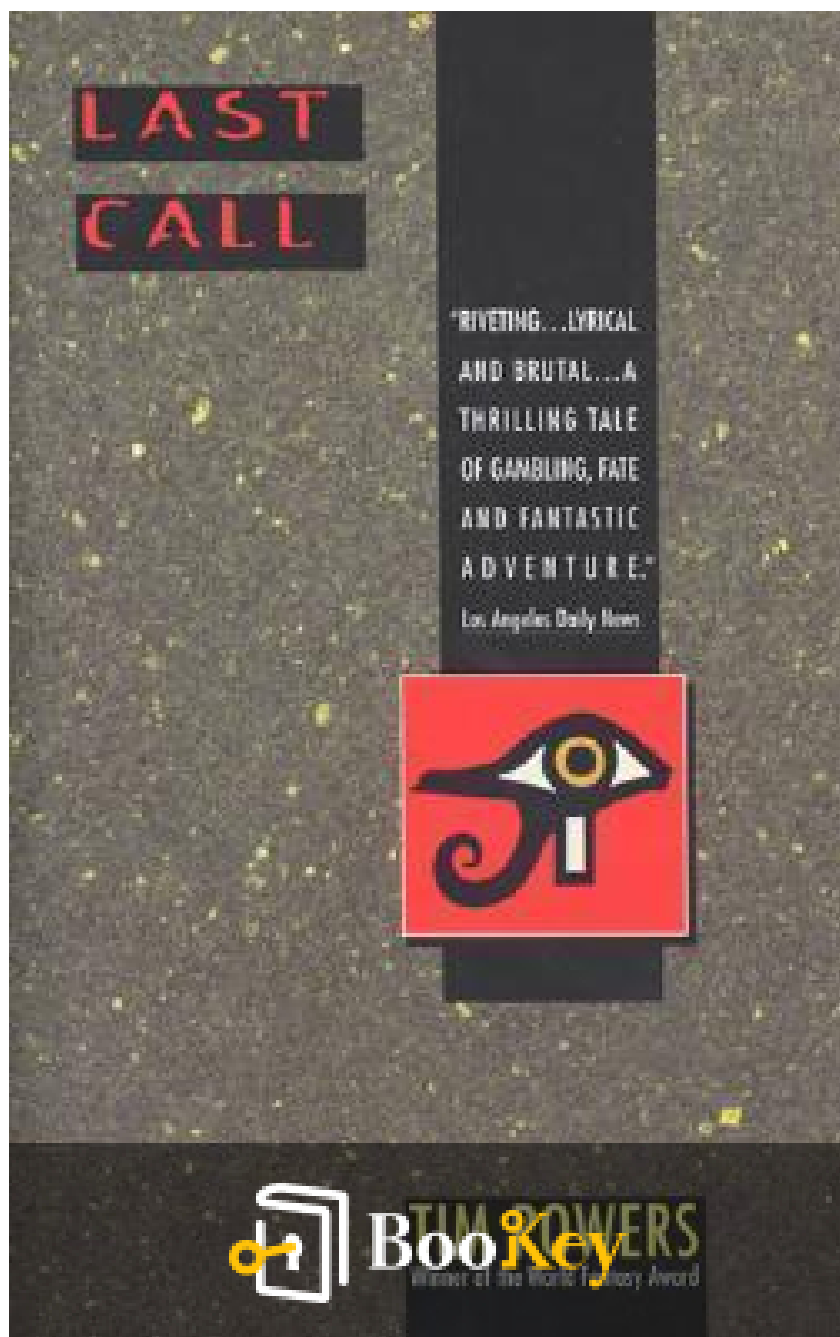


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Daniel Okrent



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Last Call Summary

The Rise and Fall of Prohibition in America

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About the book

In "Last Call: The Rise and Fall of Prohibition," Daniel Okrent masterfully unveils the tumultuous tapestry of American society during the 1920s and 1930s, exploring how the noble experiment of Prohibition transformed the nation in unforeseen ways. This gripping narrative delves into the political machinations, cultural clashes, and unforeseen consequences that emerged when the government attempted to legislate morality, giving rise to speakeasies, organized crime, and a revolution in social norms. Okrent's rich storytelling not only illuminates the far-reaching impacts of this controversial law but also poses thought-provoking questions about freedom, personal choice, and the limits of governance, making "Last Call" a compelling read for anyone curious about the complexities of American history and the enduring struggle between liberty and regulation.

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About the author

Daniel Okrent is a distinguished American author, journalist, and historian, renowned for his insightful exploration of social and cultural issues, particularly in relation to alcohol consumption and Prohibition in America. With a career spanning over several decades, Okrent has contributed to various prestigious publications, including The New York Times and Time magazine, while also serving as the first public editor of The New York Times. His notable works, such as "Last Call: The Rise and Fall of Prohibition," demonstrate his adept ability to weave compelling narratives that blend meticulous research with engaging storytelling, capturing the complexities of historical events and their societal implications. Okrent's keen intellect and passion for uncovering the intricacies of American history have established him as a prominent voice in literary and journalistic circles.

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Chapter 1 Summary: Thunderous Drums and Protestant Nuns

In a deep exploration of America's longstanding struggle with alcohol, Chapter 1 of "Last Call" by Daniel Okrent reveals how drinking has been an integral part of American life since its inception. Even the Puritans, brought over to establish a righteous society, embraced alcohol, bringing with them provisions of wine and beer. By the 19th century, alcohol consumption skyrocketed, with Americans consuming an average of seven gallons of pure alcohol annually, a figure that starkly highlights the cultural entrenchment of drinking. As Abraham Lincoln noted, alcohol had entwined itself in nearly every aspect of domestic life, often referred to as a "devastator" of families.

1. Alcohol as an Integral Aspect of Social Life: Early Americans used alcohol as a means of social interaction—celebrating success or lamenting failures with drink. Taverns became essential venues for socializing, and liquor was commonplace in both rural and urban settings. The proliferation of distilleries across the nation underscored the cultural acceptance of drinking.

2. Emergence of the Temperance Movement By the early 19th century, concerns about rampant alcohol consumption started to give rise to the temperance movement. Initially focusing on moderation, leaders like Benjamin Rush urged a shift towards less harmful alternatives rather than



abstinence. This movement evolved with the Washingtonian Movement, which favored total abstinence through personal transformation and community support rather than legal coercion, echoing Lincoln's belief in persuasion rather than compulsion.

3. Shift to Prohibition: The call for Prohibition emerged in reaction to the failures of early temperance attempts. Prominent figures, such as Neal Dow, laid the groundwork for prohibitionist laws like Maine's stringent liquor law of 1851. Dow's success ignited a national movement, although local opposition from immigrant populations revealed the deep divisions within American attitudes toward alcohol consumption.

4. Influence of Women in the Movement Women's groups played a pivotal role in the temperance movement. Eliza Thompson led a prayer-based effort, the Crusade of 1873, which mobilized women to act against local saloons, closing many establishments through their demonstrations. This grassroots activism laid the foundation for the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU).

5. Frances Willard and the Institutionalization of Temperance Advocacy
: Frances Willard became a leading figure in the WCTU, transforming it into a formidable political force. She broadened its scope to advocate for women's rights, tying temperance to the feminist movement. Willard's strategic integration of these causes gave women's suffrage a powerful ally



in the fight against alcohol.

6. Scientific Temperance Instruction Mary Hunt's initiative to instill anti-alcohol sentiments in children through education led to the widespread incorporation of "Scientific Temperance Instruction" in public schools. However, this education was founded on distorted facts and fear-mongering rather than genuine science, aiming to create a generation of children vehemently opposed to alcohol.

7. The Challenges of Prohibition and Prohibitive Sentiment Despite significant efforts, the temperance movement faced hurdles, particularly from immigrant communities for whom alcohol was culturally entrenched. Still, the WCTU's work achieved noteworthy influence, reflecting the competing social values of the time.

In summary, as America grappled with its relationship with alcohol, it created a complex landscape where temperance and prohibition movements sought to redefine societal norms around drinking. The early attempts at addressing alcohol consumption paved the way for more assertive actions, culminating in overarching debates that were as much about gender, class, and cultural identity as they were about liquor itself. The narrative of drinking in America is thus a mirror reflecting the nation's broader struggles with morality, social governance, and individual liberty.



Chapter 2 Summary: The Rising of Liquid Bread

In Chapter 2 of "Last Call" by Daniel Okrent, we encounter the larger-than-life figure of Carry Nation, a prominent temperance activist whose impassioned opposition to alcohol laid bare the emerging tensions surrounding drinking culture in America. Standing six feet tall and characterized by an unwavering resolve, Nation is a complex persona shaped by her tumultuous upbringing, conviction in her cause, and unconventional methods. Her notoriety primarily stemmed from her wielding a hatchet as a weapon against saloons, which she deemed centers of moral decay.

1. Carry Nation's Legacy: Carry Nation emerged in the early 1900s as an emblematic figure in the temperance movement. Her radical approach included physically attacking saloons, such as the notable incident at the Senate Bar in Topeka, where she wreaked havoc with her hatchet—a symbolic action that resonated beyond her personal crusade. Nation's fierce rhetoric, coupled with her vivid anecdotes, illustrates her fervent belief in the moral imperative to combat alcohol consumption and the societal evils she attributed to it.

2. The Transformation of Alcohol Consumption: While Carry Nation embodied the anti-alcohol movement, beer consumption in America was paradoxically on the rise. Driven by mass immigration, particularly from Germany and Ireland, beer became a staple beverage. Between 1850 and



1890, per capita beer consumption soared twenty-four-fold, reflecting a cultural shift that welcomed and normalized drinking as a part of the American experience. This surge was facilitated by advancements in brewing technology, with figures like Adolphus Busch revolutionizing the industry and contributing to beer's national popularity.

3. Saloon Culture and Its Proliferation: The saloon evolved into a social institution within immigrant communities, serving as a social hub that provided not just alcohol but also various forms of support to newcomers—ranging from labor opportunities to a sense of community. By the turn of the century, the number of saloons had skyrocketed, with cities like Chicago showcasing a staggering ratio of establishments compared to their populations. The saloon's significance, however, extended beyond mere consumption; it became entwined with urban life, highlighting the duality of comfort and peril that alcohol represented for impoverished immigrants.

