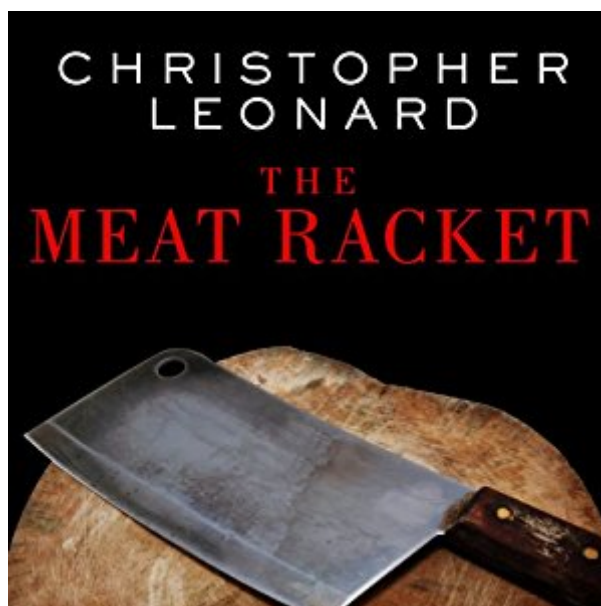


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# The Meat Racket: The Secret Takeover Of America's Food Business



## Synopsis

How much do you know about the meat on your dinner plate? Journalist Christopher Leonard spent more than a decade covering the country's biggest meat companies, including four years as the national agribusiness reporter for the Associated Press. Now he delivers the first comprehensive look inside the industrial meat system, exposing how a handful of companies executed an audacious corporate takeover of the nation's meat supply. Leonard's revealing account shines a light on the inner workings of Tyson Foods, a pioneer of the industrial system that dominates the market. You'll learn how the food industry got to where it is today and how companies like Tyson have escaped the scrutiny they deserve. You'll discover how these companies are able to raise meat prices for consumers while pushing down the price they pay to farmers. And you'll even see how big business and politics have derailed efforts to change the system, from a years-long legal fight in Iowa to the Obama administration's recent failed attempt to pass reforms. Important, timely, and explosive, *The Meat Racket* is an unvarnished portrait of the food industry that now dominates America's heartland.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The Meat Racket is an honest and thoughtful account of the current state of meat production in our country. As a Midwestern, middle class wife and mother of a meat-eating family of five, I appreciated the window into a world that would not have been seen without this in-depth examination. Christopher Leonard spent a decade exploring every aspect of the modern meat

production process. A fascinating view into the world of Tyson and the other major meat producers is provided through Mr. Leonard's patience to obtain a complete story from Tyson's beginning to present. He manages to secure a meeting with Don Tyson and develops relationships with influential Tyson executives who elaborate on their experiences and roles in bolstering the company to incomparable growth. And perhaps the most significant interviews are those with the actual farmers, telling the stories of lives that are mortgaged upon a deep trust of hard work, the American dream and the meat companies. What surfaces from the extensive research is a winner-take-all story about how meat production in the United States shifted into the hands of a few vertically integrated companies. Through this centralized control and the filtration of profits to the top, Tyson & its few allies have become an unstoppable force, even against a determined President Obama and U.S. Department of Agriculture. In Chapter 12, "Street Fight (2010 - 2011)," the meat industry's power to influence, prevent, and shape laws is illuminated. As a reader, I was left wondering "how much power is too much?" Whereas many books regarding the meat industry focus on the realities of the animal experience, *The Meat Racket* concentrates on the human experience.

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