

From Pureed Rats to Pure Food: How Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle* Sparked the Birth of the FDA and the Right for Safe, Clean Food

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Individual Paper

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My first idea for this year's topic was to do something related to the FDA (Food and Drug Administration). Needing to narrow it, I decided to choose between two major events: The Approval of the First Oral Contraceptive Pill, or the Approval of the First HIV/AIDS Antiretroviral Drug. Out of pure curiosity, I decided to look into why the FDA was created in the first place. Little did I know that this question would become the very focus of my topic. *The Jungle* protected the right of safe, clean food for United States citizens, ensuring the government would fulfill their responsibility to protect that right.

The first thing I learned about *The Jungle* was that it led to the development of the FDA, and the advancement of food safety in the United States. Consequently, to start my research, I thoroughly read *The Jungle* by Upton Sinclair. Afterwards, I went on to read about the Second Industrial Revolution, the Progressive Era, Muckrakers, and about the state of the meatpacking industry in the 20th century. To continue, I utilized the internet, finding many helpful sources. After that, I interviewed a former Senior Clinical Advisor for Chronic Disease to the FDA Commissioner. Since *The Jungle* focuses on the food and meatpacking industry, my historical paper's main focus will be on the FDA's impact on the food industry, not the drug or cosmetics aspect.

My thesis states: Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle* shed light on the state of the meatpacking industry in the United States, promoting improvements in food safety standards while protecting citizens' right to clean food and highlighting the responsibilities of the government to ensure these rights are upheld. The novel also demonstrates how investigative journalism can be at the forefront of a charge and hold powerful industries accountable, leading to societal and political progress. The lasting influence is evident even today, as the FDA upholds the public's right to safe food, fulfilling the government's responsibility to oversee food industries and safeguard

public health. My project shows how *The Jungle* played a key role in improving food safety laws by revealing the terrible conditions in the meatpacking industry. My argument is that Sinclair's novel led to government action, paving the way for the Pure Food and Drug Act and the Meat Inspection Act of 1906, which helps protect the rights of consumers. I would have added more about Sinclair's plans after *The Jungle* were, but unfortunately, had to cut them.

I decided to do an essay because of a rewarding experience from last year writing a historical paper. The year before that, I had another fulfilling experience doing an exhibit. Additionally, I thought I could best express myself by writing a historical paper.

My topic is important since it illustrates the right of people to safe and clean food and the government's responsibility to make sure the rights are achieved. The topic should be more widely recognized, as it proves that even some of the most basic rights cannot be taken for granted.

Essay:

“There would be meat stored in great piles in rooms, and the water from leaky roofs would drip over it and thousands of rats would race about it.”¹

One of the most basic rights for any living being is the right to clean food. But over 120 years ago, that right was far from guaranteed in the United States.

Upton Sinclair’s *The Jungle* shed light on the state of the meatpacking industry in the United States, prompting improvements in food safety standards while protecting citizens' right to clean food and highlighting the responsibilities of the government to ensure these rights are upheld, using investigative journalism to hold industries accountable, leading to societal and political progress. The lasting influence is evident today, as the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) upholds the public's right to safe food, fulfilling the government's responsibility to oversee food industries and safeguard public health.

The late 19th and early 20th centuries witnessed the Second Industrial Revolution and the Progressive Era. The Second Industrial Revolution lasted from 1870 to 1914 and was characterized by technological advancements, manufacturing, and distribution. This period was a time of change and expansion of the meat-packing industry in the United States. Assembly lines, railroads, and refrigerated trains shipped cattle from farms to be processed at more centralized locations. At the beginning of the 20th century, Chicago became the center of America’s meat-packing industry. Three companies dominated the nation’s meat industry: Armour Foods,

¹ Sinclair, Upton. *The Jungle*. The uncensored original edition. Project Gutenberg E-book. 2006. Page 335.

Morris & Company, and Swift Packing Company. In partnership with each other, these companies monopolized control over both the price of cattle and meat products.²

Technological advancements seen during the Second Industrial Revolution drove massive urbanization as new factory jobs attracted immigrants and rural Americans to cities. European immigrants fled religious and political persecution, crop failure, rising taxes, and land and job shortages.³ Most urban settlements did not have the necessary infrastructure to absorb the sudden inundation. People were compelled to live in slums, where unsanitary conditions, pollution, and overpopulation became blinding societal imperfections. Furthermore, corruption within local governments was rampant. Alongside laissez-faire capitalism, an economic philosophy of free-market capitalism that opposed government intervention,⁴ these cheaper and alternative forms of labor provided organizations with more profit, while the factory workers struggled to survive, widening the economic gap in America.