4. Economic Forces Behind Brewing: The brewing industry became a significant economic force, with brewers establishing deep connections to political institutions. The U.S. Brewers' Association emerged as a powerful lobby, defending against the temperance movement and shaping public policy to protect their interests. The economic ties between brewers and politicians showcased how financial dependencies influenced the broader alcohol discourse and resistance to prohibition efforts.



5. Division Among Alcohol Producers: A growing rift became apparent between brewers and distillers, each perceiving the other as a rival in the fight against temperance. While the brewers promoted beer as "liquid bread," distillers often faced scorn for producing spirits viewed as more dangerous. Tensions culminated in distinct advocacy strategies, as both parties struggled to assert their interests against a backdrop increasingly dominated by anti-alcohol sentiments fueled by organizations like the Anti-Saloon League.

Together, these elements converge to illustrate a complex landscape marked by economic interest, cultural identity, and moral crusade, setting the stage for the ongoing conflicts over alcohol during one of America's most transformative eras. Carry Nation's hatchet served not only as her weapon of choice but became an emblem of the wider battles fought on the terrain of American drinking culture during the lead-up to Prohibition.

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Chapter 3: The Most Remarkable Movement

Chapter 3 of "Last Call" by Daniel Okrent delves into the historical emergence and strategies of the Anti-Saloon League (ASL) in the context of Prohibition, originating from the town of Oberlin, Ohio. Known for its strong moral conviction and commitment to social reform, Oberlin served as the crucible for many early activists, including Howard Hyde Russell, who profoundly influenced the Prohibition movement.

1. The ASL was characterized by its singular focus on combatting alcohol rather than promoting a broader agenda, distinguishing it from other organizations like the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) and the Prohibition Party. The ASL's clarity of mission allowed it to mobilize support efficiently, in contrast to the scattered efforts of its predecessors, which struggled with overlapping causes and diluted focus.

2. Under Russell's leadership, the ASL adopted tactics that combined political pressure and intimidation, cleverly exploiting the political margins. They understood that by securing the loyalty of just a small percentage of voters, they could heavily influence election outcomes. This strategic

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Chapter 4 Summary: “Open Fire on the Enemy”

In Chapter 4 of "Last Call" by Daniel Okrent, the story delves into the pivotal role of alcohol in American society and the enduring debates surrounding its taxation and prohibition. The chapter begins with Alexander Hamilton's 1792 argument for taxing liquor as it was widely consumed across social and geographical divides, making it a robust source of revenue for a fledgling government. Hamilton's advocacy for an alcohol excise tax exemplified how liquor could serve both as a means for government funding and a tool to potentially reduce consumption.

1. The effects of Hamilton's tax were immediate, resulting in significant unrest manifesting as the Whiskey Rebellion in 1794, particularly among Pennsylvania's rye farmers. For them, whiskey was more than a drink; it was a vital economic commodity and medium of exchange. This unrest highlighted the complexities of taxing alcohol and the reactions it provoked among the populace.

2. Over the ensuing decades, reliance on alcohol taxes as a federal revenue source grew, with the government regularly reinstating the excise tax during wartime crises, illustrating the tax's entrenched importance within the national budget. This tax was not merely a financial obligation; it cultivated a shadow market for illicit alcohol, exemplified by the rise of moonshine production.



3. Meanwhile, two significant reform movements began intertwining—a push for Prohibition and an income tax. The discussion intensified around 1913 when political figure William Jennings Bryan, known for his fervent advocacy of both causes, sought to unite them strategically. His efforts would propel the constitutional amendments that allowed for both income tax and, eventually, the Prohibition.

4. The Anti-Saloon League (ASL) emerged as a formidable advocate for Prohibition, gaining momentum in 1913 after capitalizing on the passage of the income tax amendment. Realizing that the argument for national Prohibition could now sidestep concerns about lost tax revenue, the ASL shifted its strategy towards pursuing a federal amendment to ban alcohol entirely.

5. An extraordinary confluence of movements ensued, most notably with the suffrage movement, as women recognized that securing the vote would provide a powerful leverage point to lawfully combat alcohol access. The partnership between suffragists and the ASL underscored a shared mission: achieving Prohibition as a mechanism for greater social reform.

6. The campaign to prohibit alcohol capitalized on public sentiment, assembling large demonstrations that showcased widespread support, cementing the dry forces' unity and resolve. This synergy became evident on



December 10, 1913, showcasing thousands of supporters marching in Washington, symbolizing a growing, organized effort to overturn the status quo.

7. As the suffrage movement matured, the interconnectedness of these reform efforts grew apparent. Female voters became a fundamental force in passing Prohibition, often siding against any political candidates who supported the alcohol industry. The eventual success of both movements by the end of the decade illustrated how interwoven they had become, with support for one bolstering the other.

Through this chapter, Okrent reflects on how liquor taxation and the evolving social landscape served as catalysts for both the Prohibition and suffrage movements, reshaping American political life and societal norms in the early 20th century. The narrative demonstrates how economic imperatives, moral arguments, and political strategies converged to create a profound shift in the nation's governance and cultural ethos.



Chapter 5 Summary: Triumphant Failure

In the intricate narrative of Chapter 5 of "Last Call" by Daniel Okrent, we see the portrayal of Richmond Hobson's evolution as a figure pivotal in the Prohibition movement, characterized as a “triumphant failure.” His rise began at the U.S. Naval Academy, where a young Hobson faced verbal abuse and ostracism, displaying his resilient character. Not one to yield to bullying, he confronted his tormentor with impressive vocabulary that hinted at his future as a bold and eloquent leader. Despite being socially isolated by his peers, he thrived on his own, showcasing an extraordinary ability to deflect criticism—qualities that would become integral to his political career.

1. Milestone of Political Career and Celebrity: Hobson transitioned from being a celebrated war hero to a popular author with the release of his novel, which mirrored his experiences at Annapolis. His fame escalated after the Spanish-American War, where he attempted a daring mission that garnered national attention. His public persona was fueled by a relentless self-promotional campaign, resulting in widespread admiration, culminating in numerous adoring fans, particularly women, who sought to kiss him at public appearances.

2. Political Transformation and Advocacy: Upon entering the House of Representatives in 1906, Hobson aligned himself with the progressive



movement, advocating for a range of causes including tariff reform, the abolition of the Electoral College, and, significantly, the Prohibition of alcohol. His multifaceted political stance also encompassed an enlightened perspective on race relations, as he fought against discrimination within the military and championed justice for black soldiers.

3. Initial Political Setbacks: Despite his robust platform against alcohol, Hobson's political ambitions were thwarted by Oscar W. Underwood in a Democratic primary for a Senate seat. Underwood's leverage on racial issues overshadowed Hobson's Prohibition campaign, illustrating the complexities of Southern politics where race often trumped other pressing matters, ultimately contributing to Hobson's defeat.

4. A Defining Debate and Its Aftermath: On December 22, 1914, Hobson's passionate oratory supported his resolution for a constitutional amendment against alcohol. Despite ultimately failing to secure the necessary votes in a protracted debate, his efforts unified the Prohibition movement, marking a significant mobilization of support from across various political and demographic spheres.

5. Enduring Commitment to Prohibition: After leaving Congress, Hobson re-emerged onto the national stage, calling for continuous activism for the cause of Prohibition in a series of powerful speeches. The Anti-Saloon League's influence grew, fueled by Hobson's fervor and the



camaraderie of various temperance organizations, as they organized campaigns, garnered new recruits, and celebrated their movements' alignment with global anti-alcohol sentiments, particularly during World War I.

6. Organizational Success and Political Strategy: The Anti-Saloon

League's meticulous organization and strategic planning bore fruit as they capitalized on demographic shifts and political trends, leading to a significant increase in Prohibition advocates across the nation. The league's robust campaign efforts poised the movement favorably for potential constitutional amendments, underlying Hobson's insightful recognition of the need for urgency and strategy amidst a rapidly changing political landscape.

In conclusion, while Hobson's amendment ultimately failed to pass through Congress, the chapter illustrates his fervent commitment to the Prohibition cause—a vital aspect of the broader temperance movement that continued to gain traction leading into the significant political shifts of the 1916 elections. His journey epitomizes the tension between progressive ideals and entrenched social attitudes of the early twentieth century, showcasing the complexities inherent in American political and social reform movements.

Section	Summary
Introduction	Richmond Hobson is portrayed as a pivotal figure in the Prohibition movement, beginning his rise at the U.S. Naval Academy where he



Section	Summary
	developed resilience against bullying.
Milestone of Political Career and Celebrity	Hobson became a celebrated war hero and author, gaining national attention after a daring mission in the Spanish-American War and a strong fan base, especially among women.
Political Transformation and Advocacy	In Congress, Hobson advocated for Prohibition and other progressive causes, including tariff reform and racial equality in the military.
Initial Political Setbacks	Hobson's ambitions were thwarted by Underwood in a Senate primary where racial issues overshadowed his Prohibition campaign, demonstrating the complexities of Southern politics.
A Defining Debate and Its Aftermath	On December 22, 1914, Hobson passionately debated for a constitutional amendment against alcohol, unifying the Prohibition movement despite the resolution's failure.
Enduring Commitment to Prohibition	Post-Congress, Hobson continued to advocate for Prohibition through speeches, boosting the influence of the Anti-Saloon League and temperance organizations during WWI.
Organizational Success and Political Strategy	The Anti-Saloon League effectively organized and capitalized on political trends, increasing Prohibition advocacy and positioning for future legislative efforts.
Conclusion	Hobson's journey highlights the challenges and complexities of advancing Prohibition amid progressive ideals and social attitudes during the early 1900s.



