

Carl Barks

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The Piety of Disney

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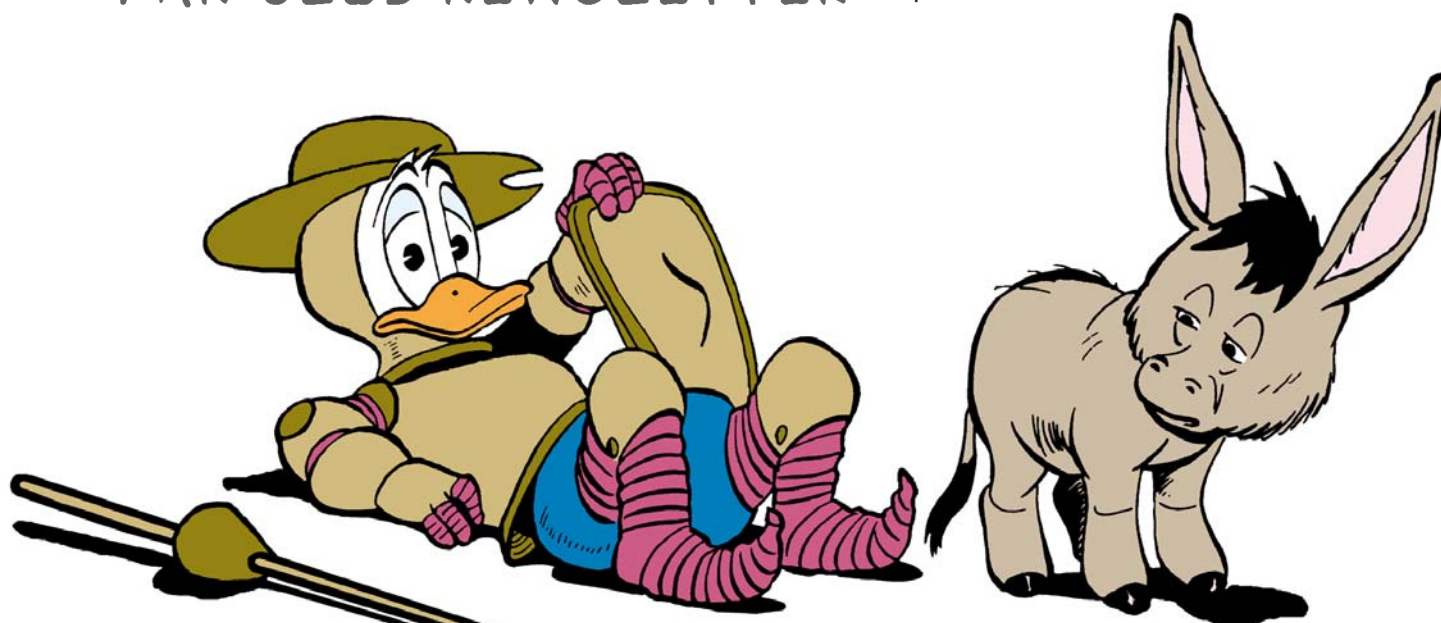
SOMETHING DISAPPOINTING HAPPENED

at movie theaters again everywhere last night: a full-length Donald Duck motion picture wasn't on the screen.

This is not unusual, and that's the problem. Donald and his nephews and their Uncle Scrooge *should* be on the silver screen today and for many years to come, in adaptations of Disney duck stories written and illustrated by Carl Barks.

The Walt Disney Company has not seen fit to make this happen. Their decision-makers have somehow overlooked the astounding movie potential of the Donald Duck property they've owned outright since before the birth of anyone at the Disney helm today.

Either way, we Barks fans want the fruits of Carl's creative genius to be made into feature length movies, and we want to encourage Disney to produce them.



"Tilting at windmills, Señor Duck?"

At least six and probably more of Carl's beloved Donald Duck and Uncle Scrooge stories can be turned into major motion pictures, setting worldwide attendance records and generating huge box office returns, without costing astronomical sums to produce.

What will make these movies smash hits is that they'll feature Donald and kin in adventure stories presented in all major languages and loved by all cultures for well more than half a century—Disney stories

generations of potential moviegoers have enjoyed reading again and again.

IT WAS CARL BARKS WHO TRANSFORMED

Donald and his waterfowl compatriots into a publishing industry phenomenon. His body of Disney comic book work amounts to some 400 stories. Carl produced these tales about Disney-owned characters for

Disney and sold them to a Disney licensee, and they belong entirely to Disney. They comprise a powerful franchise embossed with Donald Duck's name. It's a property with global audience potential → → →

yet one that is presently being ignored by The Walt Disney Company.

This is why Carl Barks fans seek to make contact with Disney's executives and encourage them to at least consider the potential merits of such an undertaking. Is our desire to inspire Disney to make Donald Duck movies a valid one?

WE CAN PRESENT A LITANY OF SHARPENED- pencil calculations and sound business reasons why producing a batch of Disney's Donald Duck movies based on Carl Barks stories will produce substantial income. But even though the evidence is available for all to see, there's a specific reason no one at Disney is permitted to weigh in on this evidence, yea or nay.

