

# **THE PROGRESSIVE ERA AND THE MUCKRAKERS**

## **DO NOW: IN 1900**

**Directions: Analyze the facts projected on the board and answer to the question below.**

***Based on the facts shown, what can we learn about America?***

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**AIM:**

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## **THINK ABOUT IT!**

***You are the mayor of your city. Many of your friends helped you during your campaign, and you got the job partly through their efforts. It is time to hire people for prominent city positions. Do you hire your friends, who now need jobs, or do you hire people who are possibly more qualified? Explain your answer.***

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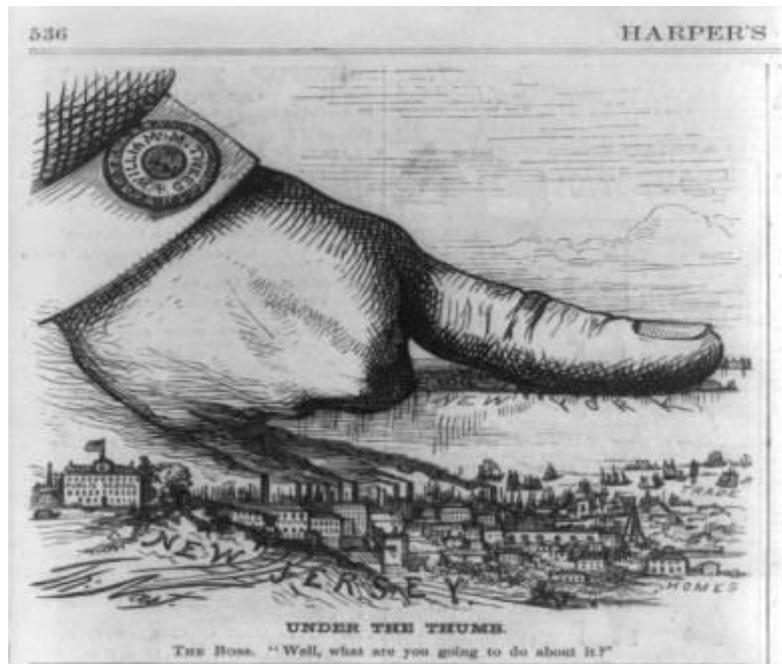
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## **BOSS TWEED AND THE POLITICAL MACHINE**

In the late 1860s, William M. Tweed was the political boss of New York City's Democratic political machine. His headquarters was known as Tammany Hall. He orchestrated elections, controlled the city's mayor, and rewarded political supporters. His primary source of funds came from the bribes and kickbacks that he demanded in exchange for city contracts. The most notorious example of urban corruption was the construction of the New York County Courthouse, begun in 1861. Officially, the city wound up spending nearly \$13 million--roughly \$178 million in today's dollars--on a building that should have cost several times less. Its construction cost nearly twice as much as the purchase of Alaska in 1867. When a committee investigated why it took so long to build the courthouse, it spent \$7,718 (\$105,000) to print its report. The printing company was owned by Tweed. The corruption was breathtaking in its breadth and brazenness. A carpenter was paid \$360,751 (roughly \$4.9 million today) for one month's labor in a building with very little woodwork. A furniture contractor received \$179,729 (\$2.5 million) for three tables and 40 chairs.

**Boss-rule, machine politics, payoff and graft, and the spoils system outraged late 19th -early 20<sup>th</sup> century reformers. Many people were granted jobs for political support.**



## **MUCKRAKERS**

**DISCUSS: Is the media or the public a stronger force in achieving reform in the US today?**

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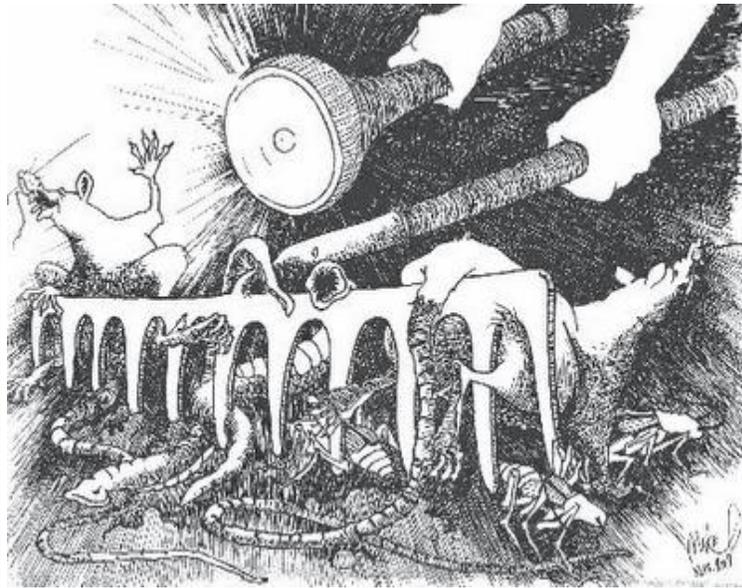
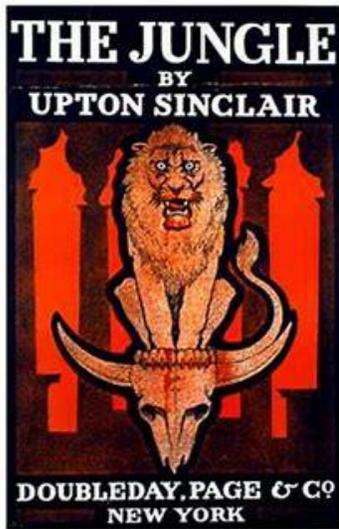
***Explain. What does it mean when a reporter "digs up the dirt" on someone or something?***

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## THE JUNGLE- UPTON SINCLAIR



### CONDITIONS IN THE MEAT PACKING INDUSTRY

One of the most famous muckrakers, Upton Sinclair, wrote a scathing book about the meatpacking industry called *The Jungle*.

...There was never the least attention paid to what was cut up for sausage; there would come all the way back from Europe old sausage that had been rejected, and that was moldy and white – it would be dosed [doused] with [the chemicals] borax and glycerine, and dumped into the hoppers [tanks], and made over again for home consumption. There would be meat that had tumbled out on the floor, in the dirt and sawdust, where the workers had tramped and spit uncounted billions of consumptions [tuberculosis] germs. There would be meat stored in great piles..., and thousands of rats would race about on it. It was too dark in these storage places to see well, but a man could run his hands over these piles of meat and sweep handfuls of the dried dung of rats. These rats ere nuisances, and the packers would put poisoned bread out for them; they would die, and then rats, bread, and meat would go into the hoppers together. ...

## MUCKRAKER CASE STUDIES

Imagine you and 3 additional students are the publishers for one famous muckraking journalist during the Progressive Era. First, read about your assigned muckraker. Then, create an advertisement where you promote your client's writings. This ad should include:

- **The title of the article/book**
- **The complaints of the author**
- **Possible solutions or reforms that address the issues raised in the article/book**
- **A slogan/headline**
- **Color**
- **At least one image – drawn not Internet-based**

At the end of the activity, each group will present their advertisement to the class. The students watching will fill in the graphic organizer below. Be sure to be as thorough as possible since there will be no additional notes on these muckrakers.

<u>MUCKRAKER</u>	<u>TITLE OF WORK</u>	<u>FOUGHT AGAINST</u>
<b>Upton Sinclair</b>		
<b>Ida Tarbell</b>		
<b>Jacob Riis</b>		

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Lincoln Steffens</b>		
<b>David Graham Phillips</b>		

**Answer Aim:**