Critical Thinking

Key Point: Resilience in the Face of Adversity

Critical Interpretation: Richmond Hobson's journey exemplifies the power of resilience, particularly in standing firm against bullying and adversity during his formative years at the Naval Academy. Imagine yourself in similar circumstances, where criticism and isolation challenge your confidence. Hobson confronted his tormentor eloquently and refused to let external negativity define him, demonstrating that true strength lies in the ability to withstand judgment and emerge stronger. His story reminds us that the paths to our most significant achievements often weave through struggles and setbacks, inspiring us to cultivate our own resilience, face challenges head-on, and embrace the unique journey that shapes us into leaders and advocates for change.

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Chapter 6: Dry-Drys, Wet-Drys, and Hyphens

In Chapter 6 of "Last Call," Daniel Okrent examines the powerful dynamics of the Prohibition movement in early 20th-century America, marked by the clash between the "dry" supporters of Prohibition and the "wet" advocates for alcohol consumption. The chapter highlights how the dry movement, propelled by groups like the Anti-Saloon League (ASL) and the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), ally with diverse political factions seeking social change. Their broad coalition included unlikely partners such as Coca-Cola's Asa Candler and theater owner Lee Shubert, suggesting that the drive against alcohol was intertwined with broader societal aspirations and commercial interests.

1. **Motivations of the Drys**: The chapter illustrates how the proponents of Prohibition were predominantly fueled by passionate convictions, often more so than their opponents who favored the status quo. Despite being commercially motivated themselves, these dry individuals presented a united front against alcohol consumption, leveraging the support of reform-minded factions who saw Prohibition as a catalyst for change.

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Chapter 7 Summary: From Magna Carta to Volstead

In Chapter 7 of "Last Call" by Daniel Okrent, the narrative explores the complex social dynamics surrounding Prohibition in the early 20th century, catalysts for its rise, and the prominent figures involved in the anti-alcohol movement. The chapter opens with a focus on Billy Sunday, a former professional baseball player who transitioned to become a powerful, evangelical preacher known for his vehement stance against alcohol. Despite being an athlete celebrated for his skills on the baseball field, Sunday's life took a transformative turn when he embraced Christian fundamentalism while witnessing the ruinous effects of alcoholism on his peers and community. He likened alcohol to "God's worst enemy," launching a fervent campaign against its consumption, drawing massive crowds at his sermons and uniting many in the fight for Prohibition, even obtaining support from thousands of college students.

1. The Impact of World War I: The chapter emphasizes how World War I created a unique environment that benefitted Prohibition supporters, who harnessed patriotism to further their cause. As America entered the war, Anti-Saloon League (ASL) proponents managed to paint the consumption of alcohol as unpatriotic and harmful to the war effort, framing the narrative around national defense and resource conservation. As a result, the legislature passed a series of laws curtailing alcohol consumption and production, branding liquor as not only a public nuisance but also as a threat



to national security.

2. The Anti-German Sentiment: An underlying current throughout the chapter is the anti-German sentiment that flourished during the war. The Prohibition movement vehemently associated German breweries with disloyalty, leveraging public fear against those in the alcohol industry. The propaganda efforts intensified calls for Prohibition, effectively demonizing German-Americans and other wet factions who opposed the movement.

3. Legislative Progression and State Ratification: The sequencing of events detailing how the Eighteenth Amendment was ratified highlights the political maneuvering that went into bypassing public-centric opinions in favor of rural dry voter preferences. The chapter reveals how state legislatures warped democratic processes, allowing rural-dominated lawmakers to approve Prohibition while urban areas, with more liberal views on alcohol, had their voices muted. This ratification process concluded with Mississippi's swift approval of the amendment, despite many of its citizens remaining wet.

4. Volstead Act: The chapter also introduces Andrew Volstead and the subsequent legislation known as the Volstead Act, which delineated the specifics of enforcing Prohibition. Volstead's character is portrayed as unassuming yet tenacious, driven by respect for the law and a belief in the social movement against alcohol. This Act criminalized aspects of alcohol



production and consumption while not directly prohibiting personal consumption, embodying a paradox inherent in the Prohibition landscape. It underscored the complexities of defining "intoxicating liquors" while accommodating religious and economic interests, ultimately leading to significant loopholes that would be exploited.

5. Public Response and Consequences: The chapter concludes with insights into the public's reception to the newly instituted Prohibition laws. It illuminates a cultural disconnect between legal restrictions and public behavior, showcasing the prolific rise of illegal smuggling, speakeasies, and a burgeoning underground economy despite the stringent laws aimed at curbing alcohol usage. The persistence of public thirst for alcohol, coupled with the failures of enforcement, became glaringly evident in ensuing years.

Overall, Okrent skillfully weaves a narrative rich with historical context, character studies, and social dynamics that collectively frame the fervent campaign for Prohibition against the backdrop of World War I and the socio-political landscape of the United States during that era.

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Critical Thinking

Key Point: Embrace the Power of Persuasion

Critical Interpretation: Billy Sunday's journey from a celebrated athlete to a powerful preacher illustrates the profound impact one individual can have in rallying people toward a shared vision. His ability to harness emotions, particularly during a tumultuous time like World War I, serves as an inspiration for your own life—reminding you that you too can drive change through passion and conviction. Whether it's advocating for a cause you believe in, leading a team, or inspiring those around you, remember that your voice and actions can create ripples of influence, encouraging others to join you in pursuit of meaningful progress. Much like Sunday, by standing firm in your beliefs and communicating them effectively, you can inspire collective action and make a significant difference in your community.

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Chapter 8 Summary: Starting Line

On January 16, 1920, the First Congregational Church in Washington, D.C. played host to a fervently celebratory gathering of prohibitionists, celebrating the impending enforcement of the Eighteenth Amendment and the Volstead Act—legislation aimed at banning alcohol in the United States. Notable figures such as Andrew Volstead, Josephus Daniels, Howard Hyde Russell, and Anna A. Gordon enthusiastically voiced their hopes for a dry America, emphasizing that “no man living” would see the Volstead Act modified. Among them, the fiery orator William Jennings Bryan delivered a stirring speech, linking the liquor trade to the biblical slayers of the infant Jesus, leaving attendees electrified and hopeful about the future.

However, Prohibition's reality soon diverged from this idealistic vision. That very night, agents from the Bureau of Internal Revenue made the first recorded arrest under the new laws, dredging up doubts about the actual impact of the legislation. Initially, Americans responded with a notable decrease in alcohol consumption; alcohol-related deaths fell, and arrests for public drunkenness dwindled. Civic leaders in dry locales set an example, leading to diminished drinking in these areas, particularly among northern European Protestant communities. For instance, in Muncie, Indiana, the number of saloons dropped significantly because respected leaders chose to abstain from alcohol.



Despite this apparent success, the reality revealed a different narrative. Reports indicated that overall alcohol consumption only decreased by about 30% during the Prohibition era. Many Americans, particularly those with disposable income, circumvented the law by stockpiling alcohol in anticipation of Prohibition and continued to partake in drinking. Wealthy individuals leveraged loopholes in the Volstead Act, legally storing vast quantities of liquor before the amendment took effect, often using their connections to maintain access to their preferred beverages.

Interestingly, the mechanisms of Prohibition prompted both elite and working-class Americans to creatively forge their own paths to acquiring alcohol. While affluent citizens would resort to storing their liquor discreetly, the poor took a more grassroots approach. Portable stills became widespread, and illegal alcohol streaming in from Canada began flooding cities soon after Prohibition started. The working class, particularly in immigrant-rich areas, relied on homemade wines. A dramatic incident in Iron River, Michigan highlighted this dynamic after a federal agent's attempt to seize homemade wine led to a local rebellion, showcasing the convergence of interests between different societal classes.

By mid-1920, an estimated 900,000 cases of liquor had been smuggled from Canadian distilleries into the U.S., underscoring the failure of the law to curb drinking among the populace. Customs inspectors encountered humorous yet serious challenges while attempting to enforce Prohibition, especially when

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high-profile political figures participated in clandestine drinking activities without fear of repercussion, hinting at the hypocrisy of the law's enforcement.

As political factions gathered for their summer conventions, discussions surrounding Prohibition remained conspicuously absent. The Republicans and Democrats both hesitated to commit to the topic in their platforms, revealing a growing divide in public sentiment about enforcement. Instead, anecdotes about parties in San Francisco, where local officials turned a blind eye to drinking, captured the mood, as delegates reveled without shame in alcoholic indulgences.

Amid this atmosphere, both Wayne Wheeler, head of the Anti-Saloon League, and Bryan witnessed the political machinations that suggested Prohibition might not hold its ground as initially thought. As internal disputes unfolded and Bryan's resolution to reinforce prohibition was decisively defeated at the Democratic convention, his earlier moments of triumph at the church became overshadowed by a revealed sense of despair. The initial fervor around Prohibition transformed into a grim realization of its complexities and complications, an early indication of the eventual unraveling of the dry era.

Thus, Prohibition, rather than quelling the appetite for alcohol, merely shifted it underground, revealing deeper societal divisions and an enduring



human desire for freedom and pleasure. The inception of the Eighteenth Amendment ignited a complex interplay of moral, legal, and cultural tensions that would shape American society for decades to come.

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Chapter 9: A Fabulous Sweepstakes

Chapter 9 of "Last Call" by Daniel Okrent explores the multifaceted world of Prohibition in the United States, revealing how it profoundly impacted society and governance. The chapter opens with a vivid portrayal of the liquor supply chains that flourished despite the Eighteenth Amendment, highlighting the lengths to which people went to access alcohol. Various regions had developed methods to circumvent prohibition laws: New England sailors smuggled liquor in boats, Philadelphia relied on denatured alcohol from local chemical industries, while Chicago's Genna brothers operated a vast network of home stills. Notably, moonshiners in the South innovated distinct distilling technologies, ensuring a steady supply of illicit spirits.

