

Stratagems Episode 9, 10 and 11: The Standard Oil Series

This episode explores the rise, dominance, and dissolution of Standard Oil, led by John D. Rockefeller. Through the lens of antitrust, capitalism, and industrial transformation, we trace the evolution of the oil industry and its enduring impact on the American economy and regulation.

Books

- [Titan – Ron Chernow](#)
 - A comprehensive biography of John D. Rockefeller, providing insight into his personal life, business tactics, and long-lasting legacy.
- [The Prize: The Epic Quest for Oil, Money, and Power – Daniel Yergin](#)
 - This is the essential history of the global oil industry, placing Standard Oil in the broader context of oil's role in world affairs.
- [A Short History of the Civil War – James L. Stokesbury](#)
 - Background on the U.S. Civil War and its aftermath, which shaped the economic environment Rockefeller would enter.
- [The Republic for Which It Stands – Richard White](#)
 - An in-depth look at the Gilded Age and Reconstruction, critical to understanding the business climate of Standard Oil.
- [Oil: A Beginner's Guide – Vaclav Smil](#)
 - Explains the formation, extraction, and significance of oil as a natural resource.
- [The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism – Max Weber](#)
 - A foundational text on how religious values influenced capitalist behavior, including Rockefeller's own beliefs.
- [Brilliant: The Evolution of Artificial Light – Jane Brox](#)
 - Traces the development of lighting technologies, including the rise of kerosene and Standard Oil's key role.
- [Taking on the Trust – Steve Weinberg](#)
 - Chronicles Ida Tarbell's journalistic crusade against Standard Oil, one of the most influential exposés in American media history.
- [Mightier Than the Sword – Rodger Streitmatter](#)
 - Details the evolution of American journalism and its influence, including the media's role in shaping public opinion against monopolies.

Articles & Reports

- [Certificated Air Carriers List](#) – U.S. Department of Transportation (Modern examples of regulated common carriers.)
 - [Freight Railroads in the U.S.](#) – Wikipedia (Context for how infrastructure shapes monopolistic industries.)
 - [Controlled Carrier List](#) – Federal Maritime Commission (Further reading on government oversight and competition.)
 - [U.S. Telephone Companies](#) – Wikipedia (Examines parallels between Standard Oil and later telecom monopolies.)
 - [Mobile Network Operators of the Americas](#) – Wikipedia (Industry comparisons in modern telecommunications.)
 - [FTC vs Zuckerberg](#) – New York Post (Current antitrust actions echoing past efforts against Standard Oil.)
 - [FTC Probes Microsoft](#) – Investopedia (Modern antitrust enforcement in tech.)
 - [FTC Lawsuit Against Amazon](#) – Associated Press (Ongoing scrutiny of monopolistic practices.)
 - [ExxonMobil Timeline](#) – History Timelines (Overview of how Standard Oil's legacy shaped today's oil giants.)
 - [U.S. v. Google \(2023\)](#) – Wikipedia (Recent antitrust actions with parallels to the Standard Oil case.)
 - [U.S. v. Apple \(2024\)](#) – Wikipedia (Examining competitive practices and market control.)
 - [U.S. v. Live Nation](#) – Wikipedia (Modern entertainment monopoly scrutiny.)
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Videos & Documentaries

- [How Oil Forms](#) – YouTube (Explains geological processes that create oil, providing scientific context for the rise of Standard Oil.)
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Background Music

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