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**Review of *Slaughterhouse Blues: The Meat and Poultry Industry in North America* By Donald D. Stull and Michael J. Broadway**

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**Slaughterhouse Blues: The Meat and Poultry Industry in North America.** By Donald D. Stull and Michael J. Broadway. Belmont, CA: Thomson/Wadsworth, 2004. xx + 172 pp. Photographs, notes, bibliography, index. \$25.95 paper.

Stull and Broadway capture fifteen years' experience examining structural shifts and community consequences of an increasingly industrialized meat production system in North America, with particular attention to the meatpacking sector. Their impressive, wide-ranging coverage of changing beef, poultry, and pork production systems and their influence on rural cultures will no doubt be a staple resource for scholars, policy makers, and communities in the Great Plains and elsewhere grappling with dramatic changes in our nation's food system.

An initial chapter aptly outlines the contours of agricultural industrialization, followed by a chapter each devoted specifically to the three major meat sectors. The following two chapters detail the changing inner workings of the meatpacking sector, noting that despite significant technological transformations, the labor, class, and safety problems documented by Upton Sinclair a century earlier remain remarkably unchanged.

Chapters 7 and 8 report on the authors' involvement in a national Ford Foundation initiative to understand how immigrants and established communities adapt to each other. The authors were selected as one of five interdisciplinary teams to investigate ethnographically how host communities in metropolitan areas co-exist with growing populations of immigrants. In their case, the host community was Garden City, Kansas, host to a dramatic growth in immigrant laborers in response to the opening of the world's largest beef packing plant there in 1980. The next two decades of community change, struggle, and adaptation are documented, with particular attention to the authors' applied role in assisting communities to cope. Chapter 8 describes the lessons learned and how such lessons repeat themselves in packing plant communities throughout the Great Plains and Canada. Most notable are the consistent findings that packing plants bring reasonably predictable costs, problems, and challenges to host communities wherever they emerge. These costs stand in stark contrast to the opportunities and benefits unsurprisingly promoted by meatpacking companies themselves.

Perhaps the most intriguing dimension of their experience is Stull and Broadway's journey to find their role beyond that of researchers. Beckoned by

numerous communities soliciting their expertise, they find themselves subtly crossing the roles of researchers, policy experts, cultural brokers, and quasi-activists. In the final chapter, the authors justifiably argue for the emergence of a more sustainable agricultural system, though perhaps more concerted attention could have been devoted to how industrialized agricultural systems influence the power of centralized political systems. Nonetheless, their message is clear and persuasively presented, not only about the problems rural communities face, but the challenges faced by researchers who must assess their own roles in both understanding the shape of change, and shaping change itself. **Kendall M. Thu**, *Department of Anthropology, Northern Illinois University.*