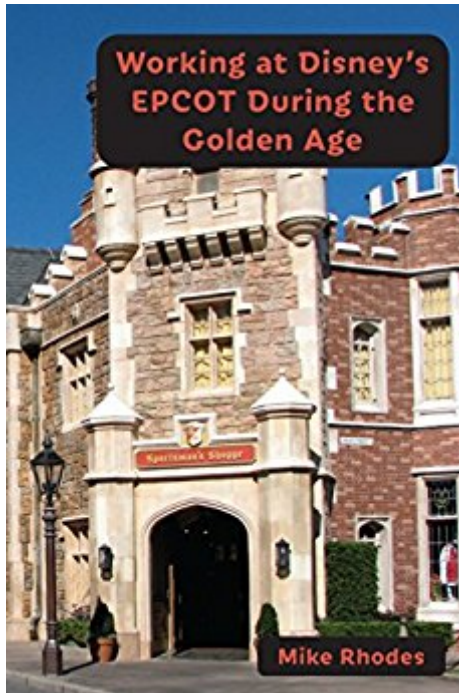




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# Working At Disney's EPCOT During The Golden Age



## Synopsis

From England to EPCOT, with Pixie Dust For many Disney fans, the early 1990s was the heyday of EPCOT. Mike Rhodes was there, working in the UK Pavilion of the World Showcase, as part of Disney's now defunct Fellowship Programme for international cast members. With Brit wit and humour, he takes you backstage, from Horizons to the Tea Caddy. To staff its World Showcase pavilions, Disney recruits from the host countries themselves. For the limited spots in the international Fellowship Programme, competition was fierce. Fellowship cast members got more of everything, including Disney-sponsored trips, free rent, and higher pay. Perks aside, Mike's program brought him many magical moments, both fanciful and farcical, including: What it takes to run a shop in the World Showcase, and the politics of corporate sponsorship (in this case, Twinings Tea) Remembrances of EPCOT past: Horizons, Wonders of Life, Seabase Alpha, World of Motion, and more Fanny packs, ladies privates, and other culture shocks Gay culture at Disney, and the perils and pleasures of being an openly gay cast member Excursions throughout Florida, from private islands and redneck wilderness to the seedy underbelly of Orlando THE GOLDEN AGE OF EPCOT AWAITS!

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## Customer Reviews

I've read quite a few of the Cast Member "memoirs" and had high hopes for this one since Epcot is my favorite WDW park. It's an interesting read as always albeit a bit repetitive at times. While you get a bit of an understanding what it was like at Epcot during the early 90's, the author primarily worked in the UK pavilion and consequently, a good portion of the book is focused on that area. So, enjoyable but was hoping for a bit more about the park as a whole.

Very entertaining book about working for The Mouse at EPCOT. Neophyte author Mike Rhodes here does an excellent job of telling you about his adventures working in the "Cultural Representative" program, at the United Kingdom pavilion. Sponsored by Twinings tea (but oddly, Mike is more of a coffee drinker, which caused some embarrassment and minor issue, as you can well imagine!), Mike got to work a whole year there in EPCOT, in the lovely UK pavilion. Mike tells us of his adventures and misadventures, but goes mostly into what it was like to work there in 1993-4, including lots of interesting background stuff on the attractions for Disney history and trivia buffs. Entertaining tales of a Brit lost in Florida and dazed by the American way of life. (actually, Mike grew to love the superior American Customer Service). Another hit from Theme Park Press! Any Disneyphile can do worse than just ordering ALL their books- i mostly have!

This should be the perfect book for me: I worked at WDW with the College Program the same time Mike did his year, I lived at Vista Way, I worked at EPCOT, I had tons of friends working throughout the parks, and I had adventures too. I agree with the title, that was the Golden Age of EPCOT (the park had mostly matured with the additions of The Living Seas, The Wonders of Life and the Norway pavilion plus the fact the initial sponsor agreements had not yet expired had Communicore, Horizons, and the World of Motion still around) yet we do not get much of that gilded age. Okay, I get it, he did not spend much time at the parks, especially EPCOT. Fair enough, so how about your impressions of working that merchandise location at the UK? Got some of that. How about your observations of guests? Got some of that. How about backstage. Again, got some of that. But the key word in every case is SOME. Something they teach elementary kids when writing papers is "wait wait tell me more" and Mr. Rhodes needed to tell me more. Even if he just did a quick search via the internet he could have found out why most people from the United States were not very worldly in

1993 and 1994. He then could have told us why (various reasons such as being surrounded by two big oceans and having two neighboring countries that we have been at peace with for a while plus the lack of nearby different cultures but if we encounter different cultures, they are trying to assimilate with us) and reflected on it. Mr. Rhodes could have checked Disney fan boards and found a wealth of information on the lack of merchandise variety and how it just keeps on getting worse every year. Finally, he could have better described backstage areas, like the meeting room upstairs at Norway and discuss why that was important but we only got "we met there" and nothing more. I wanted more, wish there was an editor and someone to help him ask those questions to him so he could have written a better book. Even though I knew all those answers above, I desperately wanted him to answer it for me. I hope he writes again, I did enjoy the writing style as it was more "Let me tell you about the year I worked at Disney" while drinking at a pub rather than a boring "EPCOT Center opened to the public on 1 October, 1982." All in all, decent, quick read, but not four or five star reading.

Enjoyed a behind the scenes look at a cast member's experience at EPCOT. Funny stories and insight. Makes me miss the more innocent times in the Disney Parks.

Always enjoy reading Disney "behind the scene's" type books and this was no exception. Full of interesting facts about Epcot and also some humor which made me LOL at times!. I did also learn a few interesting facts that I didn't know and the book offered a new insight into the workings of Disney.

Since I live about ten miles from the Mouse I enjoy reading all of the cast member books. I thought this was one of the better ones. A quick and fun read. It was interesting to see what it was like to work for Disney in the olden days.

A wonderful slice of Epcot in its golden age. A bit childish and choppy, but brilliantly entertaining nonetheless. Thanks Mike.

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