

## The Problem with Classroom Use of Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle*

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There is no doubt that *The Jungle* helped shape American political history. Sinclair wrote it to call attention to the plight of Chicago packinghouse workers who had just lost a strike against the Beef Trust. The novel appeared in February 1906, was shrewdly promoted by both author and publisher, and quickly became a best seller. Its socialist message, however, was lost in the uproar over the relatively brief but nauseatingly graphic descriptions of packinghouse “crimes” and “swindles.”<sup>1</sup> The public’s visceral reaction led Senator Albert Beveridge of Indiana to call for more extensive federal regulation of meat packing and forced Congress to pay attention to pending legislation that would set government standards for food and beverages. President Theodore Roosevelt sent two sets of investigators to Chicago and played a major role in securing congressional approval of Beveridge’s measure. When the President signed this Meat Inspection Act and also the Food and Drugs Act in June, he graciously acknowledged Beveridge’s help but said nothing about the famous novel or its author.<sup>2</sup>

Teachers of American history and American studies have been much kinder to Sinclair. Most consider him a muckraker because the public responded so decisively to his accounts of rats scurrying over the meat and going into the hoppers or workers falling into vats and becoming part of Durham’s lard. Many embrace *The Jungle* as a reasonably trustworthy source of information on urban immigrant industrial life at the turn of the century. Few raise questions about Sinclair’s credentials as either a journalist or historical novelist. If doubts arise,

they are quickly dismissed. Thus in *After the Fact: The Art of Historical Detection*, James Davidson and Mark Lytle explore the motives and maneuvers of supporters and opponents of the Meat Inspection Act, but they accept without any historical detective work “realities recounted in *The Jungle*.” James Barrett’s “Introduction” to the novel concedes that “Sinclair’s rendering of the people of Packingtown is misleading.” He writes, “A whole world of working-class activity through unions, politics, and, of course, ethnic religious and fraternal organizations remained shadowy to Sinclair. It never became an important part of his novel, but it was very much a part of life in Packingtown.” Despite this major omission, Barrett assures readers that somehow the book will enhance their understanding of “the social history of the era.”<sup>3</sup>

Moreover, scholars have ignored Sinclair’s skeptical contemporaries. The first group of governmental investigators, for example, thought packinghouses in the novel bore little resemblance to reality. And the better known Neill-Reynolds report, which Roosevelt used to secure congressional action, actually commended the chilled meat division of the industry. Its authors, moreover, repudiated Sinclair during public hearings in June 1906. The President told William Allen White that although Sinclair was of “service to us,” he was “untruthful” and “three-fourths of the things he said were absolute falsehoods.” Journalist Mark Sullivan warned readers of *Our Times* to avoid “the error, practically universal, of classifying Sinclair and his ‘Jungle’ with the ‘Muckrakers.’” They are “utterly different . . . in their methods.” The best of the muckrakers “confirmed everything,” while Sinclair was a “propagandist” whose account of “conditions in the stockyards did not purport to have any more than the loose standard of accuracy that fiction demands for local color and background.” Even that was rejected by Ralph Chaplin, a socialist who grew up in the vicinity of the yards and packinghouses and was living there when the novel appeared. In his autobiography *Wobbly*, Chaplin said of *The Jungle*, “I thought it a very inaccurate picture of the stockyards district which I knew so well.”<sup>4</sup>

Equally troubling are turn of the century historical records and more recent scholarly studies of packinghouse workers and their union, of Chicago’s female wage earners, and Back of the Yards and other immigrant industrial communities. They show that most immigrants were not passive victims of exploitation but rather that they managed to gain some measure of control over their lives. In spite of low wages and often harsh working and living conditions, most established a foothold and in time experienced some upward mobility. Relatively few contributed to political corruption, crime, alcoholism, vagrancy, prostitution or the spread of disease. Thus the dire fate of Sinclair’s protagonist, Jurgis Rudkus, and his extended Lithuanian family tests credulity. During the four year span of the novel (approximately 1900 to 1904), Jurgis’s father succumbs to tuberculosis, his brother-in-law vanishes, his young wife is forced into prostitution by her boss and dies in childbirth, his son drowns in a ditch, his wife’s cousin chooses the brothel, and two more children die—one from convulsions after eating smoked sausage, the other consumed by rats while in a beer-induced stupor.

Drawing on old records and new scholarship, this article looks first at Sinclair's motives for writing the novel, then compares what he says about packers, packinghouse products, immigrant workers and their community with the historical evidence. It concludes that contrary to the author's 1906 claim that it was "so true that students may go to it, as they would a work of reference," *The Jungle* often strays quite far from the truth. As a result, the book misinforms readers about life in what Sinclair called "Packingtown" but which residents and reporters knew as "Back of the Yards."<sup>5</sup>

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Sinclair was an only child, born in Baltimore in 1878 to an alcoholic father and a pious mother who disapproved of Demon Rum. In "a series of Cinderella transformations," he was shunted between vermin-infested boardinghouses that his father could afford and the fashionable homes of maternal relatives.<sup>6</sup> While studying at City College and Columbia University, he augmented the family income by selling jokes and adventure stories. He aspired to write the great American novel, but his early efforts were overlooked by critics and readers.



1924 aerial view of the industrial square mile containing the stockyards, packinghouses (or Packingtown) and railroad tracks. Since the direction of the camera was northeast, the photographer did not catch the residential area known as Back of the Yards. All photographs in this article courtesy of Chicago Historical Society.

Abysmally ignorant about sexuality—he was in college when he was “shocked” by awareness of prostitution—he married an equally ill-informed young friend of the family.<sup>7</sup> Unable to support her, Sinclair let Meta rejoin her parents to bear their son while he struggled with hack writing, lived in squalid lodgings, and watched his father succumb to alcoholism. Once a devout Episcopalian, even that certainty eroded. His youthful experiences with cockroaches and rats, his outrage at prostitution, and what Robert Crunden calls his “obsessive terror” of alcohol would reverberate in *The Jungle*.<sup>8</sup>

At this critical juncture, the fall of 1902, Leonard D. Abbott of *Literary Digest* gave him some socialist pamphlets. Their message, he remembered, “was like the falling down of prison walls about my mind.” George D. Herron and Gaylord Wilshire befriended him, and *Wilshire’s Magazine* “printed my picture . . . and introduced me to the socialist movement as a coming novelist.” These new associates steered him to the writings of Marx, Kautsky, Kropotkin, Bellamy, London, Markham, Veblen and Ghent, as well as *Appeal to Reason* and *International Socialist Review*. Within six months Sinclair was writing about his conversion and boasting that the “deepest fact of my nature . . . is a fiery, savage hatred of Wealth, and of all that Wealth stands for.”<sup>9</sup>

Eager to reunite his family and start work on a Civil War novel, Sinclair did not hesitate to ask the wealthy Herron for help. The latter promised thirty dollars per month, and the Sinclairs took up residence in a sixteen by eighteen-foot cabin with tar paper roof three miles outside Princeton, New Jersey. During the “wretched” winter of 1903-1904, they had little heat, not much food, and “since another pregnancy would have meant the death of the young writer’s hopes,” they lived as “brother and sister.” Meta treated her “depression and melancholy” with patent medicines and once came close to suicide.<sup>10</sup> “All such scenes were practice for the future writing of *The Jungle*.”<sup>11</sup> In the summer of 1904 editor Fred D. Warren of *Appeal to Reason* read Sinclair’s new novel *Manassas* and liked it. He suggested that the author, who by then was a member of the Socialist Party of America, turn his attention from nineteenth-century chattel slavery to contemporary wage slavery. Sinclair accepted Warren’s five hundred dollar advance for serial rights and chose Packingtown as the setting because he was following the Chicago meat packing strike in the *Appeal*.<sup>12</sup>

