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Visit Events & Experiences Education Preserving Ohio Get Involved Research HomeThe Progressive EraMuckrakers The term Muckraker was used in the Progressive Era. It referred to a group of journalists who exposed corrupt institutions and leaders. In the modern age, we call them investigative journalists. During the Progressive era, the Muckraker magazines especially the McClure took on large corporates and political groups. They also tried to raise awareness among the public regarding the poverty, child labor and prostitution. Modern investigative journalists consider Muckrakers to be early influencer's and regard them to be a part of watchdog journalism. Origin of the term In 1901 President Roosevelt took office and began managing the press. He organized various press conferences. However, the Muckrakers who had emerged around the 1900s were not easy to handle. Despite all of this, he still efficiently used them and tried to gain support for his Square Deal. When the journalists showed interest in other topics, Roosevelt became agitated and stated that they were floundering in the mud. On April 14th, 1906, he gave a speech in which he referred to John Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress. He both highlighted the pitfalls and the benefits of the investigative writing. This was the start of the term Muckraker. Many journalists hated the term and regarded it as derogatory. It was eventually associated with investigative journalists who exposed frauds, graffiti, waste and public health, issues etc. History Although traces of the reforms could already be seen in the world of journalism, the true form of Muckraking emerged in the 1900s. During this period the magazines such as Collier's Weekly, Munsey's Magazine and McClure's Magazine had already become quite popular. The January 1903 issue of McClure was the start of the Muckraking era. Ida M. Tarbell, Lincoln Steffens and Ray Baker published three different stories in the same issue. In 1902 McClure had published another story called Tweed Days in St. Louie it is regarded as the first Muckraking article. Claude H. Wetmore and Lincoln Steffens were its authors. Changes in Journalism before the Muckrakers The Muckrakers appeared right at the time when the Journalism world was going through changes. To counter Yellow journalism, which focused on exaggeration and sensationalism, objective journalism emerged. A perfect example of this was The New York Times, which was managed by Adolph Ochs. It concentrated on reporting facts and remained impartial. The advancement in wire service also helped in spreading the objective reporting style. Along with this, various other writers such as Nellie Bly, Julius Chambers, Ida B. Wells and B. O. Flower also took on serious topics as well. The McClure Magazine The magazine was Muckraking's primary outlet. On May 1893 Samuel S. McClure and John Sanborn Phillips launched McClure Magazine. They lowered their prices to 15 cents, attracted advertisers, added illustrations and provided good content. After a while, when the magazine became popular, they raised their prices. The McClure searched and founded talented writers. Examples can be taken of Ida M. Tarbell, Lincoln Steffens Burton J. Hendrick, George Kennan, John Moody, Henry Reuterahl, George Kibbe Turner, and Judson C. Welliver, etc. Other famous Magazines Other famous magazines associated with Muckraker movement are American Magazine, Arena, Collier's Weekly, Cosmopolitan, Everybody's Magazine, Hampton's, Outlook, Twentieth Century and World's Work. Famous Muckrakers Ray Baker, Lincoln Steffen, Ida Tarbell, Upton Sinclair, Samuel Hopkins Adams, David Graham Phillips, Louis D. Brandeis, Charles Edward Russell, John Spargo, John Kenneth Turner, Drew Pearson and Gustavus Myers, etc. are some of the most well-known Muckrakers in the American history. Their work brought a massive revolution and exposed many corrupt officials. Famous publications The McClure Magazine published the Right to Work article in 1903. It focused on the conditions of the coal mine, coal strike and the working conditions of the scab. According to the author, the scabs were simple farmers who had no knowledge about mining and worked in extremely harsh conditions. The Tweed Days in St. Louie was published in 1902 and is regarded as the first Mackracker article. It exposed the corrupt officials of the St. Louie. The Rise of the Standard Oil company was published in 1902. It focused on the manipulation of the trusts. The author criticized Rockefeller's for his ruthless business tactics. Along with the various other publications such as The Great American Fraud, The Treason of Senate and The Story of Life Insurance, etc. left their mark on the world. Impact The Muckrakers had a significant impact on the American society. Due to their efforts, new legislations were introduced. They destroyed the Standard Oil company's monopoly. In 1906 the Pure Food and Drug Act was established. Around 1916 USA's first Child Labor Act was created. Their investigation revealed that bribery and corruption were not only taking place at the state level but in the congress as well, which led to a complete change in the election results. Along with this reorganization also took place in the army and changes were made in the Senate's electoral system as well. Disappearance The influence of the Muckrakers began to dwindle during the reign of the William Howard Taft. The advertisement boycotts resulted in the magazines going bankrupt; this made it easy for the Corporations and the political figures to silence the Muckraker journalists. However, the most crucial factor behind the Muckrakers disappearance was their success. Many reforms had already taken place. Monopolies such as the Standard Oil had fallen apart and the political machines were destroyed. The problems that the Muckrakers had highlighted were resolved. As such, the era of Muckrakers had come to an end; there was no need for them anymore. Modern views regarding Muckraking and major cases that occurred In the modern age, people use Investigative Journalism synonymous to the Muckraking. Most of the Journalist textbook agree that McClure's Muckraking standard are similar to the contemporary investigative journalism. Majority of the modern Journalists draw inspiration from the Muckrakers, and they have also become an essential part of American history as well. Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein exposed the Nixon Administration at Watergate, which resulted in Nixon's resignation. Recently, Edward Snowden also revealed how the government was making use of illegal methods to spy on its citizens. Conclusion So, in conclusion, the Mackrakers brought a great deal of change in the world of Journalism. They were different from the yellow journalism, which focused on creating sensations and did not want to change anything. The Muckrakers truly wanted to reform society, and now their torch has been passed on to modern-day journalists. The Progressive Era 19th Amendment Muckrakers Women's Suffrage Share — copy and redistribute the material in any medium or format for any purpose, even commercially. Adapt — remix, transform, and build upon the material for any purpose, even commercially. The licensor cannot revoke these freedoms as long as you follow the license terms. Attribution — You must give appropriate credit , provide a link to the license, and indicate if changes were made . You may do so in any reasonable manner, but not in any way that suggests the licensor endorses you or your use. ShareAlike — If you remix, transform, or build upon the material, you must distribute your contributions under the same license as the original. No additional restrictions — You may not apply legal terms or technological measures that legally restrict others from doing anything the license permits. You do not have to comply with the license for elements of the material in the public domain or where your use is permitted by an applicable exception or limitation. No warranties are given. The license may not give you all of the permissions necessary for your intended use. For example, other rights such as publicity, privacy, or moral rights may limit how you use the material. Recommended: Muckrakers influence in progressive era The Muckrakers, were investigative journalist who succeeded to exposed the social ills of citizens and corruption of both corparation and politics, and they had a huge impact on the success of the Progressive movement. Without the muckrakers the progressive movement would have not achieved the well-known status they had. These crusading journalists exposed bribery and corruption at city and state level, as well as in Congress. They called attention to the exploitation of child labor, the revulsion turp of lynching, and the cruel business practices employed by capitalists. The muckraker's journalism resulted in legislations and reforms that had long-lasting effects. Magazines were the leading channels for muckraking. Samuel S. McClure and John Sanborn Phillips started the bestselling McClure's Magazine in May 1893, which stood up against corporate monopolies and crooked politicians, while exposing the terrible working and living ...show more content... He intended to show the public the horrifying effects capitalism had on workers in the Chicago meatpacking industry. He hoped his exposing would cause reforms. In his book, Sinclair described how workers labored long hours in cold, and cramped conditions. How they caught diseases, lost fingers, nails, and even limbs by acid, and unsanitary locations. However the public's outcry was more focused on Sinclair uncovering of the products being sold to the general public, rather than workers plight. The reason for this is because The Jungle described how the meat packing industry produced spoiled meat that they covered with chemicals, had rats inside their warehouses that left piles of excrement everywhere, and skin, hair, stomach, ears, and nose were ground up and packaged as cheese. Within months of Sinclair's book being published, Congress passed the Pure Food and Drug Act and the Meat Inspection Act to stop these shocking and appalling Visit Events & Experiences Education Preserving Ohio Get Involved Research In summary, during the Progressive Era, which lasted from around 1900 to 1917, muckraking journalists successfully exposed America's problems brought on by rapid industrialization and growth of cities. Influential muckrakers created public awareness of corruption, social injustices and abuses of power. Overview, Muckrakers were journalists and novelists of the Progressive Era who sought to expose corruption in big business and government. The work of muckrakers influenced the passage of key legislation that strengthened protections for workers and consumers. Why were muckrakers important during the Progressive Era? They helped to increase the public's awareness of troubling issues in society. The muckrakers played a highly visible role during the Progressive Era. Muckraking magazines—notably McClure's of the publisher S. S. McClure—took on corporate monopolies and political machines, while trying to raise public awareness and anger at urban poverty, unsafe working conditions, prostitution, and child labor. Terms in this set (5) Industrialization. Unions, children, working rights. Growing cities. Overpop, sanitation, political bosses. Influx of immigrants. . Rise of managerial class. Husbands of middle class ladies who are leading the movement. Economic depression. As with every crisis the question is how to fix it. Who were the 3 main muckrakers? Muckrakers were a group of writers, including the likes of Upton Sinclair, Lincoln Steffens, and Ida Tarbell, during the Progressive era who tried to expose the