1. The chapter also delves into the character of President Warren G. Harding, whose personal consumption of alcohol starkly contrasted with his public image as a supporter of Prohibition. Harding, who often engaged with influential figures in his poker games and social gatherings, demonstrated a relaxed attitude toward the Eighteenth Amendment. His administration became known for a lavish lifestyle fueled by illegal liquor, revealing the

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Chapter 10 Summary: Leaks in the Dotted Line

In Chapter 10 of "Last Call" by Daniel Okrent, the narrative follows Sam Bronfman, a key figure in the Canadian liquor industry during Prohibition. The chapter opens with Bronfman's arduous 120-mile dogsled journey through the harsh winter of 1916 in northwestern Ontario, which he undertook in pursuit of a hotel. His goal was to capitalize on the loopholes created by Canada's unique prohibition laws, which, unlike those in the United States, allowed for the continued manufacturing and interprovincial shipment of alcohol, as long as sales remained confined within provincial borders.

1. Opportunity in Prohibition: The broken state of Canadian Prohibition laid the groundwork for Bronfman's ventures into alcohol distribution. While the federal government imposed restrictions, savvy entrepreneurs like Bronfman could exploit provincial laws to navigate around them. The young entrepreneur was determined to secure a hotel with a liquor license, laying the foundation for his family's fortune.

2. Bronfman's Family Background: Born into a Jewish immigrant family from Moldova, Bronfman's early life was marked by humble beginnings. His family transitioned from farming to various commercial enterprises, accumulating enough wealth to invest in small hotels that served liquor, a crucial component of their business model. The change in liquor



distribution policies led them to adapt and thrive despite regulatory challenges.

3. Bootlegging and Legal Gray Areas: The chapter highlights how the Bronfman family capitalized on medicinal liquor prescriptions during Prohibition as a guise to continue selling alcohol legally. This opportunistic approach transformed into large-scale smuggling operations, particularly as the family's activities expanded into the lucrative American market. Their initial imports from American distilleries were distilled and blended before being re-exported to the United States under misleading labels.

4. The Liquor Trade's Impact As the Bronfman operations flourished, they became intertwined with the socio-economic dynamics of the regions they operated in. Local economies benefited from the business, which was significant enough to demand both provincial and federal attention. The Bronfmans crafted a profitable operation that not only enriched their family but also provided employment and tax revenues to their communities.

5. The Competitive Landscape: The narrative showcases the competitive and often dangerous nature of the liquor trade during Prohibition. As Bronfman established his reputation, rivalries and violent incidents underscored the risks involved in the bootlegging industry. The illicit nature of their operations was exemplified through encounters with law enforcement and other criminals, painting a vivid picture of the era's



lawlessness.

6. Judicial Challenges: The chapter introduces Judge Arthur J. Tuttle, an advocate for Prohibition who faced an overwhelming increase in cases pertaining to liquor trafficking. Tuttle's bench saw the emergence of complex legal arguments surrounding the enforcement of Prohibition across the U.S.-Canada border, which often hindered coherent law enforcement efforts.

7. Scotch Warehousing and Partnerships: As demand for liquor surged, the Bronfman brothers sought to strengthen their supply chain by manufacturing their own stock. Their initial strategy included mixing American whiskey before evolving to imports of neutral spirits from Scotland, preparing them for export back to the U.S. The growth of their operations also led to strategic partnerships, notably with the Scottish whiskey industry, solidifying their influence.

8. Cultural and Social Implications: The chapter delves into the anti-Semitic sentiments that the Bronfmans faced while establishing their liquor business, contextualizing their efforts amid existing prejudices against Jewish individuals in Canada. This aspect of their story reflects the broader societal dynamics influencing Jewish entrepreneurship during Prohibition.

9. Expansion and Legacy: Following early successes, the Bronfmans'

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ambitions grew, leading Sam Bronfman to shift operations to Montreal, aiming for access to larger markets in the eastern United States. The chapter chronicles their ambitions and missteps, foretelling the massive impact they would have on the global liquor industry and their eventual transformation into a renowned enterprise.

10. Human Element and Personal Narratives: Personal anecdotes from family members like Saidye Rosner Bronfman illustrate the intricate dynamics of Sam Bronfman's life, depicting him as both dedicated and complex. The narrative paints a rich picture of their travels and the personal sacrifices intertwined with the family's burgeoning business.

In summary, Chapter 10 of "Last Call" intricately weaves the story of Sam Bronfman, revealing how his adventurous spirit, entrepreneurial mindset, and the complexities of Prohibition shaped a legacy that would impact the liquor industry profoundly. The chapter encapsulates themes of ambition, socio-economic challenges, family dynamics, and the cultural landscape of the early 20th century in Canada and the United States.



Chapter 11 Summary: The Great Whiskey Way

In the early days of Prohibition, the 4,125-ton cargo ship Lake Ellerslie left Baltimore filled with a staggering amount of liquor, a harbinger of the dramatic shifts in the American alcohol trade that would follow. As this vessel sailed away, it marked the start of an era defined not by a shortage of alcohol, but rather by an inventive surge in its distribution and consumption. In just a few years, residents of Baltimore would find themselves in a drinking culture that rebounded with astonishing velocity.

1. The Bahamas, particularly Nassau, emerged as a pivotal hub in the underground liquor trade soon after the inception of Prohibition. Streams of ships began arriving at its docks, loaded with varied liquors—Scotch, gin, rum—which were swiftly offloaded to eager bootleggers. As the quantity of alcohol pouring into Nassau skyrocketed from 914 gallons in 1918 to 386,000 gallons by 1922, the local economy blossomed, transforming the typically quiet island into a bustling trading post. The revenue from the alcohol trade significantly changed Nassau's financial landscape, allowing the colony to benefit from new infrastructure such as sewage systems and modern streets.

2. The transformation of Nassau not only boosted the local economy but also saw the emergence of a unique social scene centered around bootlegging. Establishments like the Lucerne Hotel became critical meeting points for



liquor distributors, smugglers, and financiers, fostering a sense of camaraderie amid the lawlessness of the era. Figures like Bill McCoy, a famous smuggler, epitomized this environment, as he became legendary for the scale of his operations, having moved thousands of cases up the Atlantic Coast.

3. The operational mechanisms of smuggling soon adapted to the laws governing Prohibition. Many captains sailing under British flags navigated around American legal restrictions to transport liquor across international waters. Notably, the Dreamland, a barge anchored near North Cat Cay, served as a haven for these illicit activities, facilitating deals with local suppliers and making the illicit liquor trade accessible to those daring enough to engage in it.

4. Humor and creativity flourished in the language of Prohibition during this time. The period introduced numerous slang terms for drunkenness and the culture surrounding speakeasies, some of which emerged from the immediate societal backdrop of prohibition. The ubiquitous use of phrases like “scofflaw” and “rum row” succinctly captured the spirit of the times and reflected a culture that retained its thirst for alcohol despite legal restrictions.

5. The establishment of Rum Row—a collection of anchored vessels just outside American territorial waters—revolutionized how liquor was smuggled into the United States. Ships filled their holds with liquor and



remained stationary, allowing smaller boats to shuttle supplies back to shore under the cover of darkness. This method became remarkably sophisticated, with methods ranging from coded communications to the establishment of “mother ships” that regulated the distribution of liquor.

6. The rum-running operations expanded to include St. Pierre, a French territory off Newfoundland that became a critical stop for the illicit liquor trade. The legendary Bill McCoy was instrumental in converting St. Pierre into a bustling depot for liquor, which transformed local economies and lifestyles as demand surged. The scarcity of local resources turned fishermen into longshoremen, with the financial benefits far outweighing the fish trade.

7. Despite the initial promise and success of the Prohibition-driven bootlegging enterprises, there existed challenges stemming from governmental pressures and inter-agency disputes. The U.S. and British governments engaged in increasingly complex negotiations over jurisdiction and enforcement of laws, revealing tensions in the interplay of international politics and local economies.

In summary, the early Prohibition era sparked an extraordinary shift in America's drinking culture, dramatically transforming economic, social, and linguistic landscapes. By creating intricate networks and systems for the smuggling and distribution of alcohol, figures such as Bill McCoy not only capitalized on demand but also helped forge new identities for both traders



and their communities during this tumultuous time in American history.

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Chapter 12: Blessed Be the Fruit of the Vine

In December 1919, just as Prohibition loomed with the Eighteenth Amendment on the horizon, Horatio F. Stoll launched *California Grape Grower*, a publication dedicated to the California wine industry. Prior to this venture, Stoll had been a vigorous advocate for the region's grape growers and winemakers, actively promoting their products even before the threats of Prohibition began to manifest. Working in various roles—from farm laborer to journalist—Stoll became a prominent voice for the industry and helped shape its image.

As Chief Propagandist for the California Grape Protective Association, Stoll passionately campaigned against Prohibition, blending rhetoric that showcased the historical association of great figures with wine. He argued that the prohibitionists lacked similarly revered advocates, positing that no truly great men existed among their ranks—save for the prophet Mohammed. However, while Stoll's efforts were noteworthy, they couldn't singly account for the industry's resilience, which also relied on the cultural significance of winemaking in California, where an expansive acreage of vineyards contributed significantly to the state's economy.

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Chapter 13 Summary: The Alcohol That Got Away

In Chapter 13 of "Last Call" by Daniel Okrent, the narrative unfolds against the vibrant backdrop of Prohibition in the 1920s, illustrating the complex relationship between medicine, liquor, and societal hypocrisy. At the heart of the chapter is the character Jay Gatsby, who, like many of his contemporaries, thrived during this era, often fueled by the loopholes in the Volstead Act, which prohibited alcohol but permitted its medicinal use.

1. The Allure of Medicinal Alcohol: Gatsby's wealth is scrutinized by Tom Buchanan, who insinuates that Gatsby's riches stem from bootlegging. Unbeknownst to many, the distribution of alcohol for "medicinal purposes" was common practice. Prices for medicinal whiskies were modest, allowing doctors to supplement their incomes as they wrote prescriptions, which pharmacists filled at handsome profits. This system, while ostensibly legal, fostered widespread corruption and manipulation of the Prohibition laws.

2. Historical Context of Medicinal Liquor: The chapter recalls Lydia Estes Pinkham, a notable figure who marketed a herbal tonic containing a significant percentage of alcohol. Despite her reputation as an abolitionist and temperance worker, her concoction was a societal staple for many households, illustrating the contradictions of an era where alcohol was both condemned and widely consumed under the guise of medicine.