He was totally unprepared for what he encountered in Packingtown in October 1904. He had never written about industrial workers or, apparently, been inside a large factory, certainly nothing like the square-mile complex of stockyards, packinghouses and railroad tracks. He took his meals at the University of Chicago Settlement, which had been established ten years before on the southwestern edge of the complex. Its founder and director, Mary McDowell, helped him get his bearings, and she introduced him to workers and neighborhood people. In his autobiography, Sinclair claimed that he passed “again and again” through the plants.<sup>13</sup> However, in the summer of 1906 he told an interviewer that he made only three “personal visits”—one an “ordinary” guided tour, the second with a correspondent for the British medical journal, the *Lancet*, and on “the third

and last trip, I was in the wake of a lawyer who had been brought up in the Packingtown district.” Sinclair also told the interviewer that his knowledge of the fertilizer plant came from “an uncouth story teller” whom he met at a bar-room table.<sup>14</sup> The contacts he made with three other people—Algie M. Simons, the *Lancet* correspondent and Ernest Poole—were equally important in shaping the contours of *The Jungle*.

Algie M. Simons, a socialist organizer and editor of the *International Socialist Review*, gave Sinclair a warm welcome. A former charity worker in the Stockyards area, Simons had turned to socialist journalism in 1899.<sup>15</sup> For Charles H. Kerr’s Pocket Library of Socialism he produced a short but fiery pamphlet entitled *Packingtown*. The meat barons were “purely capitalistic” and their excessive greed caused them to demolish competitors, treat employees like slaves, and develop ever more by-products.<sup>16</sup> Simons asserted (without documentation) that a worker’s child met “a horrible death” in a roadside pool of “slime” and that “three persons among the acquaintances of the writer have fallen to an awful death” in rendering vats.<sup>17</sup> Simons introduced Sinclair to local socialists and gave him permission to use anything he wanted from the pamphlet.

The *Lancet* correspondent was Adolphe Smith, an English socialist who had written favorable articles about European municipal slaughter houses in which meat was prepared for immediate consumption under the eye of government inspectors.<sup>18</sup> No canning, preservation or manufacture of by-products took place in those one-story, partially-roofed structures built of brick, stone and tile for easy cleansing. Believing that meat from tubercular animals conveyed the disease to consumers, Smith, the *Lancet* and an 1898 Royal Commission on the Control of Tuberculosis advocated municipal abattoirs and government inspection in England.<sup>19</sup> Smith attended a St. Louis conference on tuberculosis in the fall of 1904 and then traveled to Chicago to see that city’s privately-owned packinghouses. Sinclair considered his encounter with the English “expert” nothing less than a “stroke of good fortune,” and his criticisms of the packinghouses would be colored by Smith’s dispatches published in the *Lancet* during January 1905.<sup>20</sup>

Ernest Poole came to Packingtown to cover the 1904 strike for *Outlook*. Princeton educated, he had been at University Settlement in New York with James B. Reynolds and Robert Hunter, and he stayed at McDowell’s settlement while interviewing strikers, strike-breakers and neighborhood people.<sup>21</sup> In addition to his labor articles, he wrote a story about a Lithuanian who came to Packingtown, advanced from laborer to butcher, and won higher wages and steadier hours through the intervention of a powerful union. That Kaztauskis “autobiography . . . as dictated to Mr. Poole” appeared in an August issue of *Independent* and caught the attention of President Roosevelt. He sent an emissary to Poole asking to meet “his” Lithuanian, and Poole replied, “He’s not one man; he’s forty thousand. You’ll find him all around the Yards.”<sup>22</sup> Firmly convinced that the strikers were right, Poole volunteered as the union’s press agent. Whether he first met Sinclair at the settlement or union headquarters is uncertain, but Poole

clearly remembered the brash young novelist announcing “I’ve come here to write the Uncle Tom’s Cabin of the Labor Movement!”<sup>23</sup>

Upon his return to New Jersey, Sinclair moved his family into a more substantial dwelling and on Christmas Day sat down to write. At the end of three months’ intense labor, he had finished the chapters set in the packinghouse district. He had at hand Simons’ *Packingtown* and Poole’s Lithuanian story; in January he began receiving Smith’s *Lancet* articles and came across the first installment of Charles Edward Russell’s series “The Greatest Trust in the World.” Sinclair wrote to Russell: “Apparently you and I have been on the track of the monster at the same time. I don’t know if you would have any facts of use to a novelist.”<sup>24</sup> It is likely that Sinclair was familiar with I.K. Friedman’s 1901 novel *By Bread Alone*, which dealt with Polish immigrant life in a Chicago steel district. When writing about Jurgis’s home life, Sinclair drew on his own experiences. *The Jungle* concerned packinghouse workers, “but internally it was the story of my own family.” Jurgis’s wife was Meta, “speaking Lithuanian but otherwise unchanged.” For their suffering in a Chicago winter, “I had only to recall the previous winter in the cabin, when we had had only cotton blankets, and had put rugs on top of us, and covered shivering in our separate beds. It was the same with hunger, with illness, with fear.”<sup>25</sup>

The novelist took a break to help establish the Intercollegiate Socialist Society and arrange a Carnegie Hall meeting where for the first time he heard Jack London talk about revolution. Meantime, *The Jungle* was appearing serially in *Appeal to Reason*, and Fred Warren pressed Sinclair to conclude the manuscript. Unable to finance a second trip to Chicago, he finished it by throwing in “everything I knew and thought my readers ought to know” about socialism.<sup>26</sup> When five publishers refused to take the book without substantial revisions, Sinclair sold advance orders through the *Appeal* and arranged for private publication. At that point Doubleday, Page and Company agreed to take it, without revision Sinclair implied in his *Autobiography*.<sup>27</sup> Recent discovery of the complete original version of the novel proves that Sinclair agreed to cut its length by almost one-third.<sup>28</sup>

Isaac Marcossou of Doubleday encouraged newspapers to print excerpts in advance of the February 1906 release. He advertised the book widely and ingeniously and commissioned three articles on Packingtown for the publishing firm’s magazine, *World’s Work*. Marcossou, however, had trouble controlling the “erratic” novelist.<sup>29</sup> Sinclair set up his own publicity office and “gave interviews and wrote statements for the press until I was dizzy.” He even talked the *New York Times* into publishing his speculations about the content of the Neill-Reynolds report. Sinclair, said Marcossou, “offered a problem that, in some respects, was more difficult to handle than the controversy that raged about his book. His impulsiveness seriously embarrassed me at times.”<sup>30</sup>

The purpose of Sinclair’s activities was to convince critics that the novel was “an exact and faithful picture of conditions as they exist in Packingtown.” But he told readers of the *Appeal* that the novel was designed “to drive home to the dullest

reader” the point that the destruction of the Rudkus family was “the inevitable and demonstrable consequence of an economic system.” “I believe in the Socialist movement” vowed Sinclair, and “if I did not, I should never have written *The Jungle*.”<sup>31</sup> In the fall of 1906 he described himself in *Cosmopolitan Magazine* as a “proletarian writer” whose intent was to “frighten the country by a picture of what its industrial masters were doing to their victims.” Quite “by chance” he discovered what the packers were doing to their products. “I really paid very little attention to the meat question while I was in Chicago. . . . I did not see half as much as I might have seen had I tried harder.” But since the public responded only to the meat-question and not the pitch for socialism, Sinclair felt that he had “failed. . . . I aimed at the public’s heart, and by accident I hit it in the stomach.”<sup>32</sup>

