

## Sinclair collection donated to UC library

An important collection of works by and about American writer Upton B. Sinclair has been donated to the UC-Santa Cruz Library by Professor Robert O. and Genevieve Hahn of Aptos.

The Hahn collection, formed over a period of 48 years, includes 118 titles, together with many other variant and reprint editions. Other material includes issues of "Upton Sinclair's Epic News," material relating to the Sinclair Centenary (1978), some oral history from that event, and the files of "The Upton Sinclair Quarterly."

"Of special interest to scholars of California and local history," according to UC librarian Allan J. Dyson, "are materials relating to Sinclair's forays into politics and to his work as an independent voice for social reform over many decades as a Southern California commentator and resident."

Sinclair's career was long and remarkable, says Dyson of the author who was born in 1878 and died in 1968.

"The Hahns' gift will provide a strong focus of interest for students of literature, especially those interested in the 'realistic' novel, as well as students of social and economic developments in the first half of this century," said Jerry James, the library's humanities bibliographer.

Sinclair is best known for his 1905 novel, "The Jungle," an expose of the conditions in the Chicago meatpacking industry.

"This novel," James said, "had such an explosive effect on the American conscience that it led to wholesale reform and regulation of the industry and the passage of the first Pure Food and Drug Act."

Sinclair's later novels and political papers continued to be grounded on a practical social consciousness, according to James.

The writer's own life was itself a series of political vignettes. He was jailed in 1923 in San Pedro, for reading aloud the First Amendment to the Constitution, and he ran for governor of California in 1934.

It was in that year that Robert Hahn, then a senior in high school, first read "The Jungle."

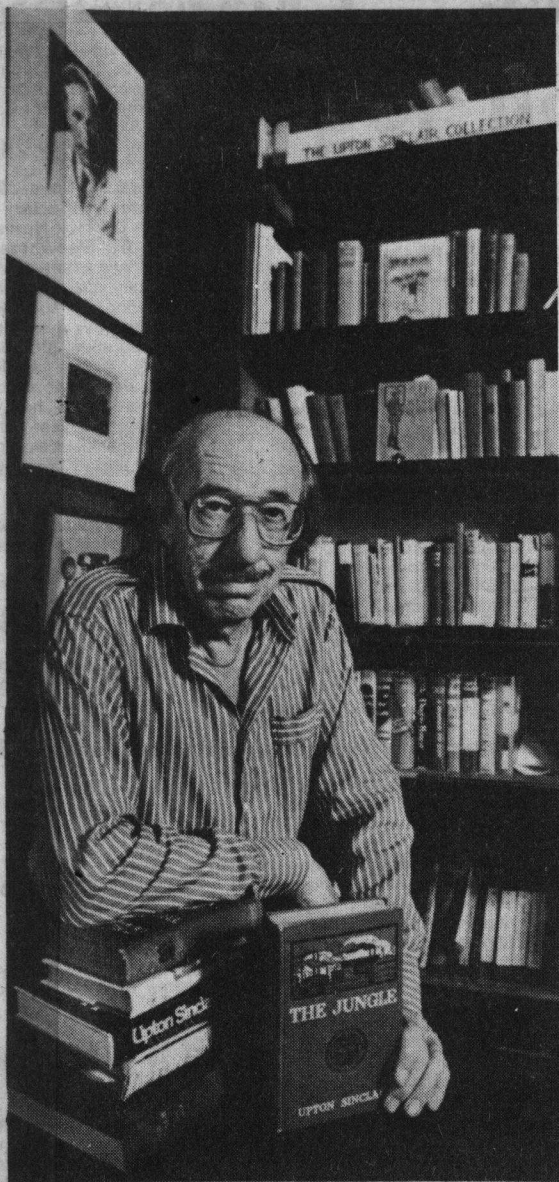
From that time, he became a dedicated reader and collector of the voluminous writings of Sinclair. As a high school teacher and, later, a professor of education and lecturer in American studies, Hahn took a special interest in Sinclair's social activism.

When he and his wife moved to Southern California in 1955, Hahn was finally able to meet the author himself. Sinclair had long lived in Pasadena and Monrovia and was the self-publisher of a seemingly trackless series of books and pamphlets, according to James.

About five years after Sinclair's death, Hahn founded a newsletter, "The Upton Sinclair Quarterly," (first entitled "Uppie Speaks"), dedicated to the study of Sinclair.

In 1978, Hahn mounted a major centenary celebration of Sinclair's birth. The event was held at California State University at Los Angeles. It featured lectures, panels and exhibits and a dramatic presentation of an unpublished play by Sinclair. Several typescripts of that play, titled "Cicero," are included in the Hahn collection.

The Robert and Genevieve Collection of Upton Sinclair is now housed in the Special Collections department on the third floor of UCSC's McHenry Library. It is available for reference use by the public, as well as UCSC faculty and students. According to James, most of the collection already has been cataloged and immediate bibliographic access to the entire collection is available through Hahn's own listing, "The Checklist of the Robert and Genevieve Hahn Collection of Upton Sinclair."



Sinclair library donor Robert Hahn