

Memo;

I find that I have an increasing irritation at criticism based on suspicion. Last night I had an example of this. Talked at the Writer's Club - informal - on my technique of biographical writing, pointing out that it was entirely the result of an experience of forty years and that as a matter of fact I had only reached now the point where I was framing the technique which I find I am following. That is, it is self-made very largely, though where and how I got the hints might be a very interesting study. Not sure these things were born in me.

In the course of the forum after my talk a young man referred to the fact, ~~that~~ what I supposed he thought was a fact, that the History of the Standard Oil Company had been suppressed and wanted to know how it happened.

I told him the truth story of the book and felt that the idea of suppression because the book was temporarily out of print was one of those proofs of our common habit of explaining by suspicion instead of by facts. The book was out of print, therefore the Standard Oil Company had used influence to take it off the market and nobody who repeated this ^{explanation} took the pains to find out the facts. Nobody came to me but rather nodded their heads and said, "They have got her at last. She has been bought."