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Capitalist packers were the most fearsome monsters in Sinclair’s jungle. They were “the incarnation of blind and insensate Greed. . . . devouring with a thousand mouths, trampling with a thousand hoofs.” They could live in the lap of luxury because they cheated cattle raisers, set high market prices on their meat products, bribed federal inspectors to pass diseased animals, and chiseled on workers’ wages. To them “a hundred human lives did not balance a penny of profit.”<sup>33</sup> Their plants were “honeycombed with rottenness”: “bosses grafted off the men” who in turn were “pitted against each other.” As a result, Packingtown “was simply a seething cauldron of jealousies and hatreds; there was no loyalty or decency anywhere.”<sup>34</sup> Female employees, “mostly foreign, hanging always on the verge of starvation,” were at the mercy of foremen “every bit as brutal and unscrupulous as the old-time slave drivers.” Things “quite unspeakable” went on in the packinghouses and “were taken for granted by everybody; only they did not show . . . because there was no difference in color between master and slave.”<sup>35</sup>

The development of commercial meatpacking in the latter half of the nineteenth century was not a nefarious plot, as Sinclair wished readers to believe. It was part of a larger economic process which supplied machine-made clothing, furniture and other goods to the country’s burgeoning urban population. The transition from many small local operations to large commercial bakeries, dairies, breweries and companies canning fruits, vegetables and fish was strikingly similar to the rise of large meatpacking firms.<sup>36</sup>

Location and timing had a good deal to do with Chicago’s prominence in meatpacking. That city opened the country’s first centralized railroad stockyard in 1865, and its success attracted packers. Extension of railroads and livestock raising onto the plains assured a growing supply of animals, and Chicago packers built larger plants, invested in machinery, and used refrigeration to extend the packing season. In the 1880s they figured out how to ship chilled fresh meat; railroads balked at providing refrigerated cars, so the packing companies acquired their own. Improvements in canning and development of oleomargarine and a host of by-products enabled the businesses to grow. The large number of visitors to the packinghouses were told that the companies utilized everything

except the animal's squeal.<sup>37</sup> Ruminating in the 1890s on the "gr-great sthrdes" of mechanical science, Mr. Dooley said a "cow goes lowin' softly in to Armours an' comes out glue, beef, gelatine, fertylizer, celooloid, . . . washin' sody, soap, . . . an' bed springs so quick that while aft she's still cow, for'ard she may be annything fr'm buttons to Pannyma hats."<sup>38</sup>

The rise of Packingtown brought a fivefold increase in livestock receipts between 1870 and 1900, and it boosted employment from two thousand people to twenty-five thousand.<sup>39</sup> Philip D. Armour and Gustavus F. Swift (Durham and Brown in *The Jungle*) headed the two largest companies and both had slaughtering plants and distribution centers in other cities, their own fleets of refrigerated railroad cars, and corporate sales in 1900 in the neighborhood of \$200 million. Although Chicago meat products were consumed by people throughout this country and abroad, the city packers dispatched fewer than one-third of all cattle and one-fourth of all hogs slaughtered in the United States in 1900. The total value of Chicago's packinghouse products was one-third of the country's total.<sup>40</sup>

Those in the path of the Chicago packers fought a noisy rear guard action. Dairy farmers called margarine a "cheap, nasty grease" capable of transmitting tuberculosis and trichinosis. Congress placed a modest tax on it in 1886, but the Department of Agriculture's Division of Chemistry pronounced it safe and nutritious.<sup>41</sup> As Chicago chilled beef invaded eastern markets, local slaughterers and butchers dubbed it "stale" or "dead" meat, implying that it absorbed ammonia from cooling machinery or was chemically "embalmed" to prolong its life. Customers liked its superior taste and lower price and thus ignored the warnings. Opponents then accused Chicago packers of using diseased animals and said only local inspection in their own states at the time of slaughter could safeguard consumers. Several states banned Chicago beef, but the Supreme Court overturned these laws in 1890.<sup>42</sup> Meantime, European countries banned American pork products until the federal government certified that they were free of trichinae. Congress in 1890-91 authorized the Department of Agriculture's Bureau of Animal Industry to inspect livestock before and after slaughter and, at the request of packers or foreign governments, conduct microscopic examinations of pork before certifying it. The large packers quickly availed themselves of this service, and by 1900 federal meat inspectors, graduates of veterinary colleges and protected by civil service, were working in 149 packinghouses in 46 cities.<sup>43</sup>

Criticism of Chicago meat products surfaced again during the Spanish-American War. General Nelson A. Miles, still smarting from the packinghouse workers' insolence to his soldiers during the Pullman strike, blamed the sickness of American troops in Cuba and Puerto Rico on the canned meat and chilled beef prepared in Chicago. He told the War Investigating Commission that the former was defective, the latter what "you might call embalmed beef."<sup>44</sup> Major General Leonard Wood, trained at Harvard Medical School, testified that the chilled beef was nutritious and wholesome, while academic and government chemists (including Dr. Harvey W. Wiley, chief of the Division [later Bureau] of Chemistry



from 1883 to 1912) gave clean bills of health to samples of the canned beef. After visits to the packinghouses and voluminous testimony, the Commission declared that the canned beef was “generally of good quality” and that “no refrigerated beef . . . was subjected to or treated with any chemicals.” Undaunted, General Miles asked for a military court of inquiry into his beef charges. It ruled that Miles had no justification for “alleging” that the beef was “embalmed” or “unfit for issue.”<sup>45</sup> These two investigations revealed that careless handling of the refrigerated beef and the practice of eating canned meat opened days before contributed to intestinal illnesses, but drinking contaminated water was the major factor. Medical doctors and researchers soon tracked typhoid to poor sanitation and pinned malaria and yellow fever on mosquitos.<sup>46</sup> Despite exoneration of Chicago meat and scientific explanations for the illnesses, historian Graham A. Cosmas concedes that the “sensational charges, not the sober refutations, stuck in the minds of thousands of ordinary citizens.”<sup>47</sup>

Foes of the packers kept the rotten beef charges alive, and, as Floyd Dell noted, this “more or less prepared” the public for *The Jungle*. Simons rejoiced that “the world knows now the story of the infamous part played . . . by the packers of Chicago.” Charles Edward Russell asked “How did they manage to emerge unharmed from the terrible ‘embalmed-beef’ revelations of the Spanish War? How did they escape prosecution when more American soldiers fell before their deadly beef than were hit by all the Spanish guns?” *The Jungle* claimed “the ‘embalmed beef’ . . . killed several times as many United States soldiers as all the bullets of the Spaniards.” And in May 1906 Sinclair issued a press release stating that Philip Armour’s 1901 death was due—not to pneumonia—but to “worry incidental” to hushing up the company’s responsibility for those deaths.<sup>48</sup>

Did the Chicago packers constitute a “Beef Trust”? Russell certainly thought so, and he believed it controlled “the prices of one-half the food consumed by the nation.” Jurgis discovered that “Packingtown was really not a number of firms at all, but one great firm, the Beef Trust.” Yet Richard T. Ely, noting the “bewildering confusion of thought in the current discussion of monopolies and trusts,” even among “our experts in economics,” decided that the Chicago packers were “but a partial monopoly.” In *Competition and Regulation* Mary Yeager argues that they were an oligopoly competing with each other through product quality and service rather than prices. “Oligopoly conformed neither to traditional competition nor to monopoly,” and thus government “efforts to discipline the behavior of oligopolists by applying sanctions against monopoly frequently failed.”<sup>49</sup>

