Gurr. Anderson, 51.

⁷⁷ Johnston, Richard H., “400 Paid to Visit Pavilion At Fair,” *New York Times*, April 1964, sec. L.

entertainment, which will eventually take its place beside the theater, opera, and motion picture.”⁷⁸

When the opening ceremonies ended the assembled guest got to experience the Skyway.



Figure 2. Illustration of Ford Magic Skyway.
Source: © Ford Times, Vol. 57 No. 5, May 1964

Conclusions

After winding through Disney’s Jurassic landscape and seeing the invention of tools and communication by early “man,” the PeopleMover transported the Ford cars and their occupants through a dark “Time Tunnel” and into the landscape of the future, “Space City.”⁷⁹ Disney envisioned Space City as a grand finale of the promising future in store for humankind. “Space City was proposed as an

⁷⁸ Anderson, 57.

⁷⁹ This is what visitors listened to on the car speakers near the end of the ride: “And now The Magic Skyway becomes a highway in the sky carrying you across the boundless night and out into time and space. We’ve come a long way in our journey with man. And here we are, on the threshold of tomorrow. Man’s achievements in science and industry have carried us here. And like the blast-off of a space vehicle for the moon and beyond, man’s achievements have challenged our hopes and rocketed our dreams beyond the horizon. Perhaps, someday, we’ll be riding rocketships like those flashing overhead to anywhere in space. Perhaps, someday, we will drive jet-powered vehicles over weather-controlled highways in the sky like the spiraling tubes around you. But all such dreams begin in the minds of men. Men of vision, faith and imagination. Men of science and industry, education and the arts. As we have seen along The Magic Skyway man is always on the move, searching and dreaming beyond the horizons of today and bringing the promise of tomorrow ever closer to reality.” *Ford Times*, Vol. 57 No. 5, May 1964. For full text see Appendix B.

expansive model of towering spires, futuristic buildings, and gleaming domes,” Anderson writes, “this was the future and this is where guests would disembark – symbolically, ‘Ford has brought us to the future.’”⁸⁰ As with the Carousel, Disney felt that the last word should be about the future. In fact, he had plans for the development of a park where the central theme was to be the future and the progressive technologies that would take us there: EPCOT Center.⁸¹ However, since he died in 1966, the Fair exhibits were the last major accomplishments that Disney lived to direct, despite the fact the company that he created would continue to be a dominant feature in American entertainment and popular culture for decades to come.

At the end of his detailed account of WED’s development of the Magic Skyway, Anderson concludes that this was the first of the themed rides now popular at Disney parks and other amusement centers. These dark rides leave the outside world behind allowing for the crafted narratives of Disneyfied cultural experiences to be more purely enjoyed as a leisure experience. It is interesting to note that Anderson’s articles on each of the four Disney features at the Fair include a long aside, a brake-out box, that describes what it was like to visit each of the pavilions. These asides are written in first-person, although it does not seem that they are taken from first-person recollections of the Fair because no interviews or publications are cited.⁸² It appears that these narratives were created by Anderson from his detailed knowledge of Disney’s exhibits at the Fair. Thus, this novelization of past events interestingly parallels Disney’s histories that deploy campy humor, nostalgia, and selective memory that favors the positive, as defined by conservative middle-class American values.

⁸⁰ Anderson, 38.

⁸¹ One of Disney’s most famous quotes is: “I believe in the future, the world is getting better.” *Walt Disney: Famous Quotes*, (Lake Buena Vista Disney Kingdom Editions, 1994), 62.

⁸² Part of the account given for the caveman section of the skyway goes like this: “in this next scene, a caveman is about to be consumed by a bear. It’s amusing though – because one caveman is wildly gesturing and shouting to his neighbor who is about to be pounced upon by the gigantic bear – communication is being developed. I feel sorry for the one guy, he didn’t look to bright, so I’m sure he eventually got eaten by the bear.” Anderson, 56.