The Walt Disney Company—*the only entity in the universe that owns the right to make Donald Duck movies*—happens to cling to a Piety that prevents us from presenting this evidence to those who should receive it. I can discuss this project with you, and you and I can tell others, but none of us can even whisper a word about it to the good folks at Disney. "We're sorry but nope, no thanks, we can't listen and we won't listen. We're prohibited from doing so by our long-standing company policy, and that's that, end of story, amen, period, ptui."

The dictionary defines Piety as "a belief or point of view that is accepted with unthinking conventional reverence."

In specific and absolute blindfolded

allegiance with its long-standing company policy, TWDC closes its corporate mind, sticks its head in the sand, shoots itself in the foot, stifles creativity ... and leaves billions in cold cash on the table.

THIS DOESN'T MAKE SENSE, BUT IT'S NONE- the-less true. The organization believed to be on the top floor of motion picture entertainment creativity is not open to *creative originality*, because of its long-standing company policy. If the idea to consider doing something Disneyish doesn't originate with Disney, it simply isn't a happening thing. And that is a classic example of Piety.

THE LONG-STANDING DISNEY COMPANY policy—the Piety that stifles creativity—is hereby quoted directly from the Office of Counsel of The Walt Disney Company: "It is our Company's long-standing policy not to accept for review or consideration any ideas, suggestions or creative materials not specifically solicited by us." In other words, Not Invented Here.

Please don't get me wrong. I'm not saying there's anything bad with a good dose of Piety per se. I'm just as pious as the next guy. But sometimes Piety can be counterproductive, and this is definitely one of those times. Not knowing you don't know something is problematic, while knowing you don't know something can be rather positive, as you can learn what it is you don't already know. → → →



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"It is our Company's long-standing policy not to accept for review or consideration any ideas, suggestions or creative materials not specifically solicited by us. Unfortunately, this policy applies even to ideas and suggestions for future use of the Company's creative properties offered by a passionate supporter with the Company's best interest in mind."

Not being allowed to know something as a matter of company policy (at least without an “except sometimes” escape clause) is definitely a situation devoid of sound business sense.

SO HOW DID THIS POLICY COME ABOUT?

Someone, sometime, somehow, came up with the notion that in order to *protect* the company from misunderstandings that might possibly lead to expensive lawsuits, the company would be better off to refuse to consider submissions not specifically solicited.

Obviously, this policy was not conceived by a person or persons who clearly understood creative processes, which require a constant flow of new information in order to remain viable.

While I am not saying this long-standing Policy originated with Disney, someone from the Disney Office of Counsel at one time did apologetically inform me that this restriction has been in place since the time of Walt Disney himself.

It may have been introduced in the company's later years, but we do know that had this policy been in place in the early days, there would have been no meeting between Walt and Kay Kamen, the fellow who showed Mr. Disney how to generate gargantuan profits from Disney-branded merchandise, and literally made it possible for the company to grow into the mega-venture it is today.

MY COMPLAINT IS DEFINITELY NOT ABOUT any person at Disney. In fact, the folks with whom we've been in contact have been kind and very polite while being quite firm in their rejections. It is their responsibility—literally part of their job description—to support, implement and enforce this nutty policy, even when they clearly

understand that the information we want to communicate could be of immense value to Disney and Disney shareholders.

HAVING A POLICY TO NOT KNOW, AND TO not know that you're not knowing, is not a situation limited to the Disney company. It is a viral monstrosity rampaging through a



plethora of business entities large and small. Google the term “long-standing company policy” and you'll come up with more than 285,000 hits—and the list of companies suffering from this affliction appears to be growing exponentially. Here are just a few random examples:

Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream: “... as a matter of long-standing company policy, neither Ben & Jerry's nor our parent company, Unilever ...”

DISCOVER Magazine: “... however, our long-standing company policy does not allow us to accept or consider creative ideas, suggestions, or materials ...”

The Kansas City Chiefs: “... have a long-standing company policy that does not allow The Kansas City Chiefs to accept or consider creative ideas, suggestions ...”

Bond Auto Parts: “... while Bond Auto is pleased to hear from our loyal fans and customers, it is Bond Auto's long-standing company policy not to accept or consider unsolicited ...”

Massachusetts Governor Devall Patrick: “... unfortunately, however, our long-standing company policy does not allow [Faith in the Dream] to accept or consider creative ideas, suggestions, or materials other than those that ...”

Cimmaron Realty, L.L.C. [RE/Max]: “... Cimmaron Realty, L.L.C.'s long-standing company policy does not allow it to accept or consider creative ideas, suggestions, or materials other than those it has specifically ...” → → →

ESPN: "...our long-standing company policy does not allow us to accept or consider unsolicited creative ideas, suggestions or materials ..."

eBay: "... however, eBay's long-standing company policy does not allow eBay to accept or consider ideas, suggestions, proposals or materials ..."

Hard Rock Hotel, Las Vegas: "... unfortunately, however, our long-standing company policy does not allow us to accept or consider creative ideas, suggestions ..."

