

characters were often purchased as consumer goods because Kay Kamen, Walt Disney's first licensing representative, encouraged merchants to emblazon Disney characters on everything from playing cards to toothbrush holders to watches to cereal boxes. This book is neither a price list nor a collectibles catalog. Instead, it provides a colorful photographic record of these classic collectibles, giving the reader the opportunity to see rare pieces from private collections as well as more accessible Disney merchandise. In our health-conscious age, it is amusing to see objects like an old 1930s Post Toasties Corn Flakes box with Mickey pointing at an ingredients list of corn grits, sugar, and salt. Recommended for popular culture collections. Janice Zlendich, California State Univ. Lib., Fullerton Copyright 1994 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Booklist Enticed by Mickey Mouse watches, Snow White figurines, and Donald Duck lunchboxes but unable to afford the lofty prices they fetch in the collectibles market? Here's the next best thing. Disney cartoons still inspire vast amounts of merchandise, but pop culture aficionados Heide and Gilman concentrate on the "golden age" that began when Mickey Mouse took the nation by storm in 1928 and continued to the late-1950s baby boomer era of Mouseketeer ears and Davy Crockett coonskin caps. The informative, entertaining text traces the commercialization of Disney's characters, whose overwhelming popularity virtually created tie-in merchandising as we know it today. The success of Disney products is epitomized by the Mickey Mouse handcar made by the Lionel toy train company: it saved Lionel from Depression bankruptcy. Of course, the 300 photos (most in color) of everything from dolls and clothing to cigarette stands and hairbrushes, all sporting Disney characters, exert the book's primary appeal. Poring over pictures isn't the same as owning the treasures, but with a 1931 German Mickey Mouse windup toy bringing \$39,000 at auction last year, it's cheaper. Gordon Flagg