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The Reporters Who Dug Up Corruption from the Muck: The Muckrakers

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When a news story reveals unsanitary conditions at a food factory or unfair dealings by a large corporation, people grow angry and the government responds with new measures. Today it is hardly unusual for a single story, doggedly pursued by a reporter, to change laws and institutions. But if we trace investigative reporting back to its roots, we meet a group of journalists in the United States more than 100 years ago who earned the unflattering nickname “men who rake the muck.” They were the “muckrakers.” Put simply, muckrakers were reform-minded journalists and writers who, during America's P