3. Gasoline for Growth of Pharmacies: As Prohibition progressed, pharmacists began to profit immensely from the booming trade in medicinal liquor. These establishments, some of which had little regard for their pharmaceutical responsibilities, became havens for illicit sales, often leveraging the facade of legitimacy. Even prominent pharmacy chains expanded rapidly, capitalizing on the demand for alcoholic medicines while disguising their true nature.

4. Emergence of Major Figures: Enterprising individuals like George Remus recognized the lucrative opportunities presented by Prohibition. With a previous background in pharmacy and law, he exploited the system to create a vast bootlegging empire. Remus's operations, from legal acquisition to illegal distribution, highlight how the seemingly strict regulations could be easily bent to serve unscrupulous ends.

5. The Industrial Alcohol Racket: Most of the alcohol consumed during Prohibition was derived from industrial alcohol, which was often denatured to make it undrinkable. However, clever chemists found ways to purify this alcohol, enabling the illicit production and distribution of potent liquor. The scams and corruption surrounding this process underscore the industry's adaptability in navigating legal restrictions.

6. Failures of Enforcement: Attempted enforcement by figures such as General Smedley Butler illustrated the futility of trying to uphold



Prohibition laws in a climate rife with corruption. His efforts were undermined by the wealth and influence of bootleggers who bribed law enforcement and public officials, ultimately revealing the deep entrenchment of organized crime within the fabric of society.

7. Closure and Consequences: The chapter wraps up by evoking the bitter irony that, despite the intent behind Prohibition, the resulting legal framework allowed for rampant exploitation and the emergence of a lucrative black market. The legacies of individuals like Remus persisted long after the laws changed, serving as testament to the indomitable human spirit of entrepreneurship, regardless of ethical considerations.

This chapter encapsulates the fluctuating dynamics of morality, legality, and the pursuit of wealth during a time when the American societal landscape was deeply affected by both the desire to curtail vice and the ingenuity of individuals eager to capitalize on the resulting contradictions.



Chapter 14 Summary: The Way We Drank

Chapter 14 of Daniel Okrent's "Last Call" examines the evolution of American drinking culture during the Prohibition era, emphasizing the societal shifts, literary reflections, and the impact of this tumultuous period on both public behavior and private lives.

1. The expectations of literature during Prohibition were portrayed humorously by Life magazine, suggesting that characters would turn to innocent drinks like chocolate soda. However, authors like F. Scott Fitzgerald and William Faulkner painted a different picture, showcasing characters deeply entrenched in the culture of excessive drinking. Fitzgerald's portrayal of Gloria Patch, along with Faulkner's Gowan Stevens, illustrates a rebellious spirit against the norms of sobriety.
2. The pervasive presence of drinking in the 1920s literature was not merely an artistic choice; it mirrored the broader American experience. A burgeoning drinking culture emerged among the young and fashionable, which many argued was not a result of Prohibition but rather a continuation of existing societal trends. Post-World War I disillusionment fueled this shift, as youth sought new outlets for behavior that contradicted the moral standards of their predecessors.
3. Writers like Willa Cather chose to depict less alcohol-soaked narratives,



contrasting with their contemporaries, yet still recognized the transformation occurring in American society. The decade marked a significant shift in social interactions, with mixed-gender drinking parties becoming commonplace, leading to a dramatic shift in how women participated in public drinking culture.

4. The speakeasy emerged as a key institution for illicit drinking, providing not just alcohol but also a venue for socializing. These establishments thrived in their ability to operate under the radar, with creative methods devised to avoid detection, including secretive warnings and ingenious mechanisms to hide alcohol from law enforcement.

5. The landscape of drinking in urban centers, particularly New York, was rich with diversity. Speakeasies catered to different races and classes, offering a form of social integration previously unseen. However, blatant segregation persisted in some places, highlighting the complex social dynamics of the era.

6. Prohibition also spurred innovation in drinking habits. With the quality of liquor often dubious, people resorted to mixers and new cocktail creations to make the alcohol more palatable. This fostered a wider acceptance of cocktails among middle and upper-class society, making conspicuous consumption a hallmark of the time.



7. The issue of quality and safety took a dark turn as manufacturers adulterated their products, leading to public health crises and the rise of dangerous bootlegged alcohol. The negative consequences of drinking became increasingly evident, especially with rising incidents of public intoxication and alcohol-related health problems, peeling back the glamorous facade of speakeasy culture.

8. Amid this backdrop, the attraction of illegal drinking sessions catalyzed liquor tourism to neighboring countries like Canada and Cuba, drawing people eager for the freedoms Prohibition denied them. These excursions were not merely about drinking; they represented an escapism fueled by the allure of the forbidden.

9. As consuming alcohol became a contentious topic, it also split the nation's youth. Despite warnings from authority figures, underage drinking surged, mirroring trends seen earlier in their parents' generation. Both youth and elderly individuals alike participated, further complicating the narrative of who exactly the Prohibition laws impacted.

10. Ultimately, those who had supported Prohibition, like Pauline Morton Sabin, grew concerned seeing its unintended consequences fostering a culture of excess rather than restraint. She and other reformers felt that Prohibition had not only failed in its moral objectives but had also catalyzed a shift toward a more reckless drinking culture.



The chapter presents a multifaceted view of the Prohibition era, revealing it as a complex intersection of literary reflection, societal norms, and cultural transformation. The drinking habits that flourished during this time reflect both a defiance of authority and a spirited embrace of new social freedoms, weaving a rich tapestry of American life in the 1920s that profoundly shaped the future of drinking culture.

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Chapter 15: Open Wounds

In Chapter 15 of "Last Call" by Daniel Okrent, the political landscape surrounding Prohibition in the 1920s is explored through key figures and events that shaped this volatile period in American history. The chapter opens with Pauline Sabin's reflections on Warren Harding's presidency, particularly his surprising stance on Prohibition enforcement before his death. Harding's lack of commitment to the Prohibition cause foreshadowed the even less enthusiastic approach of his successor, Calvin Coolidge, who viewed government as largely unnecessary and preferred minimal intervention, leading to a reduced budget for Prohibition enforcement despite the ongoing problems.

1. Both presidents shared a notable disinterest in the particulars of enforcing Prohibition, reflecting a broader attitude in their respective administrations: Harding was impetuous while Coolidge was characterized by a "determined inactivity." Coolidge's approach was driven by a belief in limited government, yet he occasionally found it necessary to take action against specific bootlegging operations, albeit with minimal outcomes.

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Chapter 16 Summary: “Escaped on Payment of Money”

In Chapter 16 of "Last Call" by Daniel Okrent, titled "Escaped on Payment of Money," the complex dynamics of the Prohibition era are explored through various perspectives, particularly focusing on the interplay of statistics, societal behavior, and enforcement challenges.

- 1. Influence of Statistics on Prohibition Support:** Prominent figures like economist Irving Fisher rose to prominence in the dry movement, using dubious statistical correlations to argue for the economic benefits of Prohibition. Fisher claimed that alcohol consumption impeded productivity, suggesting that reducing availability could add billions to the national output. However, his conclusions were often naive, failing to consider broader social and economic factors.
- 2. Competing Narratives through Numbers:** Both proponents and opponents of Prohibition twisted statistics to support their views. The Prohibition Commissioner Roy Haynes touted positive societal changes attributed to dry laws, such as increased home construction and declining arrests for "foul language," while others pointed to increases in alcohol-related issues like hospital admissions. As a result, claims of success and failure became an absurd contest of numbers—a phenomenon common throughout the decade.



3. Continued Demand for Alcohol: Despite the legal restrictions, the American populace maintained a strong desire for alcoholic beverages, leading to a surge in illicit consumption. This was evidenced by the flourishing bootlegging industry, highlighting a disconnect between the laws and the populace's appetite for drink. The brewing industry shifted gears by producing near-beer and malt syrup products, attempting to satisfy some of the public's cravings while working around regulations.

4. Corruption within Enforcement: Enforcement efforts were consistently undermined by deep-seated corruption among law officials, ranging from police officers collecting bribes to U.S. attorneys struggling with overwhelming caseloads. The chapter illustrates a climate of inefficiency where enforcement was often more about generating statistics than genuinely curtailing illegal activity. Notably, many violators escaped serious consequences through plea bargains, fines, and various forms of legal loopholes.

5. The Impact of Enforcement Tactics Emory Buckner, a U.S. Attorney, exemplifies the struggle for effective enforcement amid overwhelming odds. He introduced innovative prosecution strategies, including "Bargain Day" for rapid case processing, and implemented civil forfeitures against illicit establishments. However, his methods also drew criticism and backlash from powerful dry advocates, demonstrating the broader conflict between the aims of Prohibition and the realities of enforcement.



6. Perception of Drinking and Criminality: The chapter argues that many in law enforcement failed to comprehend the motivations of drinkers. From the perspective of those enforcing Prohibition, a vast array of societal factors contributed to alcohol consumption, which was often seen simply as a problem of crime. This oversight ultimately fueled a backlash against Prohibition and illustrated the resilience of drinking culture in America.

7. Concluding Observations: The chaotic landscape of Prohibition, marked by widespread ineffectiveness and a continual struggle for authority over the drinking populace, serves as a lens for examining the complexities of human behavior, legality, and morality. The chapter closes with a somber acknowledgment of Prohibition's failures and the inability of the law to change deeply rooted cultural habits, with Buckner's reflections highlighting the apparent futility of such legislative measures.

In summary, this chapter paints a picture of a failed experiment in social engineering where lofty goals collided with innate human desires, resulting in a tangled web of statistics, corruption, and ultimately, a rebellion against the laws intended to enforce sobriety.



Chapter 17 Summary: Crime Pays

In this chapter, the narrative unfolds around Wayne Wheeler, a key figure in the Prohibition movement, and Jim Reed, a prominent senator and vocal opponent of Prohibition. Wheeler, known for his adept management of congressional hearings, faces an unprecedented challenge during the 1926 Senate Judiciary Committee hearings on Prohibition amendments, as Reed assumes a combative leadership role opposing Wheeler's stance. The dynamics shift from managing debate to harsh confrontations, illustrating a changing political landscape where the effectiveness of Prohibition itself is scrutinized.