Additionally, corporations profited by cutting corners on safety, both for workers and consumers. Child labor, low wages, long working hours, and horrific injuries were all commonplace. Immigrant men worked in dimly lit, poorly ventilated rooms. They stood in blood and fetid water for hours, inhaling tuberculosis thriving in the damp air. Women and children worked in canning, sausage production, and meat cutting, where they also had to endure vile

² *Packers and Stockyards Overview – National Agricultural Law Center.*
<https://nationalaglawcenter.org/overview/packers-and-stockyards/>. Accessed 22 Feb. 2025.

³ “Immigration to the United States, 1851-1900 | Rise of Industrial America, 1876-1900 | U.S. History Primary Source Timeline | Classroom Materials at the Library of Congress | Library of Congress.” *Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. 20540 USA*,
<https://www.loc.gov/classroom-materials/united-states-history-primary-source-timeline/rise-of-industrial-america-1876-1900/immigration-to-united-states-1851-1900/>. Accessed 22 Feb. 2025.

⁴ “What Is a Laissez-Faire Economy, and How Does It Work?” *Investopedia*,
<https://www.investopedia.com/terms/l/laissezfaire.asp>. Accessed 22 Feb. 2025.

conditions. Zero ventilation, dangerously low temperatures, and exposure to toxic chemicals all pointed towards the neglect of workers' rights.

In response to the soot left on America by the Second Industrial Revolution, a social movement found its grip: Progressivism.⁵ The Progressive Era was a turn-of-the-century movement focused on social reform, improving human rights, curbing corruption caused by political machines, and limiting the influence of large corporations.⁶ It consisted of many different reform efforts including the improvement of living conditions, a reduction in government corruption, the regulation of big business, and women's suffrage via voting rights⁷

In the early 1900s, Progressives used investigative journalism by muckrakers. Muckrakers, a term used by President Theodore Roosevelt in 1906 refer to the investigative journalists who filled late nineteenth-century magazines with their stories, in which they exposed certain aspects of society.⁸ Roosevelt borrowed the phrase from John Bunyan's 1678 novel *The Pilgrim's Progress*.⁹

⁵ "How Gilded Age Corruption Led to the Progressive Era." *HISTORY*, 23 Aug. 2023, <https://www.history.com/news/gilded-age-progressive-era-reforms>.

⁶ Department Of State. The Office of Electronic Information, Bureau of Public Affairs. *The Progressive Movement and U.S. Foreign Policy, 1890-1920s*. 20 Aug. 2008, <https://2001-2009.state.gov/r/pa/ho/time/ip/108646.htm#:~:text=Department%20Archive%20Sites-,The%20Progressive%20Movement%20and%20U.S.%20Foreign%20Policy%2C%201890%2D1920s,political%20influence%20of%20large%20corporations>.

⁷ *The Progressives - Teach Democracy*. <https://teachdemocracy.org/election-central/the-progressives.html>. Accessed 6 Jan. 2025.

⁸ *TR Center - Muckraker*. <https://www.theodorerooseveltcenter.org/Learn-About-TR/TR-Encyclopedia/Culture%20and%20Society/Muckraker>. Accessed 13 May 2025.

⁹ *PBS Newshour Extra*. <https://www.journalisminaction.org/case/ida-tarbell-muckraker#:~:text=The%20term%20muckraking%20was%20coined,of%20honor%20for%20exposing%20misconduct>. Accessed 1 Apr. 2025.

These “muckrakers” sought to expose wrongdoings and called for reform. They also believed that government ordinance was essential to refine society.¹⁰ One of these muckrakers was author Upton Sinclair. Julius Wayland, editor of the journal *The Appeal to Reason*, offered to pay Sinclair \$500 for a story about the workers in Chicago’s stockyards.¹¹ Sinclair accepted, then convinced an editor at Macmillan, a publishing company, to expand the article into a novel based on the meatpacking industry in Chicago. Sinclair chose Chicago because it already had a reputation for being a dangerous and unethical place to work.¹² Additionally, the meatpacking industry was in desperate need of change. Even as the cost of cattle declined, meat prices were rising by an eye-popping rate: Anywhere from 28.6% to 111.6%.¹³ At the same time, companies violated the rights of their workers and misled the public about the safety and quality of their products, deflecting responsibility. If the public found out about these shocking conditions, it would spark outrage and push people toward supporting Progressive reforms. This would turn out to be a win for Socialists.

Moreover, the meat industry was already under fire due to the Spanish-American War. More soldiers died from eating spoiled meat than from enemy bullets. The army was even accused of serving “embalmed beef,” a term used for rotten meat preserved with formaldehyde.¹⁴

¹⁰ Khan Academy.

<https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/us-history/rise-to-world-power/age-of-empire/a/muckrakers>. Accessed 22 Feb. 2025.

¹¹ “Upton Sinclair.” *Spartacus Educational*, <https://spartacus-educational.com/Jupton.htm>. Accessed 22 Feb. 2025.