Furthermore, Anderson's narratives can be juxtaposed against the first-person recollections of Ford's Magic Skyway that are recorded in Appendix A, where the everyday trials of the nuclear family and amusement ride bloopers out shine the "Magic of Disney." These two recollections cannot be taken as representative of the typical visitor experience of the Disney exhibits. But they do illustrate why Disney was truly what we may call a "genius" of the commercial, cultural, and post-structuralist variety. In these recollections we see that only when the ride brakes down that the master narrative/illusion are shattered, and the "black wire suspended from a rotating black arm in the corner of a black ceiling" is revealed. Disney knew how to create these narratives through a combination of details, troupes, discourses, drama, and humor written in to the script, while others were intentionally left out. Next, he simply invited and encouraged people to believe and enjoy these illusions in much the same fashion that he seemed to, thus tapping into and helping to create the "leisure culture" that mid-century mass media and middle class prosperity engendered.⁸³

Disney deployed the skills of a master signifier swapping signs and meanings adeptly to create cultural texts that clearly articulated only those discourses and ideas that he wanted to present and those that he knew cultural consumers would accept and buy. As Watts notes, Disney was one of the first and greatest power brokers of the post war American cultural industries. Cleansing the past thus became Disney's method for selling the future – a technotopic future that he believed in and that always created a special place for his corporate sponsors, for it was after all only through corporate monies that Disney was able to make his dreams come true. And thus it is that the merger of Disney's cultural capital and corporate America's financial capital is the legacy of Disney's corporate exhibits at the 1964 New York World's Fair. This juncture was perhaps first conceived and put into practice in Disneyland, but it was more fully articulated, realized, and achieved at the Fair. The detailed account of the development of the Carousel and the Magic Skyway presented here thus allows for a deeper understanding of the encoding

⁸³ Watt, 354.

process: how Disney's unique entertainment media came to engender a diverse array of both historically and locally contingent discourses that were dispersed within the architectures, textures, and narratives experienced by so many. The cultural and historical significance of Disney's corporate exhibits at the Fair thus is not only as archetypal symbols of the emergence of the leisure economy as the engine of American popular culture via the marriage of corporate America and the commercial audiovisual media industries. But, perhaps just as important is that, as Anderson notes, we see here the development of a "new type" of immersive entertainment, funded through what amounts to corporate R&D no less, and that is quite intentionally hyped-up with discourses of technological progress and a clean, bright, and wonderfully commodified tomorrow. And thus, as a parting remark, I would like to suggest that we can look at the past events considered in this paper and can perhaps see the same commodification of future gazing and technophile discourse in the "cyberspace," "virtual reality," and "information society/revolution" narratives of today's new technologies. Like Disney himself was able to do almost forty years ago, the master signifiers and gurus of the cultural industries today are adept at creating media experiences that invite people to participate in virtual worlds, illusions that obscure or occlude any messy details of past or present realities. These contemporary high-tech media narratives serve to normalize and build upon the cultural processes that Disney helped to create, based on customized entertainment experiences both discursively and physically enhanced by "new technologies" for the purpose of consuming products, ideas, (interactive, immersive, advanced audiovisual) experiences, and legitimated (hegemonic) identities.

Bibliography of Primary Resources

1967 script of Carousel of Progress at Disneyland.

Anderson, Paul, ed, *Persistence of Vision: An Unofficial Historical Journal celebrating the Creative Legacy of Walt Disney*. Issue 6/7. Salt Lake City: Anderson, 1995. (interviews)

Cohen, Daniel. "Preview of Disney's World Fair Shows." *Science Digest*. Vol 54., No. 6, December 1963, 9-15.

De Roos, Robert. "The Magic Worlds of Walt Disney." *National Geographic*. Vol. 124. No. 2, August 1963, 159-207

Disneyland Goes to the Fair, Walt Disney Productions Inc., 57 min., 1964, videocassette.

Ford Times, Vol. 57 No. 5, May 1964.

Ford Times, December 1963.

"GE Carousel of Progress." Typescript, 1964. From *Carouselofprogress.com*.
<<http://carouselofprogress.tripod.com/>>

Johnston, Richard H., "400 Paid to Visit Pavilion At Fair," *New York Times*, April 1964, sec L.

Official Guide: New York World's Fair, 1964/1965. New York: Time Inc., 1964.

Seiler, Michael, *Los Angeles Times*, July 3, 1974,

Young, William P., *nywf64.com*, April 07, 2001. (April 20, 2002). <<http://www.nywf64.com/ford08.html>>
(first person accounts of skyway)

Zimmerman, Gereon. "Walt Disney: Giant at the Fair." *Look*, February 11, 1964, 28-32.

Bibliography of Secondary Resources

Addison, Jacob. *Carouselofprogress.com*, 2000, (March 23, 2002).
<<http://carouselofprogress.tripod.com/>>.

Anderson, Paul, ed, *Persistence of Vision: An Unofficial Historical Journal celebrating the Creative Legacy of Walt Disney*. Issue 6/7. Salt Lake City: Anderson, 1995.