1. Wheeler's historical ability to outmaneuver congressional opposition is tested by Reed's fierce confrontations during the highly publicized Senate hearings. As these hearings progress, Wheeler attempts to maintain composure, but Reed's sarcasm and bitter attacks significantly alter the proceedings.
2. The hearings highlight the division between "wets" (those in favor of repealing Prohibition) and "dries" (those supporting Prohibition), setting the stage for an intense public confrontation. Reed's tactics shift the focus from the merits of Prohibition to the failures of law enforcement, questioning the very principle of Prohibition.



3. The rise of organized crime during Prohibition becomes a focal point, underscoring the implications of the law on American society. As the illegal liquor trade flourishes, gangs establish a national network, leading to increased violence and complexity in the crime landscape, with figures like Al Capone emerging as notorious criminals.

4. Throughout the chapter, the financial gains from bootlegging illustrate the enormous economic impact of Prohibition, with illegal liquor sales reaching billions. This financial influence fosters political corruption, as officials find themselves compromised or engaged in facilitating Prohibition-related crime instead of enforcing laws against it.

5. The evolving legal framework surrounding Prohibition sees a notable judicial rewriting of the Fourth Amendment protections against unreasonable search and seizure, reflecting the conflict between civil rights and government enforcement efforts. Court rulings during this time begin to challenge previous interpretations of individual rights, emphasizing the broader implications of enforcing Prohibition.

6. The chapter culminates in a climactic public debate between Wheeler and defense attorney Clarence Darrow, where Wheeler's health and resolve are tested against a hostile audience. Despite his strong command of facts, the overwhelming sentiment against him signals a shift in public opinion.



7. As Prohibition intensifies national debates on law enforcement and civil liberties, the narrative reveals broader societal shifts, asking fundamental questions about justice, morality, and governance in a nation grappling with the consequences of its laws.

Ultimately, this chapter illustrates the multifaceted and tumultuous environment surrounding Prohibition, characterized by political maneuvering, societal upheaval, and the rise of organized crime—all of which would have lasting effects on American law and culture. The struggle depicted between Wheeler and Reed not only encapsulates a crucial moment in the Prohibition era but also reflects the tensions inherent in governance amid a divided public.

Key Themes	Description
Wayne Wheeler vs. Jim Reed	Wheeler faces significant opposition from Reed during the 1926 Senate Judiciary Committee hearings on Prohibition, marking a shift from debate management to confrontational exchanges.
Political Divisions	The hearings highlight the division between "wets" (favoring repeal) and "dries" (supporting Prohibition), focusing discussions on law enforcement failures.
Organized Crime	The chapter discusses the rise of organized crime and its implications as illegal liquor trade flourishes, with figures like Al Capone emerging.
Economic Impact	Bootlegging leads to significant financial gains, resulting in political corruption as officials become involved in facilitating crime rather than enforcing Prohibition laws.
Judicial	Judicial interpretations of the Fourth Amendment change, reflecting the

Key Themes	Description
Rewriting	tensions between civil liberties and government enforcement during Prohibition.
Public Debate	The chapter culminates in a debate between Wheeler and Clarence Darrow, revealing shifting public sentiment against Wheeler despite his factual command.
Societal Shifts	Prohibition sparks national debates on law enforcement, civil liberties, and fundamental questions about justice and governance amid societal upheaval.

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Critical Thinking

Key Point: The Importance of Public Opinion in Governance

Critical Interpretation: As you consider the intense confrontations between Wheeler and Reed during the Senate hearings, remember that your voice, like the voices in the 1926 public debate on Prohibition, holds immense power. In a world where laws and policies significantly affect society, your engagement in civic discussions can sway opinions and shift governance. This chapter serves as a reminder that even the most solid positions can be challenged and changed by the collective will of the people, inspiring you to advocate for what you believe in and participate actively in shaping the decisions that govern your life. Harness the passion and commitment demonstrated in those heated debates to influence change in your community and stand firm in your convictions.



Chapter 18: The Phony Referendum

Chapter 18 of "Last Call" delves into the complex political landscape of Prohibition in the United States during the late 1920s, highlighting the interactions among various key figures and movements. Here are the main points summarized for enhanced readability and logical flow:

1. **Political Alliances Despite Ideological Differences**:

Pauline Sabin supported James Wadsworth Jr., despite their differing views on alcohol prohibition. Wadsworth, a wealthy and established Republican, was seen as a wet, while Sabin had yet to abandon the dry cause. Their shared elite background and Republican pedigree created a strong bond between them.

2. **Factional Divisions Within the New York Republican Party**:

In the 1926 Senate elections, Wadsworth faced significant challenges. The Anti-Saloon League's nomination of Franklin W. Cristman as a dry candidate against him revealed a split within the party, with many conservatives backing Wadsworth and the extremists supporting Cristman. This division ultimately allowed Democratic candidate Robert F. Wagner to

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Chapter 19 Summary: Outrageous Excess

In December 1928, amidst the backdrop of Prohibition in America, business magnate John J. Raskob made a conspicuous purchase of liquor, showcasing the hidden reality of consumption among affluent circles despite staunch public opposition to alcohol. Raskob's claim of disinterest in drinking belied his secret indulgences, revealing a hypocrisy common among the elite. Individuals in wealthy circles, including notable figures like automobile executives, were more openly navigating Prohibition, casting aside pretense while still meticulously critiquing their dry counterparts.

Prominent dry advocates such as U.S. Senator James Wadsworth and Treasury Secretary Andrew Mellon exhibited their duality in stance. While publicly condemning Prohibition violations, their personal lives often contradicted their public personas. On the other hand, Pauline Sabin, a Republican figure, shifted her loyalty toward the wet movement after perceiving the flawed nature of Prohibition, sparked by President Hoover's inaugural address which emphasized law enforcement over reevaluation of the law itself. Reflecting a larger cultural shift, she and other women formed organizations to push against the Prohibition framework rather than simply advocating for reform.

Meanwhile, the aftermath of the 1928 election saw an extreme reaction from dry proponents who misinterpreted the electoral results as a mandate. Bishop



James Cannon Jr., a leading dry voice, sought harsher penalties for liquor violations through the enactment of the Jones Law, which transformed misdemeanor alcohol offenses into felonies, establishing necessary repercussions such as significant fines and prison terms. However, this legislative move backfired, inciting public outrage and increasing the perception that the law was absurdly severe.

The peace of urban America was shaken by mounting violence linked to Prohibition. Al Capone's media-savvy maneuvering, coupled with the chaos between rival gangs, exemplified lawlessness as the public increasingly associated Prohibition with violence and crime. The notorious events of 1929, including shootouts and public executions, captured public sentiment and led to public disapproval of the dry cause.

Throughout this turbulent period, hypocrisy within the government became painfully evident. A series of scandals began to surface, revealing dry politicians indulging in illicit trade while simultaneously supporting oppressive legislation. Prominent figures, including Members of Congress, faced embarrassing exposés over violations of Prohibition, which fueled public cynicism.

As public opinion swayed, the first signs of dissent against the imbued dry regime appeared, particularly as the stock market crash and the Great Depression loomed and began to dismantle the dry stronghold. These



elements, combined with the systemic failures of Prohibition enforcement and rising crime rates, underlined a paradigm shift that foreshadowed the eventual repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment, marking an end to the national experiment with temperance.

In summary, the unique intersection of wealth and legality during Prohibition, coupled with the hypocrisy of its strongest proponents and rampant social unrest, fueled mounting dissatisfaction that foreshadowed a significant shift in American legal and social landscapes leading into the 1930s.

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Critical Thinking

Key Point: The hypocrisy of Prohibition advocates highlights the importance of integrity and authenticity in our lives.

Critical Interpretation: As you navigate your own personal and professional landscape, consider the value of staying true to your beliefs and actions. The era of Prohibition illustrated the dangers of double standards, where public figures condemned behaviors they themselves indulged in. This chapter serves as a reminder that true leadership and credibility stem from consistency between words and actions. If you strive to lead authentically, you not only foster trust in your relationships but also inspire others to act with integrity. In a world often rife with contradiction, let the lessons of history guide you towards a path of genuine commitment to your principles.



Chapter 20 Summary: The Hummingbird That Went to Mars

The four-year journey from the stock market crash to the eventual repeal of Prohibition was marked by persistent skepticism and resistance, especially among the supporters of the dry movement. By January 1932, many leaders, including those from influential publications such as the New York Times, believed that repealing the Eighteenth Amendment was virtually impossible—a sentiment echoed by public figures like Clarence Darrow and James Montgomery Beck. These advocates argued against the feasibility of securing a Twenty-first Amendment, highlighting the formidable logistical and political hurdles involved and predicting that the matter could not be resolved for decades.

Despite the prevailing despondency among pro-repeal advocates, unanticipated sources of foresight began to emerge, notably from members of organizations like the Union League Club in Manhattan, who took a gamble on the imminent end of Prohibition. Their perspective signaled a growing sense that the dry era was drawing to a close.

The stock market crash further weakened the dry movement, causing a significant decline in enforcement capabilities. With the economy in freefall, resources for the Prohibition Bureau dwindled. Even Prohibition's staunch advocates like economist Irving Fisher, who had once professed faith in a



stable stock market, saw their credibility falter as they failed to adequately account for the economic storm brewing in the nation.

Amidst rising discontent over the enforcement of Prohibition, the business environment shifted as opportunities for illegal alcohol surged. Major corporate figures like Pierre du Pont and John Raskob moved to shift attention from the ethics of Prohibition to the fiscal implications, suggesting that Repeal could pave the way for the end of the income tax as government coffers could be refilled through alcohol taxation. These arguments gained traction as the drain of economic resources continued.

Additionally, the societal landscape shifted as illicit drinking became commonplace, with alcohol being purchased in formerly inconceivable locations. The burgeoning moonshine industry yielded profitable enterprises, and creative means to produce alcohol at home flourished, illustrating the public's resistance to Prohibition.

