

# Background on *The Jungle*

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# General Background

- Animal Rights
  - Ascribing rights to animals such as for life and liberty.
- Animal Welfare
  - Concern for animal well-being without the need for ascribing rights
- Animal Liberation
  - Concern for animal care based on the equality of interests of animals and people (not equality of abilities)

# Background

- Chicago in 1906 was the location of the largest meat processors in the USA
- The Civil War was fresh on people's mind; including its brutality
- Theodore Roosevelt was president 1901-1909
- Humane animal care was a topic of discussion

# Background

- Animal humane groups started shortly after the Civil War
- The 28-hour law of 1873 was the first farm animal welfare law; it regulated transport of cattle, sheep and swine
- Although there were earlier versions, significant federal laws were passed, each citing *The Jungle* as justification

# Background

- Packers and Stockyards Act of 1921
- Humane Methods of Slaughter Act of 1958
- Several food sanitation laws

# Anthropomorphism

- “And yet somehow the most matter-of-fact person could not help thinking of the hogs; they were so innocent, they came so very trustingly; and they were so very human in their protests – so perfectly within their rights!”
- “...will of its own, a hope..self-confidence..self importance...dignity...feelings...”

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# Anthropomorphism

- Is it appropriate to always dismiss anthropomorphism? Why or why not?
- What do we do if science contradicts our anthropomorphic sense?
  - Gestation crates for sows
  - Battery cages for hens

# Discussion Questions

- Activists today may throw a laundry list of concerns against animal agriculture. Which society issues were presented by Sinclair?

# Discussion Questions

- How are today's processing plants different than what Sinclair describes in *The Jungle*?
  - Environmental issues?
  - Food safety/sanitation?
  - Use of immigrant labor for unpleasant jobs? (what nationalities work in processing plants?)
  - Animal welfare issues?

# Reactions of the Public

- What is the public's view of animal interests?