¹² “Dangers, Tensions Lurk in Meatpacking Industry.” *NBC News*, 24 Apr. 2006, <https://www.nbcnews.com/id/wbna12408159>.

¹³ B, Reed, Stephen. “One Hundred Years of Price Change: The Consumer Price Index and the American Inflation Experience.” *Bureau of Labor Statistics*, <https://www.bls.gov/opub/mlr/2014/article/one-hundred-years-of-price-change-the-consumer-price-index-and-the-american-inflation-experience.htm>. Accessed 13 May 2025.

¹⁴ January 27, and 2020 | Deborah Blum. “Gloom and Horror Unrelieved” | *American Experience* | PBS. <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/poison-squad-gloom-horror-unrelieved/>. Accessed 22 Feb. 2025.

When the government investigated, they concluded that the meat given to soldiers was no worse than what was being sold in grocery stores, a horrifying truth.¹⁵ Government oversight and responsibility was needed to protect the rights of people.

Sinclair went undercover in the Chicago Stockyards, lived in a settlement house, and searched for anyone who could give him information, collecting first-hand knowledge by posing as a worker.¹⁶ The result of Sinclair's investigative journalism was *The Jungle*. The novel follows a family from Lithuania, focusing on Jurgis Rudkus and his wife, Ona Lukoszaite. Rudkus and his family work in Packingtown, Chicago, and struggle to pay for their house. Rudkus breaks his ankle, misses two weeks, and is fired. Additionally, Rudkus loses his father, wife, and son in rapid succession. Traumatized and heartbroken, Rudkus leaves the city and becomes a tramp, wandering the countryside farms and earning money by working for farmers. Rudkus regains his health, returns to the city, attends a socialist rally, but eventually is imprisoned for attempted murder, battery and assault.

The serial version of *The Jungle* in *The Appeal to Reason* had few readers, causing it to be canceled, however, the novel was still set for publication.¹⁷ However, Macmillan was concerned about the sensational content and requested Sinclair to remove certain passages. Sinclair refused, causing Macmillan to cancel the contract. Sinclair finally received an acceptance from publishers Doubleday, Page and Company. *The Jungle* had a limited audience at

¹⁵ January 27, and 2020 | Deborah Blum. "Gloom and Horror Unrelieved" | *American Experience* | PBS. <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/poison-squad-gloom-horror-unrelieved/>. Accessed 22 Feb. 2025.

¹⁶ January 27, and 2020 | Deborah Blum. "Gloom and Horror Unrelieved" | *American Experience* | PBS. <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/poison-squad-gloom-horror-unrelieved/>. Accessed 22 Feb. 2025.

¹⁷ "7 Things You May Not Know About 'The Jungle.'" *HISTORY*, 18 Jan. 2022, <https://www.history.com/news/7-things-you-may-not-know-about-the-jungle>.

first, but it became a bestselling sensation when Doubleday, Page & Company published a revised version in February 1906, selling more than 150,000 copies in its first year.¹⁸

While Sinclair's goal was to draw attention to workers' exploitation and promote socialism, the book contributed more to food safety reforms. In fact, out of 838 pages, only fourteen talk about the meatpacking industry. *The Jungle* shocked the public by exposing the disgusting conditions of meatpacking plants, the dangers of tainted meat, and the failure of the government's responsibility to conduct inspections. Sinclair wrote: "The meat will be shoveled into carts and the man who did the shoveling will not trouble to lift out a rat even when he saw one."¹⁹ When *The Jungle* was released in February of 1906, its disturbing portrayal of the meat industry sparked outrage and demanded immediate action to protect the rights of the consumer.

The public's reaction to the gruesome details described in *The Jungle* was so intense that Ogden J. Armour, the head of Armour & Company, felt the need to defend his industry. In an editorial for the *Saturday Evening Post*, he denied Sinclair's accusations, stating, "In Armour & Co.'s business not one atom of any condemned animal or carcass finds its way, directly or indirectly, from any source, into any food product or food ingredient."²⁰ Despite these claims, *The Jungle* made its way to President Theodore Roosevelt, who had already prioritized food safety reform in his administration. However, Roosevelt was skeptical of Sinclair's work, not because of the conditions described but because of Sinclair's socialist agenda. Roosevelt strongly opposed socialism, and he also distrusted "muckrakers." In his speech *The Man with the*

¹⁸ "How Upton Sinclair's 'The Jungle' Led to US Food Safety Reforms." *HISTORY*, 10 May 2023, <https://www.history.com/news/upton-sinclair-the-jungle-us-food-safety-reforms>.

¹⁹ Sinclair, Upton. *The Jungle*. The uncensored original edition., See Sharp Press, 2003.

²⁰ Upton Sinclair's "The Jungle" · Undercover Reporting. https://undercover.hosting.nyu.edu/s/undercover-reporting/item-set/24?sort_by=numeric:timestamp:7&sort_order=asc. Accessed 22 Feb. 2025.