As political tides began to lean towards the wet side, influential women's organizations, particularly the Women's Organization for National Prohibition Reform (WONPR), began to play a pivotal role in reshaping public and political sentiment. Under the leadership of figures like Pauline Sabin, the WONPR attracted societal elite members and broadened its appeal, leveraging their social status to challenge the complications of Prohibition, which was increasingly deemed ineffective amid rising crime



and rampant illegal drinking.

Significant challenges to the dry paradigm also arose from within the Republican party, where influential figures began to shift toward supporting Repeal in response to the pressures of the Depression. Prominent party members, who had once championed Prohibition, apprehensively conceded ground as the appeal of Repeal gained momentum.

As the 1932 presidential election approached, Franklin Delano Roosevelt's campaign embraced Prohibition's repeal as part of a wider platform promising economic revival. This platform resonated with the public weary from economic strife, framing Repeal as not only an opportunity to restore civil liberties but also as a means to alleviate the economic burdens intensified by the Great Depression.

Once in office, Roosevelt began the legislative process for repeal swiftly, with Congress voting overwhelmingly in favor of the Twenty-first Amendment in early 1933. The moment marked a historic shift as the Eighteenth Amendment was repealed, ushering in an era where the taxation of alcohol could supplement governmental revenue, thereby satisfying both the public's desire for alcoholic beverages and the government's need for finances during a dire economic period.

Ultimately, the end of Prohibition was celebrated across the country,

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signaling a dramatic social shift as the nation moved from an era of clandestine drinking back to open appreciation of alcohol, while also highlighting the failures of Prohibition as a social policy. The ripple effects of this change would echo throughout American culture and governance for decades to come, marking a significant turning point in the nation's approach to personal liberties and commercial regulations.

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Chapter 21: Afterlives, and the missing man

In the wake of Wayne B. Wheeler's death in 1927, Prohibition's architect faded into obscurity, with historical accounts largely omitting his name despite the significant impact he made on American society. Wheeler, once a formidable force in the movement to outlaw alcohol, saw his influence disintegrate post-Repeal, becoming a mere footnote in history. His allies took varied paths: James M. Doran transitioned from regulating alcohol to leading a liquor industry association, and figures like Izzy Einstein, Mabel Willebrandt, and Andrew J. Volstead attempted to redefine their legacies, though they struggled to escape their Prohibition past.

1. **Wheeler's Legacy**: Wheeler, the unnamed father of Prohibition, passed into obscurity as the movement he championed disintegrated. Over the decades, he barely registered in newspapers, marking a significant disparity between his influence and his historical remembrance. Prohibition, while a national experience, did not retain its architect in memory, reflecting the transient nature of political legacies.

2. **Post-Prohibition Transformations**: Many individuals

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Best Quotes from Last Call by Daniel Okrent with Page Numbers

Chapter 1 | Quotes from pages 13-26

1. "If a family or a nation is sober, nature in its normal course will cause them to rise to a higher civilization. If... debauched by liquor, it must decline and ultimately perish."
—Richmond P. Hobson
2. "Americans drank from the crack of dawn to the crack of dawn." —W. J. Rorabaugh
3. "Intoxicating liquor used by everybody, repudiated by nobody." —Abraham Lincoln
4. "Moderate Drinking Is the Downhill Road to Intemperance and Drunkenness."
—William Lloyd Garrison
5. "Those whom they desire to convince and persuade are their old friends and companions. They know they are not demons." —Abraham Lincoln
6. "We should be hardly better than a nation of sots." —George Ticknor
7. "Snap your burning chains, ye denizens of the pit." —John Bartholomew Gough
8. "Cath the universal ear and set the key of that mighty orchestra..." —Frances Willard
9. "I have cared very little about food, indeed, very little about anything, except the matter in hand." —Frances Willard
10. "The day is surely coming when... trained haters of alcohol will pour a whole Niagara of ballots upon the saloon." —Mary Hunt

Chapter 2 | Quotes from pages 27-35

1. "I was a bulldog running along at the feet of Jesus, barking at what He doesn't like."



2. "They need me," she explained.
3. "The public could see by my editorials that I was not insane."
4. "I ran behind the bar, smashed the mirror and all the bottles under it; picked up the cash register, threw it down."
5. "The prayer, the agitation, the indoctrination, and the political activity had to some degree worked."
6. "Mr. Cook was sheriff and I was treated very nicely by him and Mrs. Cook."
7. "The saloon offered something very valuable: in the best cases companionship and comfort, in the worst an escape into oblivion."
8. "His dead self would stir in him."
9. "Life was different. Men talked with great voices, laughed great laughs, and there was an atmosphere of greatness."
10. "It may cost us millions and even more, but what of it if thereby we elevate our position?"

Chapter 3 | Quotes from pages 36-50

1. The town of Oberlin, Ohio, named for an Alsatian cleric who ministered to the poor, was founded in 1833 by two Presbyterian clergymen who chose 'to plant a colony somewhere in this region whose chief aim will be to glorify God & do good to men.'
2. From its very beginning the colony and the eponymous school at its heart attracted men and women desperate to change the world.
3. Strategically focused, the ASL could more effectively apply its intimidating tactics.
4. The Anti-Saloon League is not in politics as a party, nor are we trying to abolish



vice, gambling, horse-racing, murder, theft or arson.

5. Never again will any political party ignore the protests of the church and the moral forces of the state.

6. The real secret of the League's success is its unrivaled opportunity to reach the hundreds of thousands of churchgoers while they are in church and through their pastors.

7. The Anti-Saloon League may not have been the first broad-based American pressure group, but it certainly was the first to develop the tactics and the muscle necessary to rewrite the Constitution.

8. Wayne Wheeler was a 'locomotive in trousers.'

9. This one thing we do.

10. The league was also 'the most autocratic, the most dictatorial, as well as the most dangerous power ever known in the politics of this country.'

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Chapter 4 | Quotes from pages 51-61

1. "Open fire on the enemy."
2. "My personal belief as to prohibition, pro or con, is nobody's business but my own."
3. "I do not know how you may feel about this, but I would rather die than run from such a conflict."
4. "The chief cry against national prohibition has been that the government must have the revenue. Now... the adoption of the Income Tax Amendment to the Federal Constitution furnishes an answer to the revenue problem."
5. "Alcohol was an acquired taste. It had been painfully acquired."
6. "The only hope of the Anti-Saloon League's success lies in putting the ballot into the hands of women."
7. "When woman has the ballot, she will vote solid for prohibition."
8. "The social revolution that was the suffrage movement would bring the Prohibition movement to the brink of success."
9. "We are teaching these crooks that breaking promises to us is surer punishment than going back on their bosses, and some day they will learn that all over the United States—and we'll have national prohibition."
10. "It must be evident to every logical mind that what is needed is an additional balance of power... sure to throw itself into the scale against the saloon."

Chapter 5 | Quotes from pages 62-74

1. I do not desire nor will I tolerate your scurrilous contumely.
2. He got along without their society so well that he saw no reason for resuming it.



3. I saw black men carry our flag on Santiago Hill.
4. Because the white man is supreme in this country, it is the white man's responsibility to give absolute justice to the black man.
5. All men are the same.
6. In the name of your manhood, in the name of your patriotism, in the name of all that is held dear by good men, in the name of your fireside, in the name of our institutions, I call on you to join hands with me and each one to do his full duty.
7. He fought not for results but for causes.
8. Seek the enfranchisement of women everywhere.
9. Take the offensive everywhere. Attack! Attack! Attack!
10. What is the object of this resolution? It is to destroy the agency that debauches the youth of the land.

Chapter 6 | Quotes from pages 75-84

1. The party of change will always be more motivated than the party of the status quo.
2. Inertia will not hold against the press of passion.
3. Once the ASL, the WCTU, and the other antialcohol zealots acquired the support of other political movements...the results were catalytic.
4. Even if one ignored the predatory brewers and distillers, it would have been difficult for this average American to find someone to identify with on the wet side of the political ledger.
5. The Non-Drinkers had been organizing for fifty years and the Drinkers had no organization whatever. They had been too busy drinking.



6. Among his own, he could be eminently practical.
7. Men vote as they pray rather than as they drink.
8. One of those Civil War amendments that posed the last roadblock to congressional approval of constitutional Prohibition.
9. The principles of State rights are as sacred as the virtue of the vestal virgins.
10. In the end, though, when the Eighteenth Amendment was brought to a vote...they were able to pry from the wet column nine southern and border state Democrats.





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Chapter 7 | Quotes from pages 85-99

1. "I want people to know what I mean and that's why I try to get down where they live."
2. "I will fight them till hell freezes over, then I'll buy a pair of skates and fight 'em on the ice."
3. "The liquor interests hate Billy Sunday as they hate no other man."
4. "I have no interest in a God who does not smite."
5. "How can we justify the making of any part of our breadstuffs into intoxicating liquor when men are crying out for bread?"
6. "The problem of what to do with the farm surplus will be solved in a jiffy; the children of drunkards will consume this surplus in the form of flap-jacks for breakfast."
7. "The business of manufacturing alcohol, liquor and beer will go out of the hands of law-abiding members of the community, and will be transferred to the quasi criminal class."
8. "Prohibition was written into the Constitution with as much deliberation as attended the enactment of any amendment to the Constitution."
9. "I will gradually work out the machinery that will, with the cooperation of the states, make the country dry, we cannot hope that this law can be enforced so as not to be violated. All laws will be violated."
10. "These were not necessarily anomalies; it became clear as the race to ratification accelerated through 1918 and into early 1919."

Chapter 8 | Quotes from pages 100-109



1. "Equal Pay for Equal Work," would be unveiled in a week and would resonate for decades.
2. "No man living" would ever see the Volstead Act modified.
3. "They are dead that sought the young child's life!"
4. "We were all elated by the marked decrease in so-called disorderly conduct."
5. "We learned to drink milk as never before."
6. "They drink this in preference to water. They carry it to their work in their dinner pails and they won't work without it."
7. "If your honors... shall find a way to uphold the validity of this amendment, the government of the United States, as we have known it, will have ceased to exist."
8. "The selfless patriots who financed Root's legal challenge—the brewers, of course—likely imagined that, too."
9. "It is as necessary as coffee to the average American and tea to the average Englishman."
10. "My heart is in the grave."