This was Roosevelt’s experience. Fearing that incorporation of the National Packing Company in 1903 might lead to merger of the Armour, Swift, and Morris firms, the Justice Department secured an injunction prohibiting collusion and the Supreme Court upheld it early in 1905. The new Bureau of Corporations investigated six Chicago packing firms, but its report said profits of approximately two percent of sales were reasonable. The President then tried prosecuting packing company officials for violating the injunction; if found guilty, they could

be charged with criminal action and possibly end up in jail. Despite the best efforts of government lawyers, the judge decided in favor of the packers in March 1906, one month after release of *The Jungle*. Roosevelt failed to discipline the Chicago packers under existing laws, but he was not through fighting.<sup>50</sup>

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Concern for the safety of Chicago meat products was linked to the larger question of guaranteeing the purity of all food processed outside the household. Demands for protection against adulteration surfaced in state legislatures, and the first pure food bill was submitted to Congress in 1879. The courts generally upheld state regulations if products could be proved harmful. State agricultural experiment stations and departments of food and dairy products sought to do that by analyzing the chemical content of food products. Even though most European governments had national standards by the 1890s, Congress was reluctant to act. The most vigorous proponent of federal involvement was Dr. Harvey W. Wiley. He and his Division of Chemistry staff analyzed ingredients, preservatives and coloring matter and over a span of sixteen years published their findings as parts of Bulletin No. 13, *Food and Food Adulterants*.<sup>51</sup>

Food chemists were more concerned about adulterants, dyes and preservatives in flour, baking powder, syrups, jellies and candies, sugar, spices, and condiments, coffee, milk and canned vegetables than in packinghouse products. Part One of Bulletin No. 13 was Wiley's 1887 endorsement of "artificial butter," and he and other chemists had found the canned meats tested for the war inquiries to be wholesome. In 1900 he launched a much larger investigation of packinghouse procedures and products, the results of which became Part Ten of Bulletin No. 13. Wiley criticized the use of beef and pork in products labeled "potted chicken," but he found that "only good wholesome meat is used for canning" and 94 percent of the samples had no preservatives, adulterants or dyes. The remainder showed traces of what he then considered safe preservatives, "the amount . . . not excessive in any instance." Thus, he concluded, since the industry has grown to such "vast proportions," it is "gratifying to know that, as a result of our investigations, we have found so little to criticize and so much to commend in these necessary products."<sup>52</sup> As a result of his famous "Poison Squad" experiments, Wiley later decided that even small amounts of some preservatives could disturb appetite and digestion, and he recommended banning their use.<sup>53</sup> But Wiley and his packinghouse investigators found no reason to criticize sanitary conditions or the handling of meat within the plants.

Another aspect of food safety was the question of whether meat and milk from tubercular cattle could infect people. When Dr. Robert Koch discovered the bacillus in 1882, he thought it caused the same disease in man and beast. No one knew how tuberculosis was transmitted, but veterinarians advocated stringent livestock inspection as a public health measure. While doctors did not rule out infection through meat or milk, they thought cooking meat and boiling milk could eliminate the risk. Since they suspected the White Plague spread through lung

discharges of sick individuals, they emphasized disinfection of premises and careful disposal of sputum so it could not dry out, pulverize and travel through the air.<sup>54</sup> Disagreement sharpened after Koch declared in 1901 that bovine and human tuberculosis were caused by different bacilli and conjectured that people seldom if ever contracted tuberculosis from cattle. American doctors generally supported Koch, and some even suggested that money spent on livestock inspection be used to identify and treat patients. Most veterinarians and many British doctors disputed Koch, and insisted, as did Dr. Daniel E. Salmon, head of the Bureau of Animal Industry from 1884 until 1905, that "No slaughter-houses should be allowed to operate without inspection."<sup>55</sup> Ironically, there was widespread agreement that thorough cooking rendered all meat safe, even pork, and the Bureau of Animal Industry began phasing out microscopic examination for trichinae in 1902, abandoning it completely by 1907.<sup>56</sup>

Meantime, those seeking environmental factors in the transmission of tuberculosis decided that it was endemic in dark, crowded slums and workplaces and spread from there. Explained Robert Hunter, the germs "live for months in darkness or in places artificially lighted" and eventually become "pulverized dust which is blown about through tenements, theatres, street cars, railway trains, offices, and factories." Dr. Alice Hamilton of Hull House also fingered "germ-laden dust . . . whirled in the air by gusts of wind." Back of the Yards physician Dr. Caroline Hedger insisted that in the interior packinghouse rooms with electric lights "germs could live almost indefinitely unless removed." She found it "revolting to think of the chances for infection of food in a situation like this." Adolphe Smith believed that the "sharp angles, nooks, and corners" of the packinghouses harbored "sputum of tuberculous workers . . . for weeks, months, and years" and that the disease was "especially prevalent" among packinghouse workers. There was a distinct possibility, therefore, that the packers were exporting "the bacilli in the provisions . . . sent from Chicago all over the world."<sup>57</sup>

*The Jungle* effectively heightened fears about contamination and adulteration of packinghouse products. In the novel men and women labor in "dark holes, by electric light." Many cough incessantly, spit at random, and stack meat in sputum on the floor. The packers are said to prefer tubercular cattle because they "fatten more quickly."<sup>58</sup> They hire "regular alchemists" to concoct meat products out of knuckle joints, gullets, skins, moldy scrap ends and those poisoned rats, appropriately spiced, colored and preserved. Other illustrations were excised by Doubleday. One involved an unmarried worker who gave birth in a "dark passage" and dropped the baby "into one of the carts full of beef, that was all ready for the cooking-vats." Black strike-breakers (with "woolly heads" and "savages" for ancestors) spread "diseases of vice" in the canned meat, "loathsome" afflictions which caused fingers and parts of the faces "to rot away and drop off."<sup>59</sup> In *The Brass Check*, Sinclair professed "bitterness" when he finally realized that he "had been made into a 'celebrity' . . . simply because the public did not want to eat tubercular beef." But in September 1905, when he was trying to persuade

Macmillan to publish the manuscript, he assured them that “with the spoiled meat sensations that are in it . . . you can count upon making the book a success.”<sup>60</sup>

President Roosevelt, supplied with advance copies of *The Jungle* by Marcossion and Sinclair, was concerned about the accusations against federal inspectors and the implications for public health. He asked the Department of Agriculture to investigate, and early in March a committee visited eighteen Chicago plants that used federal inspection and three that did not. Its report provided detailed information about the inspection service and the physical conditions within the plants.<sup>61</sup> The investigators found good, fair and bad conditions, often within the same plant and sometimes in the same room. In one establishment, for example, there were dirty windows and unpainted walls in the hog-killing area but clean workbenches and a clean vitrified brick floor. The cattle-killing area had “good light and ventilation,” tiled side walls, but dirty overhead beams. The beef-canning section was “well whitewashed, lighted, and ventilated, and was clean,” although the cooking room had dirty meat receptacles and no fans to carry off the steam. There were dressing rooms, lockers and wash basins for some but not all employees. Some toilets were “clean, well flushed, painted, and whitewashed,” others “dark and insanitary.” The plants not using federal inspection were generally unsanitary throughout.<sup>62</sup>