problems that existed in American society as a result of the rise of big business, urbanization, and immigration. Who were muckrakers and what effect did they have on reform? Journalists that exposed the troubling issues such as child labor and racial discrimination, slum housing and corruption in business and politics. Through the exposing of these acts, many learned of the corruption and insisted on reform. The investigative techniques of the muckrakers included poring over documents, conducting countless interviews, and going undercover. This differed from yellow journalism, where some leading newspapers sensationalized stories using imagination rather than facts. The main objectives of the Progressive movement were addressing problems caused by industrialization, urbanization, immigration, and political corruption. Social reformers were primarily middle-class citizens who targeted political machines and their bosses. These famous muckrakers of their day helped expose issues and corruption in America between 1890 and the start of World War I. Jacob Riis, Jacob A. ... Ida B. Wells, ... Florence Kelley, ... Ida Tarbell, ... Ray Stannard Baker, ... Upton Sinclair, ... Lincoln Steffens, ... John Spargo, 21st Century Muckrakers Watchdogging Public Corruption: A Newspaper Unearths Patterns of Costly Abuse. ... Rotting Meat, Security Documents, and Corporal Punishment. ... Reporting Time and Resources Reveal a Hidden Source of Pollution. ... Navigating Through the Biofuels Jungle. intransitive verb : to search out and publicly expose real or apparent misconduct of a prominent individual or business. Theodore Roosevelt coined the term "muckraker" during a speech in 1906. He compared investigative reporters to the narrow-minded figure in John Bunyan's 17th-century religious fable, "The Pilgrim's Progress": the "man that could look no way but downwards, with a muckrake in his hand." Where Have All the Muckrakers Gone? Sure, there are writers doing impassioned investigative work today. ... Muckrakers such as Lincoln Steffens and Ida Tarbell wrote for mass-market magazines. They turned local issues into national issues, local protests into national crusades. Muckrakers exposed problems like political corruption, child labor, and safety issues with workers. Their work increased support for progressivism, which, in the long run, helped end child labor, get a shorter workweek, and improve the lives of the poor. Why was the work of the muckraker so effective in bringing about reform? Their work was so effective because their sensational account were published widely, and widely read by millions of Americans. Reform writers used newspaper articles, novels, and books to write about issues like political corruption, industrial monopolies, and unfair labor practices. One of the best-known muckraking journalists of the early 20th century was Lincoln Steffens. Upton Sinclair. One of the most famous muckrakers is Upton Sinclair, author of "The Jungle. Ida Tarbell. Another famous muckraker is Ida Tarbell, author of "This History of the Standard Oil Company. Who were muckrakers? They were journalists (writers for newspapers and magazines) who exposed the dirt, corruption, and ills of American society. He exposed factory conditions. Terms in this set (5) Industrial Revolution, Child Labor, Racial Inequality, Unsafe food, and Working Conditions. Progressive Movement Excesses of the Gilded Age. Poor working conditions of American labor (workers) Low standard of living of American labor. What caused, or brought about a need for, a Progressive Era? The growth of cities and industries, plus urbanization, contributed. ... The progressives mostly grew up in cities and were college educated. In today's era where newspapers and magazines are rife with sensational headline-making news, celebrity gossips, and super long ads, a piece of investigative journalism amid all of this noise is certainly a welcome relief. The roots of investigative journalists (informally called muckrakers) go back to the Progressive Era that was roughly from 1900 to 1917. Who Were the Muckrakers? Source = Allposters 'Muckrakers' was an informal term that was used for those journalists who strived to expose wrongdoings, dig up the truth and raise awareness about the socio-economic and political issues prevalent in America. With a spirit of bringing about reform and grabbing the public's attention, the sensational news stories and jaw-dropping articles covered by such journalists investigated and revealed the malpractices in society. However, in British English, the term 'muckraker' is used in a derogatory sense. More often, it refers to a journalist (often in a tabloid newspaper) who specializes in scandals and mean gossips about celebrities or famous personalities. The "Muckraking" Reporting Ushered in Around 1900s Source = Weebly Although the literature of reform had already become visible in the mid-19th century, the 'muckraking' reporting began appearing around 1900. In 1902, an illustrated monthly periodical McClure's published the first muckraking article entitled "Tweed Days in St. Louis" that was written by Claude H. Wetmore and Lincoln Steffens. The January 1903 issue of McClure's is reckoned to be the official start of muckraking journalism. The very same issue comprised of famous muckraking works like "The Shame of Minneapolis" (Lincoln Steffens), "The History of Standard Oil" (Ida M. Tarbell), and "The Right to Work" (Ray Stannard Baker). Origin of the Term 'Muckrakers' Source = Pining The former President of the United States "Theodore Roosevelt" gave the name "muckrakers" to these investigative journalists. The progressive president adopted the term from John Bunyan's 1678 allegory Pilgrim's Progress in which a muck was used to excavate filth and muck. Roosevelt announced a passage from the allegory in his 1906 speech "The Man With the Muck Rake". While some journalists didn't like