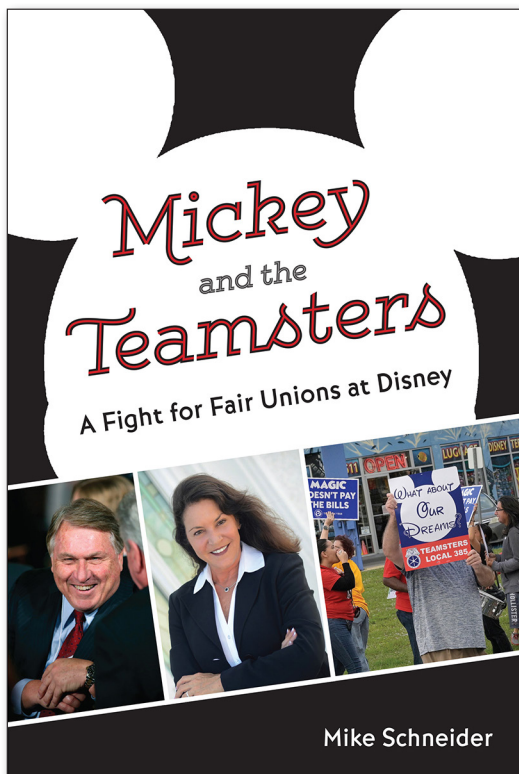


Advance Praise for *Mickey and the Teamsters*



"*Mickey and the Teamsters* is not just a story about a union. It's a history of Disney, the Teamsters, the Mafia, feminism—in short, a story as rich and wacky as Florida itself. It's also a worthy addition to the pantheon of untold stories of flawed but heroic figures in the labor movement, for which Schneider should be proud."

—**HAMILTON NOLAN**, labor writer for *In These Times*

"Schneider has crafted a thorough and engaging narrative about a little-known situation involving America's favorite theme park and union representation."

—**AARON H. GOLDBERG**, author of *Buying Disney's World: The Story of How Florida Swampland Became Walt Disney World*

"Read this fascinating tale of Disney characters caught between an unresponsive labor union and an autocratic employer—while working jobs they loved."

—**RICHARD E. FOGLESONG**, author of *Married to the Mouse: Walt Disney World and Orlando*

Mickey and the Teamsters: A Fight for Fair Unions at Disney | Mike Schneider | 978-0-8130-8030-7 | Paper \$26.95 | 168 pages, 6 x 9 | Oct 2023

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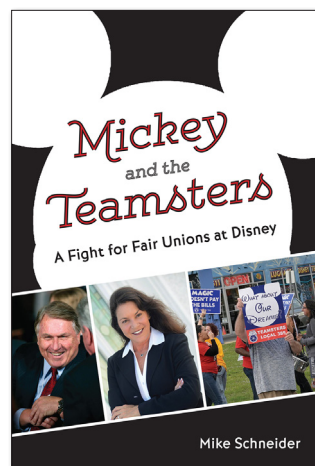
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About the Author of *Mickey and the Teamsters*



Credit: Phelan M. Ebenhack



MIKE SCHNEIDER has been an Associated Press journalist for almost three decades. He has lived in Orlando, Florida, since 1997, reporting on Walt Disney World and the tourism industry, the trials of Casey Anthony and George Zimmerman, the Pulse nightclub massacre and countless hurricanes and space shuttle launches. The St. Louis native has a background in data mapping and covers demographics and the US Census Bureau for AP. He is a graduate of the University of Wisconsin–Madison and the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia.

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Q&A with Mike Schneider

author of *Mickey and the Teamsters*

When did you know that you wanted to write this book? What led you to this subject?

As a reporter covering Disney World regularly, I had always found it odd that the costumed characters at Disney World, symbols of childhood innocence, were Teamsters, a union with historic connections to the mob. It was such a weird clash of cultures that when troublesome stuff started happening at the costumed characters' local Teamsters office in 2017, it struck me that it was worth exploring further.

What do you hope readers will enjoy the most about your book?

I think they will enjoy some of the behind-the-scenes perspectives on what it is like to work at Disney World. But I hope they find an uplifting story about people who rise up together at personal risk to fight for what is right when they see wrongdoing.

Unions have been in the news lately as workers in a variety of industries have been striking for better working conditions and pay, including Hollywood's WGA and SAG-AFTRA strikes. Do you see any similarities or differences between the strikes making headlines today and the events of your book?

Absolutely. Unions try to equalize the playing field in the imbalanced relationship between workers and management. What these recent strikes show are workers saying "Enough!" My book recounts Disney workers doing the same thing, but there is a unique twist in that the workers are not only battling Disney management but also mismanagement by their local union's leader.

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Q&A with Mike Schneider

author of *Mickey and the Teamsters*

In your book, you point out that Disney World employs the largest single-site workforce in the United States. How do the workings of the unions at Disney compare to those of other large companies?

I imagine this is true of other organized workforces with tens of thousands of employees, but the different unions at Disney World have developed their own cultures and personalities. This translates into different ways of communicating with members and negotiating with companies. The Teamsters have this old-school swagger.

Is there any part of this story that readers may be surprised to learn?

You mean besides the fact that Minnie Mouse and Goofy are card-carrying Teamsters members? How about the fact that sometimes a labor arbitrator is called upon to settle a dispute over clean underwear. Or that, in Orlando, a defense attorney can save a client from prison by putting on a Tigger costume in court.

Is there any work of fiction that this story reminds you of?

I would humbly place this book beside others that recount the labor history of the Disney theme parks, such as *The Disney Revolt* and *Married to the Mouse*. But there's also room to put it next to books that tell the stories of woman labor leaders who overcame great obstacles, like *The Great Stewardess Rebellion*, or *Crystal Lee: A Woman of Inheritance*, the book upon which the movie *Norma Rae* was based.

Who are your favorite writers, and how have they influenced or informed your own work?

I'm partial to short-story writers like Lorrie Moore and John Cheever. Working for the wire-service like I do, you develop a habit of writing lean sentences that get to the point. So, that combination has motivated me to write economically.

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