Bierman, James H., "The Walt Disney Robot Dramas," *Yale Review LXVI* (1976): 223-36.

Hunt, Tristan. in What Ways is 'Post-Fordism' Held to Differ from 'Fordism?' UK-Learning Co., 2002, (March 20, 2002). <http://www.essaybank.co.uk/free_coursework/892.html>.

Nye, David E. *Narratives and Spaces: Technology and the Construction of American Culture*. New York: Columbia, 1997.

Smith, David, and Clark Steven. *Disney: The First Hundred Years*. New York: Hyperion, 1999.

Smith, Michael L., "Making Time: Representations of Technology at the 1964 World's Fair," in *The Power of Culture: Critical Essays in American History*, eds. Richard W. Fox and T. J. Jackson Lears. Chicago: U of Chicago, 1993.

Smith, Michael L, "EPCOT, Camelot, and the History of Technology," in *New Perspectives on Technology and American Culture*, ed. Bruce Sinclair. Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1986, 69-79.

Sorkin, Michael. "See You in Disneyland." *Variations on a Theme Park: The New American City and the End of Public Space*. Ed. Michael Sorkin. New York: Noonday, 1992, 205-32.

Stanton, Jeffrey, *New York 1964 Word's Fair*, 1997. (Febuary 29, 2002). <<http://naid.sppsr.ucla.edu/ny64fair/>>.

Wallace, Michael. "Mickey Mouse History: Portraying the Past at Disney World," in *History Museums in the United States: A Critical Assessment*, eds. Warren Leon and Roy Rosenzweig. Urbana: U of Illinois, 1989.

Walt Disney: Famous Quotes, Lake Buena Vista: Disney Kingdom Editions, 1994.

Watts, Steven. *The Magic Kingdom : Walt Disney and the American Way of Life*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1997.

Weiner, Lynn Y. "'There's a Great Big Beautiful Tomorrow': Historic Memory and Gender in Walt Disney's 'Carousel of Progress,'" *Journal of American Culture* (1997), Vol. 20, Issue 1, p111, 6p. Available: Academic Search FullTEXT Elite [November 13, 2001].

Young, William P., *nywf64.com*, April 07, 2001. (April 20, 2002). <<http://www.nywf64.com>>.

Appendix A: First Person Accounts of Ford's Magic Skyway

Recollection of the Skyway #1⁸⁴



A snapshot shows our family happily tooling along the Magic Skyway, my brother and I in the front seat of a new convertible... After navigating through our glass tunnel, giving us a great view of the Fairgrounds, the ride plunged into darkness, then opened into a room where a Tyrannosaurus was fighting a Stegosaurus on a rocky ledge, so that they looked like they would fall right into your car as you passed underneath. Just as we safely made it past them, the ride stopped. After waiting some time, and thinking to lighten the mood, I turned around and said, "Gee, I hope my playing with the pedals didn't cause the ride to break." My mom exploded: "Then keep your #@!& foot OFF THE PEDALS!" I quickly turned back around and began staring straight ahead. Mom was obviously having a bad day, and in all the excitement I hadn't noticed. The five of us spent the next 15 minutes in icy silence while a giant plastic Pterodactyl shrieked overhead as it circled endlessly on what I could now make out was a black wire suspended from a rotating black arm in the corner of a black ceiling. The radio kept repeating the same two sentences over and over. The illusion of being in a primeval jungle had pretty much vanished.

Recollection of the Skyway #2⁸⁵

I was about 4 1/2 when my family went to the Fair, so I don't have a lot of clear memories, except for one encounter that has locked itself into my mind to this day. Even though I was so young I was a bona fide car nut and knew a lot about different makes and models. I couldn't wait to see the new Mustang at the Ford Pavilion. When we got on the Magic Skyway ride, my parents, grandparents, sister and I got into a dark blue '64 Galaxie convertible with a white interior -- this I remember clearly. I begged to sit behind the wheel, and as soon as I got in, turned on the radio. Just as the ride started moving, I heard a voice on the radio intone, "Hello, this is Henry Ford, and welcome to the Ford Magic Skyway." Well, even at my young age, I knew Henry Ford was dead! Totally spooked by this ghostly voice talking through the radio, and combined with the looming darkness of the tunnel, I screamed from one end of the ride to the other.