Annoyed by the report’s detail and refusal to generalize about sanitary conditions, the President felt that it did not give him “clear, definite answers.”<sup>63</sup> So he asked the same men to address specific criticisms in Smith’s *Lancet* articles, Sinclair’s novel and Hedger’s forthcoming article. The committee tried again to explain to Roosevelt that sanitary conditions were uneven. Hedger’s charge of excessive dirt fit “certain rooms of certain establishments, but it is absolutely unfair as a generalization.” Sinclair “selected the worst possible condition which could be found in any establishment” and “willfully closed his eyes to establishments where excellent conditions prevail.” The novelist’s assertion that poisoned rats went into the meat hoppers was a “deliberate misrepresentation of fact.”<sup>64</sup> They also took this opportunity to call attention to Adolphe Smith’s statement: “When a carcass, or a portion of a carcass, is condemned, in spite of stockyard gossip and scandal, I believe that it is conscientiously destroyed.” Smith also had “some difficulty in believing” stories about the use of bruised hams and defective meat.<sup>65</sup>

The President sequestered both of these April reports, for he had dispatched Commissioner of Labor Charles P. Neill and James B. Reynolds to make yet another investigation. Interestingly, both men had toured the stockyard and packinghouses on previous occasions without registering any complaints about procedure.<sup>66</sup> Neill and Reynolds spent several weeks in Packingtown but delayed writing their report until commanded to do so the first weekend in June.<sup>67</sup> In that short document the authors say they verified everything by “personal examination.”<sup>68</sup> They did find dirty windows, floors, workbenches and meat receptacles, some toilets improperly located and unsanitary, and many rooms that were poorly ventilated. They were critical of the use of electric lights: “Most of the rooms are

so dark as to make artificial light necessary at all times.” They did not mention rats. But they departed from their own guidelines to hypothesize that aged meat “might be treated with chemicals” and to say that unidentified physicians thought tuberculosis “disproportionately prevalent” among packinghouse workers.<sup>69</sup>

Briefly and grudgingly they acknowledged seeing clean brick and cement floors, model cooling and meat storage facilities, and eating rooms for the women in the packinghouses. Federal agents conducted the post-mortem inspections “carefully and conscientiously” and examined hog flesh under microscopes with “great care.”<sup>70</sup> In a section of the report headed “Uncleanliness in handling products” they buried their approval of the entire chilled-meat operation:

After killing, carcasses are well washed, and up to the time they reach the cooling room are handled in a fairly sanitary and cleanly manner. The parts that leave the cooling room for treatment in bulk are also handled with regard to cleanliness.<sup>71</sup>

When called before the House Agriculture Committee, both Neill and Reynolds said their criticisms applied only to the canning and preservation of meat.<sup>72</sup> Packinghouse workers were “a strong, sturdy class of foreigners,” not tubercular wrecks, and they saw clean rooms and sanitary metal carts, tubs and cutting tables “in quite a number of places.”<sup>73</sup> Asked about their relationship to Sinclair, Reynolds replied, “We had letters from Mr. Sinclair, and he sent parties to us to give evidence.” We “made an attempt to verify certain statements, but found it impossible to do so.”<sup>74</sup>

During the last week of May, Sinclair fed his scary version of what would be in the Neill-Reynolds report to the *New York Times*—plants “overrun with rats,” lard made from hogs that had died of cholera, food prepared by “ignorant foreigners or negroes” who had “no knowledge” of sanitation. Roosevelt’s June 4 letter accompanying the actual report stressed the negative and ignored the positive observations because “legislation is needed . . . to prevent the possibility of all abuses in the future.” The House Agriculture Committee finally forced the President to release the two Department of Agriculture reports, but the newspapers gave them short shrift. Nor did anyone ask why Dr. Wiley had found “so little to criticize and so much to commend” in Packingtown, or why so many visitors and journalists trooped through the plants without mentioning unsanitary conditions, or how millions could consume Chicago meat without ill effects. Said the *Outlook*, “the suspicion that poisoned, diseased, and putrid meat is packed and distributed for the use of the American people has . . . spread widely—not to say wildly. Even if this suspicion is unfounded, nothing but Federal legislation can allay it.”<sup>75</sup> And so Congress bowed to public opinion and the President’s wishes and endorsed the essence of the Beveridge bill extending federal inspection to all parts of the packinghouses.

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If *The Jungle* misrepresents packers and packinghouse products, it is even more misleading about the workers and their community. In order to prove that they exist in an “inferno of exploitation,” Sinclair lets bosses, realtors, merchants, politicians, priests, saloon keepers and the midwife cheat the Rudkus clan. Jurgis is “helpless as a wounded animal, the target of unseen enemies,” his wife too child-like to cope, and stolid Elzbieta, the linchpin of the group, reminds him of “the angleworm, which goes on living though cut in half . . . she asked no questions about the justice of it, nor the worthwhileness of life in which destruction and death ran riot.” Little wonder the journal published by the packinghouse workers’ union called the novel “greatly overdrawn” and objected to a plot in which the immigrants experience “only slavery, injustice and death.”<sup>76</sup>

Sinclair wanted readers to believe that packinghouse workers were “rats in a trap,” that prostitutes fared better than “decent” girls, and that “if you met a man who was rising . . . you met a knave.”<sup>77</sup> John R. Commons of the University of Wisconsin studied the Chicago packinghouse workers in 1904 and described the great variety of jobs commanding wages from 15 cents an hour for new unskilled hands to 50 cents an hour for the highly skilled “butcher aristocracy.” He found that Irish and German newcomers in the 1880s had moved up, “accumulated money,” and were fanning out into other jobs. Bohemians dominated the skilled ranks, while newly-arrived Slovaks and Lithuanians filled the lower positions. He did meet one Slovak who had been in Packingtown for ten years and “worked himself up to a 50-cent job.”<sup>78</sup> Another academic investigator, Carl William Thompson, studied the district in 1906 and came to similar conclusions. Even laborers were able to save part of their earnings, and “Slovak and Lithuanian girls working . . . at the low wage of five dollars a week also save a considerable fraction of their income.” A recent study of Chicago’s low-wage women workers who chose to live apart from family and relatives found that most managed to do so. Ernest Poole’s protagonist advanced from five dollars per week in his first job to eleven dollars per week and said that was “very common. There are thousands of immigrants like me.”<sup>79</sup>

Adults in the Rudkus family eventually join the union but find it cannot protect their jobs and its venal leaders are part of the army of Chicago grafters. So Jurgis becomes a strike-breaker and helps destroy it. Commons, Thompson, Poole, Mary McDowell, labor statistician Ethelbert Stewart and more recently David Brody and James Barrett have much higher opinions of the union than does Sinclair. Chartered in 1897 by the American Federation of Labor to sign up packinghouse and market butchers, it made an important difference in Packingtown. Run by skilled men, it nonetheless was willing and able to organize unskilled, female and black workers. It wrested from the packers wage increases, shorter and steadier hours, and promotions based on seniority. Moreover, it was the only organization that brought together the various ethnic groups employed in Packingtown.<sup>80</sup> In other words, packinghouse workers as viewed by contempo-

raries and recent scholars bear little resemblance to what Barrett calls Sinclair's "hopeless, animal-like creatures."<sup>81</sup>

Most of them made wiser housing decisions than did the Rudkus family. Upon their arrival the Rudkus family crowds into a Lithuanian woman's "unthinkably filthy" flat. It is one of four flats in a two-story building, and according to Sinclair such structures usually had from six to fourteen people per room, "fifty to sixty to a flat."<sup>82</sup> The next step for most immigrant families would have been their own four-room flat, renting for \$9 a month. But Sinclair's group decides within one week to invest their combined savings in a supposedly new four-room house, "a long mile and a half" from the packing plants. Its basement and attic are unfinished so they cannot take boarders, and it will cost them \$12 per month plus interest, insurance, real estate taxes and water, which they do not understand.<sup>83</sup> Inexplicably they look at nothing else: "they did not know where any more were, and they did not know any way of finding out."<sup>84</sup> In short order they discover that their house is fifteen years old, infested with cockroaches, incredibly cold in winter, and "unlucky. Every family that lived in it, someone was sure to get consumption."<sup>85</sup> After Jurgis goes to jail, the others fall behind in the payments and lose the house, furnishings and down payment.