Muck-Rake, he criticized them, saying, “But the man who never does anything else, who never thinks or speaks or writes, save his feats with the muckrake, speedily becomes not a help to society, not an incitement to good, but one of the most potent forces for evil.”²¹ Roosevelt believed that muckrakers were damaging to society.

Despite his personal views, Roosevelt took action. He wrote to Sinclair, “But all this has nothing to do with the fact that the specific evils you point out shall, if their existence be proved, and if I have power, be eradicated.”²² To investigate Sinclair’s claims, Roosevelt ordered the Secretary of Agriculture, James Wilson, to inspect Chicago’s meatpacking plants. The investigation, lasting from March 12 to April 21, 1906, contradicted many of Sinclair’s allegations. However, Roosevelt remained unconvinced. He did not trust the meat industry and soon commissioned another inspection, led by Labor Commissioner Charles Neill and social worker James Reynolds. After an exhaustive ordeal, Neill and Reynolds not only confirmed Sinclair’s claims, they suggested that *The Jungle* had understated the severity of the problem:²³ “An absence of cleanliness was also found everywhere in the handling of meat being prepared for the various meat-food products.”²⁴

Outraged, Roosevelt considered publishing the report to the public, but he hesitated, worried that it would further damage the meat industry, which was already suffering a 50% drop

²¹ “Theodore Roosevelt, ‘The Man with the Muck-Rake,’ Speech Text.” *Voices of Democracy*, <https://voicesofdemocracy.umd.edu/theodore-roosevelt-the-man-with-the-muck-rake-speech-text/>. Accessed 22 Feb. 2025.

²² “Letter from Theodore Roosevelt to Upton Sinclair (1906).” *Teaching American History*, <https://teachingamericanhistory.org/document/to-upton-sinclair/>. Accessed 22 Feb. 2025.

²³ SmartSense. *Heroes of Food Safety: Upton Sinclair and the Meat Inspection Act of 1906*. <https://blog.smartsense.co/upton-sinclair-the-jungle>. Accessed 22 Feb. 2025.

²⁴ “The Neill-Reynolds Report.” *Stomaching America*, <https://82558588.weebly.com/the-neill-reynolds-report.html>. Accessed 13 May 2025.

in sales.²⁵ Instead, he used his responsibility as president to pressure Congress into passing stricter food safety regulations.

On June 4, 1906, Roosevelt submitted the Neill-Reynolds report to Congress, urging lawmakers to take action. He stated, “I therefore commend your favorable consideration... this amendment being commonly known as the ‘Beveridge Amendment [Federal Meat Inspection Act].”²⁶ The amendment passed in the Senate but faced opposition in the House of Representatives, where meat companies had significant political influence. In response, Roosevelt chose to release the Neill-Reynolds report to the public, leading to outrage and an even greater decline in meat exports. Political cartoons, such as *The Meat Market*, reflected the public’s disgust. In the cartoon, a butcher labeled “The Beef-Trust” stands over a counter with a knife, surrounded by tainted products like “embalmed sausages” and “deodorized ham.”²⁷ [See Appendix 1.]

In an attempt to regain public trust, eight major Chicago meatpacking companies issued a statement insisting “that their plants are kept clean, their methods of manufacturing are sanitary, their products wholesome” and that inspectors “who have made examinations of how the meatpacking plants are conducted, have been entirely satisfied in every instance with the conditions existing in this industry.”²⁸ Despite these claims, public pressure continued to grow.

²⁵ *June 4, 1906: Message Regarding Meatpacking Plants* | Miller Center. 20 Oct. 2016, <https://millercenter.org/the-presidency/presidential-speeches/june-4-1906-message-regarding-meatpacking-plants>.

²⁶ *June 4, 1906: Message Regarding Meatpacking Plants* | Miller Center. 20 Oct. 2016, <https://millercenter.org/the-presidency/presidential-speeches/june-4-1906-message-regarding-meatpacking-plants>.

²⁷ Hassmann, Carl. [*The Meat Market*]. 19060613, <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2011645899/>.

²⁸ *Fulbright’s U.S. History - Meat Packing Regulations - the Beveridge Amendment*. <https://sites.google.com/view/fulbrights-u-s-history/meat-packing-regulations-the-beveridge-amendment>. Accessed 22 Feb. 2025.