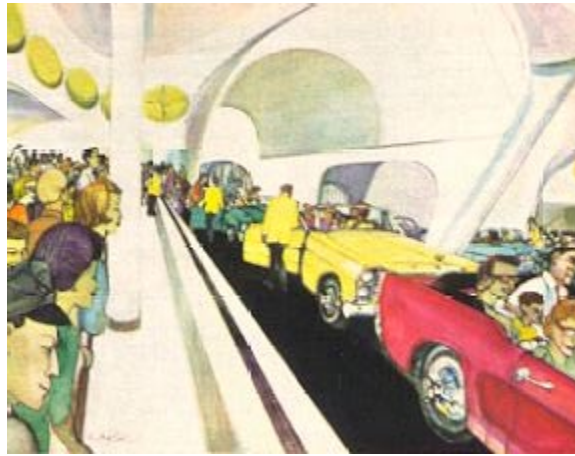
I told this story to a co-worker once who [is] the same age as I am. He related a story about going to the Fair in '65. He remembers that his family sat in a red '65 Galaxie convertible and he begged for the driver's seat also. In his case, he started turning the steering wheel to pretend like he was driving. Unfortunately for him, many other Fairgoers must have done the same thing because he said that the wheel came off in his hands. Not wishing to anger his parents, he held the wheel against the steering column with all his might

⁸⁴ Young.

⁸⁵ Young.

throughout the ride. When the time came for them to get out of the car, he wouldn't budge and when the operator asked him to get out, he started crying hysterically, figuring that he would be held responsible for breaking the car.

Appendix B. Transcript of the 1965 Magic Skyway Show⁸⁶



Source: © Ford Times, Vol. 58 No. 5, May 1965

Voice of Announcer:

Ladies and Gentlemen. Please remain seated at all times. Keep your hands and arms inside the car. And no smoking please.

Voice of Henry Ford II:

Ladies and Gentlemen. This is Henry Ford II. Welcome to Ford Motor Company's Magic Skyway. An adventure created by the incomparable Walt Disney. A voyage through time and space. From a dark and distant yesterday to a bright and promising tomorrow. May you all have an entertaining trip.

Voice of Walt Disney:

Thank you Mr. Ford and hello friends. This is Walt Disney speaking. I'll be riding along to point out some of the things you're going to see from your front-row seat in Mr. Ford's automobiles.

Thanks to some old-fashioned magic we call "imagination," this Ford Motor Company car will be your time machine for your journey. Carrying you far back in time to the dawn of life on land and transporting you far out into the future.

⁸⁶ Ford Times, Vol. 58 No. 5, May 1965.

But that's getting far ahead of our story. Right now we're leaving the world of today behind. So if your imagination is ready, here we go.



Source: © Ford Times, Vol. 58 No. 5, May 1965

We're traveling backwards in time. Many millions of years in fact. Back to a day when giant creatures thundered over the land and soared like gliders across the sky. You're probably familiar with some of their names: Allosaurus. Edopasaurus. Pterodactyl. Not exactly the kind of pets you would keep around the house. In fact, most of them were kind of ... well, kind of ... "supercalifragilisticexpialidocious" and that's as big as they come!

Later, near the end of the ride:

Thousands of years raced by as man applied the wheel to explore the world. And then he discovered new ways to make the wheel work for him. There were water wheels for generating power and iron wheels to span the continent. Wheels within wheels for industry's machines. Wheels for the automobile and the airplane. And just as the first wheel freed man from his cave, today they have carried us to the beginning of still another new age.

And now The Magic Skyway becomes a highway in the sky carrying you across the boundless night and out into time and space.

We've come a long way in our journey with man. And here we are, on the threshold of tomorrow. Man's achievements in science and industry have carried us here. And like the blast-off of a space vehicle for the moon and beyond, man's achievements have challenged our hopes and rocketed our dreams beyond the horizon.

Perhaps, someday, we'll be riding rocketships like those flashing overhead to anywhere in space. Perhaps, someday, we will drive jet-powered vehicles over weather-controlled highways in the sky like the spiraling tubes around you.

But all such dreams begin in the minds of men. Men of vision, faith and imagination. Men of science and industry, education and the arts. As we have seen along The Magic Skyway man is always on the move, searching and dreaming beyond the horizons of today and bringing the promise of tomorrow ever closer to reality.

Now our journey is almost at an end. On behalf of your host, Ford Motor Company, and the creative staff of the Walt Disney Studio who dreamed up this adventure, I hope you have enjoyed your trip on The Magic Skyway. Thanks for joining us!