

Response to Readings: Saturday, May 5, 2007

It's A Jungle Out There: Industrialization, Immigration, and Urbanization Through Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle*

Core theme: The Country and the City

Historian Christopher Phelps of OSU Mansfield, a specialist in American cultural and social history, will take us through an interactive exploration of what life was like during the American Industrial Revolution. Using Dr. Phelps's edited edition of Upton Sinclair's ground-breaking novel *The Jungle*, participants will develop an appreciation and understanding of the realities of working in the booming industrial economy during the 19th and early 20th centuries.

Reading Assignment:

Upton Sinclair. *The Jungle*. Edited with an Introduction by Christopher Phelps (Boston: Bedford/St. Martins, 2005).

Read Chris Phelps's Introduction, and Upton Sinclair's novel

Writing Assignment

After completing the readings, answer the following question in 1-2 pages. Answers must be typed, double-spaced.

Can a work of fiction like *The Jungle* be taken as a description of historical reality? Citing some specific examples from *The Jungle*, what are the advantages and disadvantages of using literature to illuminate history?