Team Rodent: How Disney Devours the World by Carl Hiaasen, Ballantine Books 1998

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Disney and its various corporate manifestations are so entrenched in the public consciousness that they are as recognizable as other American symbols. But behind the symbols lurks a corporation similar to any other huge conglomerate, and Carl Hiaasen, in this short, powerful, and highly agendaed attack on all things Disney, gives the reader a look at the dirt, greed, and disregard behind the Mouse.

Hiaasen's focuses his attacks on Disney's incursions into the Florida environment, and the subsequent over-development that accompanied Disney World's construction. Hiaasen's bias is obvious from reading the back cover; his stated aim to being permanently banned from anything Disney world wide, and, with this book, he may well succeed.

Rape of the environment, legal envelope pushing, shoddy veterinary practices, and less than savory behind the scenes activities at the Magic Kingdom; all these and more find their way into this scathing and highly engaging (Hiaasen has a flair for turning a sentence, and his darkly humored prose, though not for everyone's taste, makes for entertaining reading) dissection of what Disney did to Hiaasen's Florida, and why the public needs to see the Mouse for what it really is: a corporation that put its own interests ahead of the environment of Florida and all those who inhabit it.

A one-sided attack? Without any doubt, but also thought provoking and something that might make you wonder if the rumors about sexy sublimation in Disney products might have some truth after all.

- J. Rocky Colavito is professor of English and Director of Writing Programs at Butler University.