Knowledgeable contemporaries did not share Sinclair's grim assessment. Robert Hunter omitted the district from his study of substandard Chicago housing because "there is no large area . . . where the conditions seem to be uniformly bad." "Very few of the houses . . . are deficient in provisions for light and ventilation, and none of them seem to be overcrowded." He did fault some for inadequate drainage and filthy yards, but those "evils do not extend over a large area. They are, in their worst forms, extraordinary and not typical." After examining the residential area around the packinghouses, Adolphe Smith said the employees were "very fortunate to be able to live in what . . . is more like the country than a city boasting of nearly 2,000,000 inhabitants." The houses had "plenty of air space around them," were "not in bad condition," were "fairly clean," and "overcrowding . . . was not general." He thought the "unwholesomeness" of the packinghouses was "to a large extent counteracted by the healthy character of the workpeople's houses."<sup>86</sup>

Nor did observers agree with Sinclair about the degree of overcrowding. It was Hedger's opinion that the two-story, four-flat rental buildings sheltered "four families on the average," each with four adults and "some children thrown in for good measure"—a far cry from Sinclair's claim of fifty or sixty per flat. Ethelbert Stewart's unpublished 1905 survey of 284 Back of the Yards dwellings found some with boarders, some without, some clean, some dirty. Newcomers were more apt to have boarders than, say, the Polish family of five who after six years in Packingtown had its own "Well lighted, neat & clean, well furnished" four-room flat.<sup>87</sup> In 1909 Sophonisba Breckinridge and Edith Abbott studied over six hundred "typical" frame houses in a ten block area that was predominantly Polish and Lithuanian. Though most of the houses were built before the city's 1903 housing ordinance, more than four-fifths met the new standards. And fewer than



**View looking north on Ashland Avenue showing packinghouses and a cabbage field to the east and Back of the Yards houses to the west. A resident of the University of Chicago Settlement took this picture around the turn of the century.**



**A typical shopping street scene in Back of the Yards, taken in 1904 by a *Chicago Daily News* photographer during the stockyards strike.**





**The first floor of this corner building at 4758 S. Ada St., was a saloon and meeting hall. The workingman's cottage and two-story apartment to the right were typical of the structures canvassed by Sophonisba Breckinridge and Edith Abbott in 1909.**

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one-quarter of the people living in those structures were lodgers.<sup>88</sup> Breckinridge and Abbott, like most middle-class Americans, disapproved of the immigrant practice of taking lodgers or boarders, but they understood that those families had lived in close quarters in their homelands and that the additional income helped them achieve their goal of home ownership. Thus the houses and the occupants, they said, were like immigrant working-class districts elsewhere in Chicago and in other cities; Back of the Yards was “a typical and not an exceptional neighborhood.”<sup>89</sup>

During his stay in Packingtown Sinclair found “no ray of sunshine in the lives of the people, save such as they were able to get out of drunkenness.” Hence his Lithuanian characters steer clear of the church, join no ethnic organizations, and

befriend only “near neighbors and shopmates.”<sup>90</sup> Since there were eight ethnic Catholic churches in the Stockyards district, half of them imposing in size, an observer would have to be blind and deaf to miss their significance. Charles Bushnell, author of a 1902 doctoral dissertation about the community, considered those churches and their many societies the “centers of social intercourse.” Carl William Thompson noted that the various ethnic groups had “their own societies and clubs, and all belong to the same church.”<sup>91</sup> Although Poole’s Lithuanian was not a regular church-goer, he belonged to the Lithuanian Concertina Club and another society which gave “two picnics in summer and two big balls in winter.” “On Sundays we go on the trolley out into the country.” Another observer said “principal thoroughfares” in every Chicago working-class district were “gay all summer with the banners announcing the picnic of one or another of these lodges.”<sup>92</sup> Churches and ethnic organizations were “social anchors” in the development of Back of the Yards in the late nineteenth century, and Robert Slayton refers to the church as the “central institution” in his study of the community in the first half of the twentieth century.<sup>93</sup>

Only in *The Jungle* are saloons so evil. Two Chicago investigators for The Committee of Fifty said those in working-class districts were “a part of the life of the people,” “the workingman’s club.” Patrons read newspapers and played cards, exchanged views and secured employment information, cashed their pay checks, and had free lunches with their beer. In the saloons of the Hull House ward, E.C. Moore was unable to find “a riotous company intent upon reducing itself to intoxication.” Drinking was not “the most important thing.”<sup>94</sup> Breckinridge and Abbott discovered that the 1,268 Polish and Lithuanian households in their study supported thirty drinking establishments, most of them at corner locations with other stores. The saloon keeper was “a person of influence, and the hall in the rear . . . a social center in which weddings and other festivities occur.”<sup>95</sup> In addition, John Kingsdale’s “The ‘Poor Man’s Club,’” Perry Duis’s authoritative study of saloons in Chicago and Boston, and Slayton’s *Back of the Yards* cast fatal doubt on the accuracy of Sinclair’s depiction.<sup>96</sup>

Also misleading is Sinclair’s farcical treatment of politics. Voters are dolts, elections are ritual jousts between “rival sets of grafters,” and Jurgis sells his services to a “political lord” with “rat-like eyes,” “a little dried-up Irishman, whose hands shook.” Almost certainly the novelist saw Lincoln Steffens’ “Chicago: Half Free and Fighting On” in the October 1903 issue of *McClure’s* or *The Shame of the Cities* (1904). Yet there is no hint in *The Jungle* of the hotly contested aldermanic elections or Steffens’ assertion that the Municipal Voters’ League had “something to teach every city and town in the country.”<sup>97</sup> While Sinclair was writing—and wishing to make a second trip to Chicago—he could have followed the 1905 race for mayor. An outspoken Irish-American Democrat, Edward F. Dunne, won that election with the help of the Chicago Federation of Labor and immigrant workers, including those in the Stockyards district.<sup>98</sup>

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The novel's impact upon readers in 1906 assures its place in American history. As John Braeman so aptly said, "During the excitement aroused by Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle*, the federal government stepped forward as the defender of the public well-being." But is the book "journalistic novel writing," as Sinclair claimed? Mark Sullivan rejected it as muckracking journalism and referred to the author as a "propagandist." Stockyards area resident Ralph Chaplin considered it "very inaccurate." And Mary McDowell, more familiar with the packinghouses and neighborhood than either Sullivan or Chaplin, said the novel "was filled with half-truths." In a review of Sinclair's first autobiography, Edmund Wilson ventured the opinion that he chose sides "before he knew what it was all about" and the resulting "vision of good and evil at grips in all the affairs of the world . . . would always have prevented Sinclair from being a first-rate newspaper man."<sup>99</sup>

Does *The Jungle* have value as historical fiction? While novelists have the right to give free rein to their imaginations, the historical novelist needs what Cushing Strout calls a "veracious imagination." Sinclair does not meet Stout's criteria—respect for "both the documentable and the imaginative without sacrificing either to the other."<sup>100</sup> Turn of the century evidence buttressed by recent scholarship exposes the many ways in which Sinclair loaded the dice to convince readers that packinghouse workers led heart-breaking lives in a capitalist jungle. In the process he distorted the truth about the packers and their product and about immigrant workers and their community.

So the problem with classroom use of Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle* is that readers come away from it with a fundamentally flawed picture of urban immigrant industrial life in early twentieth century America.