Finally, on June 30, 1906, Congress passed the Beveridge Amendment and the Pure Food and Drug Act, both of which Roosevelt signed into law.²⁹ By Sinclair utilizing his responsibility as a muckraker, combined with media attention and Roosevelt's push, the right for safe food was realized. *The Jungle* played a critical role in shaping modern food safety regulations and set a precedent for investigative journalism. The novel directly influenced the passage of the Beveridge Amendment, also called the Federal Meat Inspection Act and the Pure Food and Drug Act. The Federal Meat Inspection Act requires that "The Secretary [of Agriculture] shall cause an examination and inspection of all amenable species, and the food products," and that "all amenable species found on such inspection to show symptoms of disease shall be set apart and slaughtered separately."³⁰ These regulations helped establish federal oversight of the food industry, ensuring that the horrific conditions described in *The Jungle* would never happen again. Similarly, the Pure Food and Drug Act prohibited harmful food additives, food adulteration, and deceptive labeling. While the latter Act was effective, it did have some major flaws. The law required the government to prove that alleged offenders intended to deceive or poison consumers with their products, companies did not have to list ingredients, and it was impossible to prove adulteration in food. Public opinions such as these were very popular: "Government inspection is a farce. It is merely a formality that enable the companies to put a government label on goods

²⁹ Commissioner, Office of the. "Part I: The 1906 Food and Drugs Act and Its Enforcement." *FDA*, Apr. 2019. www.fda.gov, <https://www.fda.gov/about-fda/changes-science-law-and-regulatory-authorities/part-i-1906-food-and-drugs-act-and-its-enforcement>.

³⁰ Federal Meat Inspection Act, S. 59-382. <https://www.fsis.usda.gov/policy/food-safety-acts/federal-meat-inspection-act>.

and get more money from the public. This so-called inspection costs the people....4,000,000 yearly.”³¹

Since then, the Act has been amended multiple times over the years, most famously in 1938, closing these loopholes and others along the way. This legislation laid the foundation for the FDA, which now regulates food safety in the United States, replacing The Bureau of Chemistry in 1927.³² Today, the responsibility of the FDA is to continue inspecting food to ensure it meets safety standards. Additionally, the FDA is responsible for 80% of the food in the United States. The rest of the products, including the Meatpacking Industry, is checked by the USDA (The United States Department of Agriculture).

Although one of Sinclair’s goals was to expose the injustices of the meatpacking industry, he was frustrated that the public largely overlooked his advocacy for socialism. He was also underwhelmed by the lack of changes to protect the rights and prioritize the safety of employees. Sinclair hoped his novel would spark outrage about “wage slavery” and promote socialism as a solution.³³ Later, Sinclair would famously write that he "aimed at the public's heart, and by accident [he] hit it in the stomach."³⁴

³¹ Humanities, National Endowment for the. *The Day Book. [Volume] (Chicago, Ill.) 1911-1917, December 13, 1912, Image 9.* 13 Dec. 1912. chroniclingamerica.loc.gov, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83045487/1912-12-13/ed-1/seq-9/>.

³² Commissioner, Office of the. “FDA’s Origin.” *FDA*, Mar. 2019. www.fda.gov, <https://www.fda.gov/about-fda/changes-science-law-and-regulatory-authorities/fdas-origin>.

³³ “How Upton Sinclair’s ‘The Jungle’ Led to US Food Safety Reforms.” *HISTORY*, 10 May 2023, <https://www.history.com/news/upton-sinclair-the-jungle-us-food-safety-reforms>.

³⁴ SmartSense. *Heroes of Food Safety: Upton Sinclair and the Meat Inspection Act of 1906.* <https://blog.smartsense.co/upton-sinclair-the-jungle>. Accessed 22 Feb. 2025.

Sinclair pioneered journalistic activism alongside muckrakers like Jacob Riis and Ida Tarbell. Before the early 1900s, public opinion was against government regulation of business. However, journalists like Upton Sinclair, using their sense of civic responsibility, turned the public's attitude in favor of government intervention by revealing companies' unethical practices. In particular, the landmark passage of the Meat Inspection and Pure Food Act showed that books could influence politics by capturing the public's attention and insisting that the government uphold its responsibility to provide the American people with inspected, clean food. *The Jungle* had such profound repercussions on the public that the author Jack London compared it with *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, a novel that impacted attitudes toward slavery before the Civil War.³⁵

In conclusion, Upton Sinclair's publication of *The Jungle* in 1906 exposed the meatpacking industry in the United States, improving food quality while simultaneously protecting citizens' right to clean food and underscoring the responsibilities of the government to ensure these rights are enacted. The lasting influence is evident today, as the FDA still makes headlines for prohibiting and recalling products to further test the safety of these products to protect the rights of the United States and fulfill its responsibility. Overall, Sinclair's work emphasizes the importance of both the public's right to safe food and the government's responsibility to protect that right, showing how one individual's efforts can spark significant change and ensure lasting accountability in society. As former president Theodore Roosevelt put it: "The enactment of a pure food law was a recognition of the fact that the public welfare

³⁵ *Jack London: Burning Man Portrait of an American Socialist | Socialism & Democracy.*
<https://sdonline.org/issue/38/jack-london-burning-man-portrait-american-socialist#:~:text=Upton%20Sinclair%2C%20who%20had%20taken,Cabin%20did%20for%20chattel%20slavery>. Accessed 22 Feb. 2025.

outweighs the right to private gain, and that no man may poison the people for his private profit."³⁶

³⁶ *TR Center - TR Quotes*. <https://theodorerooseveltcenter.org/Learn-About-TR/TR-Quotes?page=138>. Accessed 13 May 2025.