Indianhead Mountain Ski Resort: "... unfortunately, however, Indianhead's long-standing company policy does not allow it to accept or consider creative ideas, suggestions ..."

Champion Energy Services: [a residential and commercial electric company in Texas and Illinois]: "... unfortunately, however, Champion's long-standing company policy does not allow it to accept or consider creative ideas, suggestions or materials other than ..."

U.S. Soccer: "... unfortunately, however, U.S. Soccer's long-standing company policy does not allow it to accept or consider creative ideas, suggestions, or materials other than ..."

Fiddleheads Coffee Roasters: "... unfortunately, however, our long-standing company policy does not allow us to accept or consider creative ideas, suggestions, or materials other than those that ..."

Chaldean Astrology: "...unfortunately, however, TheSunsetChart.com's

long-standing company policy does not allow it to accept or consider creative ideas, suggestions, or materials ..."

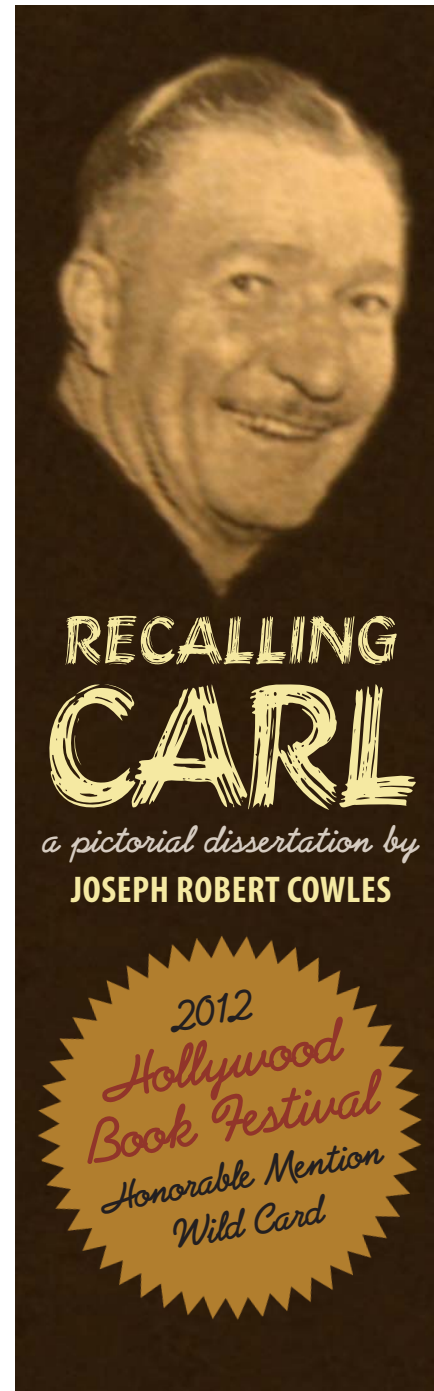
And so on and so forth—these few are just the tip of the iceberg. Ben and Jerry's? Kansas City Chiefs? Auto parts? Governor Patrick? ESPN? eBay? Hotels in Vegas? Ski resorts? Coffee roasters? Astrologers? And look at how they're all virtually the same!

How does this madness continue to exist? One heck of a lot of corporate executives have their heads in the sand and butts in the air.

TO RECAP—DISNEY SHOULD SET ASIDE the Piety, experience an Epiphany, and make Donald Duck movies because:

Carl's stories have been enjoyed worldwide by children and adults for decades, translated into all languages of civilization and reprinted again and again, selling billions of comic books, and making Mr. Barks the most widely published storyteller ever known (although only a few readers knew the name of "The Good Artist").

This vast readership of Carl's duck stories on a continuing month-after-month basis numbered far more than the viewers who might chance to see a short animated Donald Duck cartoon two or three times a year. Estimates of the pass-along readership of *Walt Disney's Comics and Stories* vary from an average of 2.8 to 3.5 or more per issue—a circulation from 100 to 150 million yearly in the U.S. alone. These figures represent families who actually



chase to bring Disney materials into their homes, and even in difficult economic times continued to do so. In comparison, the Disney Studio's animated cartoons were chance encounters, playing alongside the newsreels prior to the feature films. Audiences never knew whether they'd see Donald Duck, Mickey Mouse, Porky Pig, Bugs Bunny, or some other character.

Carl's body of work is remembered and respected by potential moviegoers everywhere. Donald Duck is a global entertainment property owned by Disney and no one but Disney can do anything with it.

Of the 400 or so Disney duck stories Carl wrote and drew, at least six and probably more are eminently suitable for development as movies, while another fifty to sixty can easily become video episodes.

Donald Duck movies offer *new income* from a potential motion picture franchise that is presently sitting on the Disney shelf gathering Disney dust and Disney cobwebs.

FOR MORE DETAILS, you may wish to refer to my full dissertation on this subject, *Recalling Carl*. (The book is available through Amazon and other booksellers worldwide.) Although Disney policy prohibits me from telling their executives what I've reported in this book, I'm delighted to tell you that the *2012 Hollywood Book Festival* recently awarded *Recalling Carl* an Honorable Mention in their Wild Card category.

—JRC