being called muckrakers, some were proud to be called so and went too far especially when writing about political corruption. Later, it was used with reference to investigative journalists who reported/exposed business and government issues provoking citizens' moral outrage. Muckrakers' Success Led to their Disappearance Source = Blogspot During the presidential tenure of conservative President William Howard Taft, the influence of muckrakers began fading. The political leaders and corporations successfully silenced the journalists and advertiser boycotting caused the bankruptcy of magazines. The most important factor behind the disappearance of the muckrakers was their success. The exposes made by them were bringing reforms in the nation's cities, businesses, politics, and more. And as the issues uncovered by muckrakers were being sorted out, they were no longer needed. Muckrakers' Journalism Made a Lasting Impact Source = Mrsronansclasses An American investigative journalist Fred J. Cook said that litigation or legislation due to muckraking journalism brought in a long-lasting impact. The major reforms include reorganization of the U.S. Navy, the end of Standard Oil's monopoly over the oil industry, the introduction of the Pure Food and Drug Act of 1906, and the initiation of the first child labor laws in the United States around 1916. The reports and exposes pertaining to bribery and corruption indeed brought reforms at the city and state level and in election results too. The Modern Muckraking Source = Wisegeek The modern term used for "Muckraker" is Investigative Reporter. The theory of muckraking has played a vital role in raising issues of social, corporate, and political prejudices. The hypothesis unveils a major intersection between the press and politics over the two centuries that started in the United States of America. Today investigative journalism is playing an active role in unearthing the deceitful practices prevailing in the political system of a country. It helps in the analysis of the malpractices prevailing in the political structure to ensure good governance in the best interest of the people. When politicians spread rumors, or the political system is on the verge of collapsing due to corruption, then a country relies on the journalists to unfold the truth layer by layer. Here are some examples of modern-day muckraking that have changed the definition of journalism in American History over the past few centuries. 2013 Edward Snowden Case Regarding NSA's Secret Surveillance Source = Ssl-images amazon We all know the famous Edward Snowden, a contractor for the US government who had illegally provided the documents to The Guardian and The Washington Post. The leaked documents unveiled the details regarding the American Surveillance methods that how the National Security Agency (NSA) collected the data on American citizens. It disclosed the ways that NSA undertook by keeping a close check on emails, phone records, and instant messaging. In 2014, The Washington Post was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for Public Service. The award was for its investigative reporting that accompanied insightful reports for in-depth analysis. The report was for the public to understand the framework of the National Security Agency (NSA). 2005 Secret Authorization for Warrantless Monitoring Source = Aclu-ky In 2005, a New York Times story by journalists James Risen and Eric Lichtblau revealed the secret authorization given by the then President of America George W. Bush to the National Security Agency (NSA) for domestic spying without a warrant. NSA was approved to continuously monitor and intercept people's emails and calls in the United States of America. However, the publication put the whole investigation on hold after an argument took place in the White House keeping the point that the reporting can put the investigations at risk. So, additional reporting was conducted during that year. In 2008, Congress revised the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act that demanded warrants on the part of phone companies to conduct emergency wiretaps on American citizens. It had put all the phone companies into a legal circumvention and provided legal immunity to those who were a part of the eavesdropping program. 2003 Human Rights Violations at Abu Ghraib Source = Echo A report published by journalist Charles Hanley of the Associated Press revealed the inhumane behavior of the US soldiers towards the detainees in the US military prison called Abu Ghraib in Iraq. The detainees gave an account of their stay in prison and how they were abused. It matched with the previous reports that Amnesty International documented. Amnesty International is a human rights organization. After this, the US Central Command intervened in the case. Consequently, 17 American soldiers were suspended. In April 2004, photos of the abuse were shared. Later, the Washington Post found documents that showed Lt. Gen. Ricardo Sanchez's order to loosen the rules regarding the methods used on detainees which included methods objecting the human rights. International Human Rights Advocacy Organization called the whole encounter a clear violation of the Geneva convention. As a consequence, eleven American soldiers were convicted of the crimes that took place at Abu Ghraib. Concluding Thoughts Investigative reporting is a powerful medium to uncover the hidden issues that lie deep inside the whole working system of a country. These underlying issues hinder a nation's progress and contribute to one of the obvious reasons that a country falls apart. Another name that is popular for Muckraking is Watchdog Journalism. Regardless of the name "Muckraker", we should admit that it has given a new color to journalism and has made every individual realize the importance of effective journalism in a country.

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