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The Day Book. [Volume] (Chicago, Ill.) 1911-1917, December 13, 1912, Image 9. 13 Dec. 1912.
chroniclingamerica.loc.gov,
<https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83045487/1912-12-13/ed-1/seq-9/>.

This provided me with an article that provided a very negative approach to how the United States Government was handling the situation with the publication of both *The Jungle* and the Neill-Reynolds Report. I also used a quote from this newspaper. It showed an opposite point of view that the Pure Food and Drug Act was performative and not effective.

“Food Tragedies.” *Stomaching America*, <https://82558588.weebly.com/food-tragedies.html>.
Accessed 22 Feb. 2025.

This webpage gave me articles, advertisements, and letters from the 20th century. Additionally, it provided me with information about the controversies surrounding the Spanish-American War.

Hassmann, Carl. *[The Meat Market]*. 19060613, <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2011645899/>.

This source accounted for the revolting conditions of the meat given to both the army and grocery stores. Descriptions such as “embalmed meat” and letters from the military to congress were all provided from this source. Appendix 1 is also from this source.

Interview with FDA Employee (Anonymous). Conducted by Abhay Sharma. Email, 28 Mar. 2025.

While I did not use any quotes from this interview, this person who wishes to remain anonymous was able to share his insights on the FDA. This person also gave me some current statistics that I was unfortunately not able to use. They were also able to provide me with an insider type of information that gave me a broader view of how the FDA actually works.

Jack London: Burning Man Portrait of an American Socialist | Socialism & Democracy.
<https://sdonline.org/issue/38/jack-london-burning-man-portrait-american-socialist#:~:text=Upton%20Sinclair%2C%20who%20had%20taken,Cabin%20did%20for%20chattel%20slavery>. Accessed 22 Feb. 2025.

This article explained the immediate impact *The Jungle* had on Sinclair’s life: the fame, the money, and the influence on American Society. It also featured letters from Jack London to Upton Sinclair and vice versa. London’s letter to Sinclair boasted of compliments about his book.

June 4, 1906: Message Regarding Meatpacking Plants | Miller Center. 20 Oct. 2016,
<https://millercenter.org/the-presidency/presidential-speeches/june-4-1906-message-regarding-meatpacking-plants>.

This website contained the letter that Theodore Roosevelt had sent to Congress, urging them to seriously consider the bill. With its immaculately gruesome details, and with each paragraph, the truth about the meatpacking industry is disclosed.

“Letter from Theodore Roosevelt to Upton Sinclair (1906).” *Teaching American History*, <https://teachingamericanhistory.org/document/to-upton-sinclair/>. Accessed 22 Feb. 2025.

This website had the letter President Roosevelt had sent to Sinclair. While Roosevelt was grateful for exposing the meat industry, he frowned upon Sinclair’s political viewpoints, even going as far as to calling him a “crackpot.”

Meat Inspection Act of 1906, 34 Stat. 674, enacted 30 June 1906. U.S. Government Publishing Office, <https://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?flash=false&doc=71>.

This Act, which included the Beveridge Amendment, mandated meat inspections by the Federal Government. *The Jungle* is stated to be one of the primary inspirations for this act, paving the way for quality meat and other foods, which is a human right. It was closely associated with the Pure Food and Drug Act, also passed in 1906.

"Muckraker." *Theodore Roosevelt Center*, Dickinson State University, <https://www.theodorerooseveltcenter.org/Learn-About-TR/TR-Encyclopedia/Culture%20and%20Society/Muckraker>. Accessed 13 May 2025.

This source provided me with some speeches on former president Roosevelt, examples of how, when, and where he used the word “muckraker.” It also had part of Roosevelt’s famous speech “*The Man with the Muck-Rake*.”

Neill, Charles P., and James Bronson Reynolds. *The Neill-Reynolds Report*. 1906. *Hearings on the So-Called "Beveridge Amendment"*, U.S. Government Printing Office, 1906.

This was the original report, containing all of the answers to Roosevelt’s questions about *The Jungle*.

“Part I: The 1906 Food and Drugs Act and Its Enforcement.” *FDA*, Apr. 2019. [www.fda.gov, https://www.fda.gov/about-fda/changes-science-law-and-regulatory-authorities/part-i-1906-food-and-drugs-act-and-its-enforcement](https://www.fda.gov/about-fda/changes-science-law-and-regulatory-authorities/part-i-1906-food-and-drugs-act-and-its-enforcement).