## Notes

1. Upton Sinclair, *The Jungle* (New York, 1960), 99.
2. For events leading to this legislation, see John Braeman, "The Square Deal in Action: A Case Study in the Growth of the 'National Police Power,'" in John Braeman, Robert H. Bremner, Everett Walters, eds., *Change and Continuity in Twentieth-Century America* (Columbus, Ohio, 1964), 35-80; James Harvey Young, *Pure Food: Securing the Federal Food and Drugs Act of 1906* (Princeton, New Jersey, 1989), chaps. 8-11; Oscar Edward Anderson, *The Health of a Nation: Harvey W. Wiley and the Fight for Pure Food* (Chicago, 1958), chaps. 7-9; Mark Sullivan, *Our Times, The United States, 1900-1925*, vol. II *America Finding Herself* (New York, 1927), 471-552.
3. These passages are located in chapters 9 and 14 of *The Jungle*. James West Davidson and Mark Hamilton Lytle, *After the Fact: The Art of Historical Detection* (2 vols., New York, 1982), II, 234; James R. Barrett, ed., *The Jungle* (Urbana, Illinois, 1988), xiii, xxvii.
4. Theodore Roosevelt to William Allen White, July 31, 1906, in *The Letters of Theodore Roosevelt*, Elting E. Morison, ed., (8 vols., Cambridge, Mass., 1951-1954), V, 340; Sullivan, *Our Times*, II, footnote 478-479; Ralph Chaplin, *Wobbly: The Rough-and-Tumble Story of an American Radical* (Chicago, 1948), 92.
5. Upton Sinclair, "Is 'The Jungle' True?" *The Independent* 60 (May 17, 1906), 1129. "Packingtown" originated in the 1880s to describe the packinghouses adjacent to the stockyard. "Back of the Yards" referred to the residential area that developed to the west and south of Packingtown. Later in the twentieth century "the Stockyards district" embraced both the industrial and the residential areas. Louise Carroll Wade, *Chicago's Pride: The Stockyards, Packingtown, and*

*Environs in the Nineteenth Century* (Urbana, Illinois, 1987), 199, 276; Robert A. Slayton, *Back of the Yards: The Making of a Local Democracy* (Chicago, 1986), 37-38.

6. Upton Sinclair, *The Autobiography of Upton Sinclair* (New York, 1962), 9. Fire destroyed Sinclair's personal papers in 1907, but he recalled his early years in *American Outpost: A Book of Reminiscences* (New York, 1932), reprinted most of that in the *Autobiography*, and has additional material in *The Brass Check: A Study of American Journalism* (Pasadena, California, 1919). See also Leon Harris, *Upton Sinclair: American Rebel* (New York, 1975); William A. Bloodworth, Jr., *Upton Sinclair* (Boston, 1977); Christopher P. Wilson, *The Labor of Words: Literary Professionalism in the Progressive Era* (Athens, Georgia, 1985), chap. 5; Robert M. Crunden, *Ministers of Reform: The Progressives' Achievement in American Civilization, 1889-1920* (Urbana, Illinois, 1984), chap. 6; Louis Filler, *Crusaders for American Liberalism* (Yellow Springs, Ohio, 1961), chap. 13.

7. Sinclair, *Autobiography*, 28-29, 76.

8. Crunden, *Ministers of Reform*, 168.

9. Sinclair, *Autobiography*, 101, 104; Upton Sinclair, "My Cause," *The Independent* 55 (May 14, 1903), 1122.

10. Sinclair, *Autobiography*, 93-97.

11. Sinclair, *American Outpost*, 137. This sentence was omitted from the *Autobiography*.

12. Sinclair, *Autobiography*, 108, 109; Harris, *Upton Sinclair*, 66-67; Bloodworth, *Upton Sinclair*, 45-47.

13. Sinclair, *Autobiography*, 109.

14. Hugh C. Weir, "Upton Sinclair—the Man of the Hour, A Recent Interview," *Human Life*, September 1906, 5.

15. Kent Kreuter and Gretchen Kreuter, *An American Dissenter: The Life of Algie Martin Simons, 1870-1950* (Lexington, Kentucky, 1969), 6-94; William A. Glazer, "Algie Martin Simons and Marxism in America," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 41 (December 1954), 419-429.

16. A.M. Simons, *Packingtown* (Chicago, 1899), 3, 5-6, 21-26, 36, 11-12.

17. *Ibid.*, 15, 17-18.

18. As a young man Smith participated in the Paris Commune and sided with French critics of Karl Marx. He collaborated with John Thomson on *Street Life in London* (1877), and his articles on abattoirs in Brussels and Berlin appeared in *Lancet*, December 17, 1892, and July 14, 21, 1894.

19. F.B. Smith, *The Retreat of Tuberculosis, 1850-1950* (London, 1988), 178-181; "Municipal Authorities and Public Slaughter-Houses," *The Sanitarian* 42 (February 1899), 97-105.

20. Sinclair, *Autobiography*, 110. Smith was designated "Our Special Sanitary Commissioner." The articles appeared in *Lancet*, January 7, 1905, 49-52; January 14, 1905, 120-123; January 21, 1905, 183-185; January 28, 1905, 258-260.

21. Truman Frederick Keefer, *Ernest Poole* (New York, 1966), 1-32; Ernest Poole, *The Bridge: My Own Story* (New York, 1940), chaps. 7-9.

22. Antanas Kaztauskis, "From Lithuania to the Chicago Stockyards—An Autobiography," *The Independent* 57 (August 4, 1904), 241-248; Poole, *The Bridge*, 95.

23. Poole, *The Bridge*, 95-96; Christine Scriabine, "Upton Sinclair and the Writing of *The Jungle*," *Chicago History* 10 (Spring 1981), 27-30.

24. Sinclair, *Autobiography*, 111; Sinclair to C.E. Russell, January 20, 1905 (C.E. Russell Papers, vol. I, Correspondence, Library of Congress). See also Judson A. Grenier, "Muckraking the Muckrakers: Upton Sinclair and His Peers," in David R. Colburn and George E. Pozzetta, eds., *Reform and Reformers in the Progressive Era* (Westport, Connecticut, 1983), 74.

25. Sinclair, *Autobiography*, 112.

26. *Ibid.*, 112-114.

27. *Ibid.*, 115-116; Sinclair, *Brass Check*, 32-33; Isaac F. Marcossou, *Adventures in Interviewing* (New York, 1919), 280-282; Wilson, *Labor of Words*, 137-138; Frank Nelson Doubleday, *The Memoirs of a Publisher* (Garden City, New York, 1972), 156-158; John Milton Cooper, Jr., *Walter Hines Page: The Southerner as American, 1855-1918* (Chapel Hill, 1977), 184-185.

28. Gene DeGruson, ed., *The Lost First Edition of Upton Sinclair's "The Jungle"* (Memphis and Atlanta, 1988), xv-xxvii; Suk Bong Suh, "Literature, Society, and Culture: Upton Sinclair and 'The Jungle'" (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Iowa, 1986), 117-131.

29. Marcossou, *Adventures*, 283-285, 287; Wilson, *Labor of Words*, 137-139; Suh, "Literature, Society, and Culture," 281-289. The May 1906 issue of *World's Work* carried "A Picture of Meat Inspection" by William K. Jacques, "The Unhealthfulness of Packingtown" by Caroline Hedger, and "The Failure of Government Inspection" by Thomas H. McKee. Advance copies of the articles were sent to President Roosevelt in April.

30. Sinclair, *Autobiography*, 121; Marcossou, *Adventures*, 287.

31. Sinclair, "Is 'The Jungle' True?" 1129; *Appeal*, March 4, 1905, quoted in Suh, "Literature, Society, and Culture," 180; *Appeal*, November 18, 1905, quoted in DeGruson, ed., *The Jungle*, xxi.

