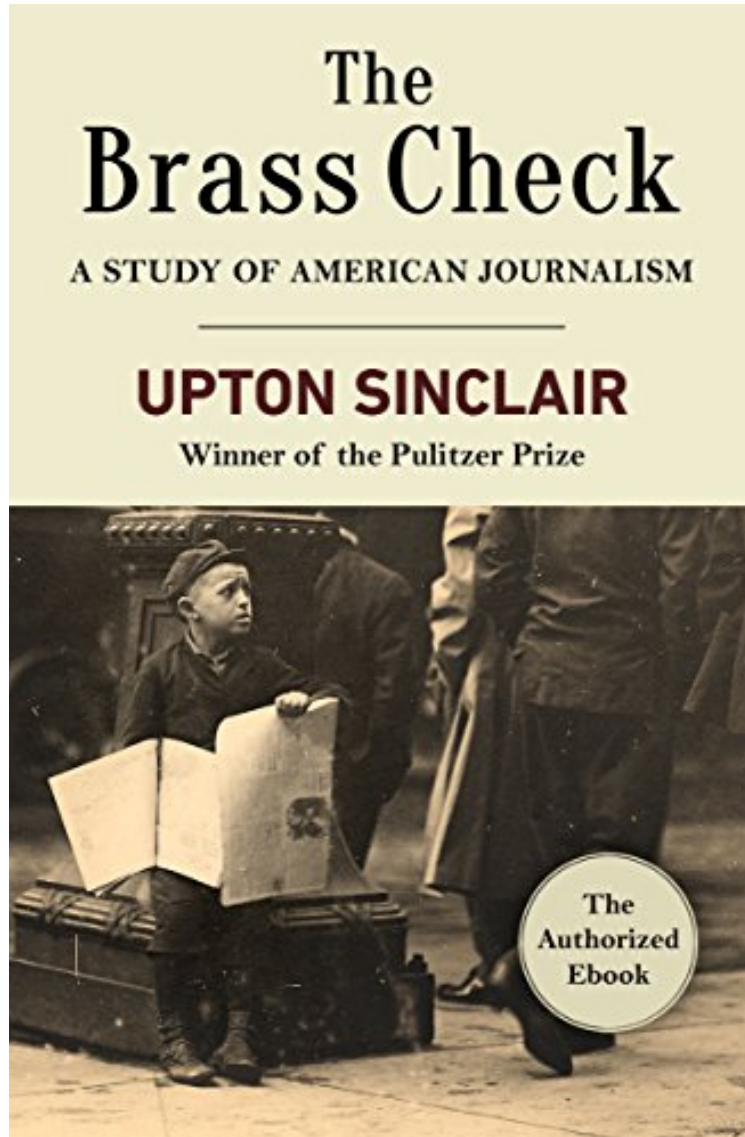


The Brass Check: A Study of American Journalism

Upton Sinclair

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Upton Sinclair : The Brass Check: A Study of American Journalism before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Brass Check: A Study of American Journalism:

17 of 18 people found the following review helpful. 1st Structural Criticism of American PressBy rchYou probably don't know this, but in 1920 Upton Sinclair self-published arguably the first ever structural criticism of the corrupt and broken press system in America. Not only did he self-publish it-at the height of his fame no less-but he refused to copyright it, hoping to pass through the complete media blacklist a book like this faced. It went on to sell more than 150,000 copies its first year. Take that, Cory Doctorow! Though the book has been almost entirely forgotten by

history, it's not only fascinating but a timeless perspective. Sinclair deeply understood the economic incentives of early 20th century journalism and thus could predict and analyze the manipulative effect it had on *The Truth*. Today, those incentives and pressures are different but they warp our information in a similar way. In almost every substantial charge he leveled against the yellow press, you could, today, sub in blogs and the cable news cycle and be even more correct. In fact, the reason that most newspapers could escape this criticism is that over the last 50 years they have instituted many of the important changes he asked for.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Bloggers Take Note By Kimi Upton Sinclair shows once again how daily journalism, particularly newspapers of his day, were the puppets of the wealthy. The conscious reader will be overwhelmed to the point of numbness that news outlets made lying, rumor-mongering and utter disregard for the truth a job requirement. And especially shameful is the Associated Press. Bloggers in our day should read this before writing one more word. That Mr. Sinclair kept at his fight for fact-based news is as startling as the greedy forces that tried to shut him up.

11 of 12 people found the following review helpful. Near autobiographical account of Sinclair By mchenryed The Brass Check is Upton Sinclair's nearly autobiographical experiences with the press. Sinclair, most famous for writing about the meat packing plants in the early 1900's (in *The Jungle*), received a lot of bad press by capitalist owned newspapers. These periodicals openly attacked him, printed half-truths, or failed to give him credit when he was right. The book contains 445 pages of his experiences with the press. He laments that most papers sell by submitting to the whims of their advertisers and printing scare headlines. Providing a substantial amount of evidence, Sinclair shows how papers and magazines unfairly discredited him and his causes. Of particular interest are the Colorado coal miner strike and the conditions of the meat packing plants in Chicago. Probably only hard core Upton Sinclair fans will appreciate this book. Most of it was mundane and outdated. A lot of the players and events that he covered never made it to the history books and it was challenging to remain focused after hearing yet another story about a newspaper (some of which still exist today - Los Angeles Times, for example). Historians will appreciate the different perspective on history and fans of Upton Sinclair will get an up and close personal look at his personal life.

A muckraking expose acute; of corruption in American journalism from the Pulitzer Prize winning author of *The Jungle* Upton Sinclair dedicated his life to documenting the destructive force of unbridled capitalism. In this influential study, he takes on the effect of money and power on mass media, arguing that the newspapers, magazines, and wire services of the Progressive era formed "a class institution serving the rich and spurning the poor." In the early twentieth century, a "brass check" was a token purchased by brothel patrons. By drawing a comparison between journalists and prostitutes, Sinclair highlights the total control publishers such as William Randolph Hearst exerted over their empires. Reporters and editors were paid to service the financial and political interests of their bosses, even if that meant misrepresenting the facts or outright lying. Sinclair documents specific cases, including the Ludlow Massacre of 1914 and the Red Scare whipped up by Hearst's *New York Journal* and other newspapers, in which major news outlets ignored the truth in favor of tabloid sensationalism. Sinclair considered *The Brass Check* to be his most important and most dangerous book. Nearly a century later, his impassioned call for reform is timelier than ever. This ebook has been authorized by the estate of Upton Sinclair.

"A literary achievement . . . full of sharp observation and savage characterization." —*The New York Times*
"A history of the Sacco-Vanzetti case truer than the court transcript, more real than any non-fiction account, precisely because it goes beyond the immediate events of the case to bring the reader the historical furnace in which the case was forged." —Howard Zinn
"Praise for Upton Sinclair! When people ask me what has happened in my long lifetime I do not refer them to the newspaper files and to the authorities, but to [Upton Sinclair's] novels." —George Bernard Shaw