The FDA’s own website, it provided me inside information about the Food And Drug acts. After looking into this article, I had a much deeper understanding of the Pure Food and Drug Act.

Pure Food and Drug Act of 1906, 34 Stat. 768. 1906. *U.S. Government Printing Office*.

This was the first step taken towards food safety reforms, along with the Meat Inspection Act.. Though it has been amended many times, it is still and always will be remembered as one of the best acts made in the history of the USA. *The Jungle* was the impetus for the passing of this Act, which changed how food was viewed in the United States, including putting the onus of responsibility on the food industry.

Sinclair, Upton. *The Jungle*. The uncensored original edition., Project Gutenberg ebook, 2006

My very best primary source, *The Jungle* exposes the United States meatpacking industry. The book also shows what it was like to be an immigrant who was looked down upon in society. Without this groundbreaking book, it is unlikely that the Meat Inspection Act, Pure Food and Drug Act and modern FDA would have been prioritized. It drew national attention to conditions of meat packing plants, horrifying readers, leading to immense societal reform.

“Theodore Roosevelt, ‘The Man with the Muck-Rake,’ Speech Text.” *Voices of Democracy*, <https://voicesofdemocracy.umd.edu/theodore-roosevelt-the-man-with-the-muck-rake-speech-text/>. Accessed 22 Feb. 2025.

This source had Roosevelt’s entire speech “The Man with the Muck-Rake,” and I was able to use many quotes from this. Throughout the speech, Roosevelt doesn’t hide his disdain for the muckrakers.

"TR Quotes." *Theodore Roosevelt Center*, Dickinson State University, <https://theodorerooseveltcenter.org/Learn-About-TR/TR-Quotes?page=138>. <https://theodorerooseveltcenter.org/Learn-About-TR/TR-Quotes?page=138>. Accessed 13 May 2025.

This provided me with many empowering quotes said by Theodore Roosevelt. One of them was the quote at the very end of my historical paper.

Upton Sinclair’s “*The Jungle*” · *Undercover Reporting*. https://undercover.hosting.nyu.edu/s/undercover-reporting/item-set/24?sort_by=numeric:timestamp:7&sort_order=asc. Accessed 22 Feb. 2025.

This article had Ogden J. Armour’s quotes in the Saturday Evening Post, in which he defended his industry. Unfortunately, for Armour, after the release of the Neills-Reynolds report, his reputation as an honest businessman was ruined.

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. "One Hundred Years of Price Change: The Consumer Price Index and the American Inflation Experience." *Monthly Labor Review*, U.S. Department of Labor, 2014, <https://www.bls.gov/opub/mlr/2014/article/one-hundred-years-of-price-change-the-consumer-price-index-and-the-american-inflation-experience.htm>.

This source provided me with statistics, photographs, and newspapers, all describing the eye-popping inflation on meat products in the early 20th century.

U.S. Food and Drug Administration. *FDA*. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, <https://www.fda.gov>. Accessed 3 Mar. 2025.

This is the FDA webpage. Almost all information can be found here.

Secondary Sources:

“7 Things You May Not Know About ‘The Jungle.’” *HISTORY*, 18 Jan. 2022,
<https://www.history.com/news/7-things-you-may-not-know-about-the-jungle>.

This History.com article was one of my first sources, and also turned out to be one of the most helpful ones. I learned many things, even if they didn’t make the cut. It also provided me with some basic information on major topics, which I eventually researched with other sources and books.

Blum, Deborah. “*Gloom and Horror Unrelieved*” | *American Experience* | PBS.
<https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/poison-squad-gloom-horror-unrelieved/>. Accessed 22 Feb. 2025.

This article gave me an additional insight about the embalmed meat in the Spanish American War. Understanding this aspect of the Spanish American War offered a deeper perspective on the challenges faced by the U.S. military at the time and the impact of supply chain decisions during wartime.

Commissioner, Office of the. “FDA’s Origin.” *FDA*, Mar. 2019. www.fda.gov,
<https://www.fda.gov/about-fda/changes-science-law-and-regulatory-authorities/fdas-origin>.

One of my sources from the FDA’s website, I was able to dive deeper into the question “why was the FDA created?” Additional sources for further research and reading are also provided at the end of this article.

“Dangers, Tensions Lurk in Meatpacking Industry.” *NBC News*, 24 Apr. 2006,
<https://www.nbcnews.com/id/wbna12408159>.

This article helped me understand why Sinclair chose to go to Chicago. This source also gave me a few statistics from both the time of *The Jungle*, and the improvements afterwards.

Department Of State. The Office of Electronic Information, Bureau of Public Affairs. *The Progressive Movement and U.S. Foreign Policy, 1890-1920s*. 20 Aug. 2008,
<https://2001-2009.state.gov/r/pa/ho/time/ip/108646.htm#:~:text=Department%20Archive%20Sites-,The%20Progressive%20Movement%20and%20U.S.%20Foreign%20Policy%2C%201890%2D1920s,political%20influence%20of%20large%20corporations>

This source gave me a brief overview of The Progressive Movement. It highlighted the efforts to address issues such as corruption, labor rights, women's suffrage, and the regulation of big businesses.