32. Upton Sinclair, "What Life Means to Me," *Cosmopolitan Magazine* 41 (October 1906), 594. See also Crunden, *Ministers of Reform*, 172-173.

33. Sinclair, *Autobiography*, 311.

34. *Ibid.*, 63.
35. *Ibid.*, 109.
36. Harvey Levenstein, *Revolution at the Table: The Transformation of the American Diet* (New York, 1988), chap. 3; Richard J. Hooker, *Food and Drink in America: A History* (Indianapolis, 1982), chaps. 15, 16; Susan Strasser, *Never Done: A History of American Housework* (New York, 1982), chap. 1.
37. Wade, *Chicago's Pride*, chaps. 3, 5, 6, 11, 12; Mary Yeager, *Competition and Regulation: The Development of Oligopoly in the Meat Packing Industry* (Greenwich, Connecticut, 1981), chaps. 1-5; Jimmy M. Skaggs, *Prime Cut: Livestock Raising and Meatpacking in the United States, 1607-1983* (College Station, Texas, 1986), chaps. 3-4; William Cronon, *Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West* (New York, 1991), Chap 5.
38. Finley Peter Dunne, *Mr. Dooley on Ivrything and Ivrybody*, selected by Robert Hutchinson (New York, 1963), 197.
39. Wade, *Chicago's Pride*, 55, 61, 82; U.S. Twelfth Census, 1900, VIII, Part II, 184-185; 43rd Annual Report of the Trade and Commerce of Chicago for Year Ending Dec. 31st, 1900 (Chicago, 1901), 44.
40. John Moody, *The Truth About the Trusts: A Description and Analysis of the American Trust Movement* (Chicago, 1904), 257-258; U.S. Bureau of Corporations, *Report on the Beef Industry* (Washington, D.C., 1905), 11.
41. Wade, *Chicago's Pride*, 90-92, 208; James Harvey Young, "'This Greasy Counterfeit': Butter Versus Oleomargarine in the United States Congress, 1886," *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 53 (1979), 392-414; Mitchell Okun, *Fair Play in the Marketplace: The First Battle for Pure Food and Drugs* (DeKalb, Illinois, 1986), chap. 11; U.S. Department of Agriculture, Division of Chemistry, Bulletin No. 13, *Food and Food Adulterants, Part One: Dairy Products* (Washington, D.C., 1887), 9-26. Dr. Harvey W. Wiley prepared this report.
42. "Cheaper Beef," *Harper's Weekly* 26 (October 21, 1882), 663; Wade, *Chicago's Pride*, 209-210; Skaggs, *Prime Cut*, 95-96; Yeager, *Competition and Regulation*, 99.
43. Wade, *Chicago's Pride*, 192, 212-213; Skaggs, *Prime Cut*, 83-84; U.S. Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Animal Industry, *Eighth and Ninth Annual Reports, 1891 and 1892* (Washington, D.C., 1893), 36-41; *Annual Report, 1906*, 70-77, 93-94; Fred Wilbur Powell, *The Bureau of Animal Industry: Its History, Activities and Organization* (Baltimore, 1927), 12-15.
44. Louise Carroll Wade, "Hell Hath No Fury Like a General Scorned: Nelson A. Miles, the Pullman Strike, and the Beef Scandal of 1898," *Illinois Historical Journal* 79 (Autumn 1986), 165; Edward F. Keuchel, "Chemicals and Meat: The Embalmed Beef Scandal of the Spanish-American War," *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 48 (Summer 1974), 252.
45. Wade, "Hell Hath No Fury," 174-182; Hermann Hagedorn, *Leonard Wood, A Biography* (2 vols., New York, 1931), I, 228-230; Keuchel, "Chemicals and Meat," 258-260.
46. Wade, "Hell Hath No Fury," 180-183; Keuchel, "Chemicals and Meat," 260-261; C.E.A. Winslow, *The Evolution and Significance of the Modern Public Health Campaign* (New Haven, 1923), 39-43; Young, *Pure Food*, 135-139.
47. Graham A. Cosmas, *An Army for Empire: The United States Army in the Spanish-American War* (Columbia, Missouri, 1971), 194. They have stuck in the minds of historians too. "The packers who supplied American soldiers fighting in Cuba had sold the army quantities of rotten and chemically adulterated meats . . . Colonel Teddy Roosevelt had seen more troops die from poisonous meats than from Spanish bullets." Davidson and Lytle, *After the Fact*, II, 242.
48. Floyd Dell, *Upton Sinclair: A Study in Social Protest* (New York, 1927), 106-107; Simons, *Packtown*, 40; Charles Edward Russell, *The Greatest Trust in the World* (New York, 1905), 211; Sinclair, *The Jungle*, 99; *Chicago Record-Herald*, May 29, 1906.
49. Russell, *Greatest Trust in the World*, 4; Sinclair, *The Jungle*, 112; Richard T. Ely, *Monopolies and Trusts* (New York, 1900), 1, 3, 54; Yeager, *Competition and Regulation*, xxii; and see Steven L. Piott, *The Anti-Monopoly Persuasion: Popular Resistance to the Rise of Big Business in the Midwest* (Westport, Connecticut, 1985), chaps. 4, 5.
50. Yeager, *Competition and Regulation*, 137-145, 181-190; Arthur M. Johnson, "Theodore Roosevelt and the Bureau of Corporations," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 45 (March 1959), 578-583; "Facts about Packers' Case," *Chicago Evening Post*, January 27, 1906; *Chicago Daily News*, March 21, 1906.
51. Young, *Pure Food*, chap. 5; Anderson, *Health of a Nation*, 120-125; Sullivan, *Our Times*, II, 483-501, 516-521; Okun, *Fair Play in the Marketplace*, chaps. 4-7; Thomas A. Bailey, "Congressional Opposition to Pure Food Legislation, 1879-1906," *American Journal of Sociology* 36 (July 1930), 52-64; R. James Kane, "Populism, Progressivism, and Pure Food," *Agricultural History* 38 (July 1964), 161-165.
52. Young, *Pure Food*, 139-145; Anderson, *Health of a Nation*, 135-136, 128; U.S. Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Chemistry, Bulletin No. 13, *Food and Food Adulterants, Part Ten: Preserved Meats* (Washington, D.C., 1902), 1440-1441, 1375, 1392, 1431, 1432, v, vi.

53. Young, *Pure Food*, 151-157; Anderson, *Health of a Nation*, 150-151; Crunden, *Ministers of Reform*, 186-187; U.S. Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Chemistry, Bulletin No. 84, *Influence of Food Preservatives and Artificial Colors on Digestion and Health* (Washington, D.C., 1904-1908).

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83. *Ibid.*, 48-52, 72-73, 103-104.

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86. Hunter, *Tenement Conditions in Chicago*, 182, 12; *Lancet*, January 7, 1905, 51, 52; *Lancet*, January 21, 1905, 183.

87. Hedger, "Unhealthfulness of Packingtown," 7507; Ethelbert Stewart, Manuscript Census of Back of the Yards, 1905 (Ethelbert Stewart Papers, Records of Bureau of Labor Statistics, National Archives), Number 100 and *passim*. Ernest Poole acknowledged improvement over time in housing by having his immigrant share a room with three other men when he first arrived, then move to a boarding house and, after his marriage, to a clean four-room flat with "flowers growing in boxes in the two front windows." [Poole] Kaztauskis, "From Lithuania to the Chicago Stock Yards," 245, 246, 248.

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