Fulbright’s U.S. History - Meat Packing Regulations - the Beveridge Amendment.
<https://sites.google.com/view/fulbrights-u-s-history/meat-packing-regulations-the-beveridge-amendment>. Accessed 22 Feb. 2025.

This source helped me understand what the meatpacking regulations were during the early 20th century. The article also detailed how the requirement and management changed drastically due

to the establishment of key regulations such as the Meat Inspection Act and the Pure Food and Drug Act.

“How Gilded Age Corruption Led to the Progressive Era.” *HISTORY*, 23 Aug. 2023, <https://www.history.com/news/gilded-age-progressive-era-reforms>.

This source gave me information about The Second Industrial Revolution, The Progressive Era, and the state of the United States economy during that time period. It explained how the rapid advancements in technology and industry during the late 19th and early 20th centuries transformed the economy, spurring growth but also leading to significant social and labor challenges.

“How Upton Sinclair’s ‘The Jungle’ Led to US Food Safety Reforms.” *HISTORY*, 10 May 2023, <https://www.history.com/news/upton-sinclair-the-jungle-us-food-safety-reforms>.

This webpage gave me a brief overview of *The Jungle* and all the effects it led to to improve the United States meat industry. The source also explained how this led to significant reforms, including the Meat Inspection Act and the Pure Food and Drug Act, which helped establish regulations to ensure safer meat production and improve food safety standards across the country.

"Ida Tarbell: Muckraker." *Journalism in Action*, PBS NewsHour Extra, <https://www.journalisminaction.org/case/ida-tarbell-muckraker#:~:text=The%20term%20muckraking%20was%20coined,of%20honor%20for%20exposing%20misconduct>.

I was interested in finding out why and how “muckrakers” got their name. This article also contained some information about both John Bunyan and Theodore Roosevelt.

“Ida M. Tarbell Progressive Reform Movement.” *Bill of Rights Institute*, <https://billofrightsinstitute.org/essays/ida-m-tarbells-crusade-against-standard-oil/>. Accessed 22 Feb. 2025.

This article gave me all the basic information about Ida Tarbell and the Rockefeller Company. From the start of the scramble for oil in the 1850’s, to the rise of the Rockefeller Company, this webpage had it all.

“Immigration to the United States, 1851-1900 | Rise of Industrial America, 1876-1900 | U.S. History Primary Source Timeline | Classroom Materials at the Library of Congress | Library of Congress.” *Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. 20540 USA*, <https://www.loc.gov/classroom-materials/united-states-history-primary-source-timeline/rise-of-industrial-america-1876-1900/immigration-to-united-states-1851-1900/>. Accessed 22 Feb. 2025.

This helped me understand why there was such a huge increase in immigration from 1851-1900. It highlighted key factors such as economic opportunities, political unrest, and social changes that attracted people to new lands during this period.

"Muckrakers." *Khan Academy*,
<https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/us-history/rise-to-world-power/age-of-empire/a/muckrakers>. Accessed 22 Feb. 2025.

This article gave me a quick overview of what muckrakers and the Progressive Era was about. It also had additional sources for further reading and research.

Packers and Stockyards Overview – National Agricultural Law Center.
<https://nationalaglawcenter.org/overview/packers-and-stockyards/>. Accessed 22 Feb. 2025.

This website helped me understand why the meatpacking industry was so corrupt. It also helped me understand how the industry was able to get away with so many crimes against workers rights.

SmartSense. *Heroes of Food Safety: Upton Sinclair and the Meat Inspection Act of 1906*.
<https://blog.smartsense.co/upton-sinclair-the-jungle>. Accessed 22 Feb. 2025.

This source helped me understand the Neills-Reynolds report. Some unsung heroes of the food safety reform era in the United States, such as Harvey Wiley, who lamentably, did not make the Final Cut in my historical paper.

"Upton Sinclair." *Spartacus Educational*, <https://spartacus-educational.com/Jupton.htm>.
Accessed 22 Feb. 2025.

This website had information on Sinclair's life. While it did help with providing information about *The Jungle* and the Progressive Era, it mainly focuses on Sinclair's childhood and upbringing.

"What Is a Laissez-Faire Economy, and How Does It Work?" *Investopedia*,
<https://www.investopedia.com/terms/l/laissezfaire.asp>. Accessed 22 Feb. 2025.

This article gives a quick overview of what a Laissez-Faire Economy is, and helped grow my understanding of that type of economy. After reading this, I delved deeper into it, and how it worked in the early 20th century.

Appendix

Appendix 1

“The Beef-Market”