Chapter 9 | Quotes from pages 110-123

1. "Life has few petted darlings."
2. "Who drinks bootleg drinks with Death."
3. "I refuse to believe that out of our one hundred and twenty million population . . . it is impossible to find four thousand men in the United States who can not be bought."
4. "Politics first, law enforcement second, has been the order."



5. "This is an unbought victory, and ten times as valuable on that account."
6. "I would say let the black man vote when he is fit to vote; prohibit the white man voting when he is unfit to vote."
7. "Warren Harding could get his drinks from Taylor, his manservant . . . who kept it stocked with bourbon and Scotch."
8. "Every imaginable brand of whisky . . . cards and poker chips ready at hand—a general atmosphere of the waistcoat unbuttoned, feet on the desk, and the spittoon alongside."
9. "Mabel Willebrandt, aka 'the Prohibition Portia,' possessor of 'one of the keenest legal minds in the United States.'"
10. "Many of them are well-meaning, sentimental and dry, but they can't catch crooks."





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Chapter 10 | Quotes from pages 124-134

1. "I could hardly face the return trip. All that son-of-a-bitch could shoot was deer."
2. "I just did."
3. "You were somebody if you had money."
4. "Work? Me work? Only suckers work."
5. "The liquor business in Saskatchewan is controlled by me."
6. "This operation from the beginning was one man. You've probably gathered that."
7. "The Bronfmans would expect to be represented on the board of the Holding Company, but as this would be a private company and not a Trading concern their connection with same, even if known, should not affect the business prejudicially."
8. "A certain quantity of the liquor the family had put on those boats had somehow ended up in the United States."
9. "Interest is the greatest invention in the history of the world."
10. "The alchemy of desire led them to start manufacturing their own stock."

Chapter 11 | Quotes from pages 135-146

1. "A void precisely the size of the 34,667 cases and 1,860 barrels in its capacious hold."
2. "The liquor business had already transformed the Bahama Government's financial condition as if by magic from a deficit to a comparatively huge surplus."
3. "The conditions supervening in the United States early in 1920 brought Nassauvians into the twentieth century."
4. "The men who made the greatest fortunes in Nassau never sailed a ship nor sold to



any person in the United States a pint of booze."

5. "Each time [I] took 5,000 cases of Scotch [out of the harbor], I left \$30,000 in the hands of the customs authorities."

6. "Rum Row... was like going to a supermarket."

7. "Hundreds of such men were operating out of every one of the liquor ports, boosting their earning power and the economic health of their communities."

8. "For all the factors that made St. Pierre so attractive...the most important to the Canadians was its status as part of metropolitan France."

9. "A State is only responsible for the enforcement of its own laws, and he had no obligation to implement the laws of another nation."

10. "Prohibition was an affront to the whole history of mankind."

Chapter 12 | Quotes from pages 147-162

1. "Has there ever been a prohibitionist who was a really great man . . . unless it be Mohammed, the first prohibitionist?"

2. "Lulled into a sense of false security . . . ,' Stoll explained, 'the grape growers announced they were going to make wine, because the ban would surely be lifted before the crop was ready to be harvested."

3. "Everywhere he traveled the vines were heavy with fruit and the disposition of the growers was as sunny as the California skies."

4. "The unexpected demand for fresh wine grapes from Eastern cities and buyers . . . offering from \$25 to \$30 per ton... turned out to be a goldmine for those who saw it coming."



5. "Over here, several odd-looking trucks with crushing machines and eight-hundred-gallon tanks mounted on their beds are pulled up next to freight cars; they're in competition with the operators in the abandoned warehouses nearby."
6. "Grapes are so valuable this year that they are being stolen."
7. "When the growers had retooled their operations to meet the clamorous demand, a robust, elaborate, and entirely legal distribution system had developed."
8. "You could tell who the growers were by their silk shirts and Cadillacs."
9. "Mainly, the growers' ability to adapt quickly to the changing landscape of the market kept them afloat during turbulent times."
10. "The willingness to innovate and embrace change can lead to unexpected prosperity."





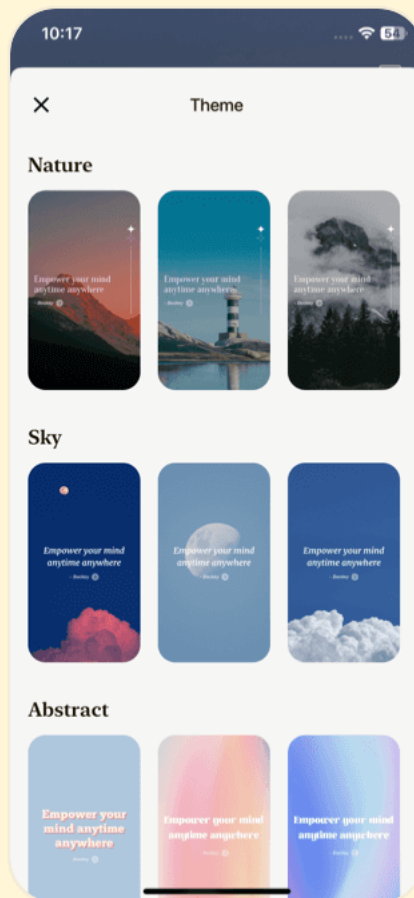
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Chapter 13 | Quotes from pages 163-172

1. "Opportunity bred ingenuity."
2. "In the early stages of the medicinal liquor business, a clever Chicago lawyer named George Remus looked at Prohibition and said, 'I saw a chance to make a clean-up.'"
3. "He learned there isn't enough money in the world to buy up all the public officials who demand a share."
4. "The day has passed in Philadelphia when societies and organizations can hold banquets in big hotels and serve liquor."
5. "Success is often about being in the right place at the right time."
6. "A gallon of alcohol flowed into the bootleg trade through a process that was only superficially complicated."
7. "It was a chance to make a living—and a lot of money—without any direct contact with the illegal trade."
8. "In the carnival of corruption, Philadelphia was the big top."
9. "The revelation of Union National's complicity in Hoff's racket led to the resignation of its president, Joseph S. McCulloch."
10. "Emory Buckner, U.S. attorney for the Southern District of New York, saw it differently: the industrial alcohol business...was 'a perfect carnival of corruption.'"

Chapter 14 | Quotes from pages 173-188

1. "Nobody stays at home anymore."
2. "The world broke in two in 1922 or thereabouts."
3. "A pretty girl in a speakeasy was the most beautiful girl in the world."



4. "Prohibition would do more than close the saloon; it would also let domestic drinking out of the closet."
5. "The light laughter of soprano voices rings now where once sodden male wretches stood and sang Mother Machree."
6. "The night clubs have done more to improve race relations in ten years than the churches, white and black, have done in ten decades."
7. "As you sail away, far beyond the range of amendments and thou-shaltnots, those dear little iced things begin to appear, sparkling aloft on their crystal stems."
8. "This is not a case of the revolt of the youth but a case in which youth is led by the revolt of middle age."
9. "Prohibition has become an attempt to enthrone hypocrisy as the dominant force in this country."
10. "Drinking is done almost everywhere, by almost everybody."

Chapter 15 | Quotes from pages 189-205

1. "It will warp the whole political fabric, prevent clear thinking—even by those who are capable of thinking clearly, and hide the merits of the men who run for office in a fog of feeling."
2. "If the federal government should go out of existence, the common run of people would not detect the difference in the affairs of their daily life for a considerable length of time."
3. "The courtly, Yale-educated Sheppard... rose each year on January 16 to commemorate the anniversary of the amendment's ratification with speeches layered in



Shakespearean eloquence and brightened by his sunny optimism."

4. "Prohibition was not voted into existence by total abstainers, nor was the abstinence of elected officials essential to its maintenance."

5. "The un-dry had a cobbled-together alliance of their own, a vocal wet caucus had formed in Congress."

6. "The situation grows more and more menacing... It is the city versus the country. That is, the wet versus the dry."

7. "It is not best for America that her councils be dominated by semicivilized foreign colonies in Boston, New York, Chicago."

8. "Prohibition created dazzling opportunities for the children of the immigrant slums."

9. "They were not content to rely on the phenomenon reported... a reverse diaspora that had immigrants returning voluntarily to their European homelands because, they declare, America has gone dry, which they consider tyranny."

10. "What mattered was Sackett's vote on the Senate floor, and had he (or any other dry) been inclined to wander during the nose counting it would not have been for lack of discipline."





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Chapter 16 | Quotes from pages 206-221

1. If I am licked, I will have the satisfaction of knowing that I was licked by things from the outside and by nothing inside of myself.
2. It seems an impossible thing to persuade those who want law enforcement that what is required here in this district is less enforcement.
3. A bootlegger is making his money as honest as some of these nice honest-to-goodness people.
4. Not by the next general election, but by the next generation.
5. To call such proceedings 'law enforcement' is a farce.
6. The man who buys liquor when he is thirsty for it is not a criminal in the sense that a check forger or thief is a criminal.
7. Even a decline in arrests for offenses against chastity can't be taken at face value.
8. The numbers became a jump ball, each side trying to tip them toward its own goal.
9. It was as if the ASL zealots had come to believe that enforcement of the dry laws was more important than their effectiveness.
10. I found that the great United States Court in the Southern District of New York had degenerated into whatever is in the subcellar under a police court.

Chapter 17 | Quotes from pages 222-239

1. "The very fact that the law is difficult to enforce, is the clearest proof of the need of its existence."
2. "No one can hold the confidence of his pupils or associates who cannot keep a smiling exterior, no matter how disturbed he is inside."



3. "The business pays very well, but it is outside the law and they can't go to court...s they naturally shoot."
4. "If the Senator's theory is that alcohol is so poisonous, then why put poison in it?"
5. "Those of us who don't like Prohibition ought to stop complaining and organize and get rid of it, or shut up."
6. "Prohibition will fall into 'disrepute' and suffer 'irreparable harm' if the American public concludes that 'universal snooping' is favored for enforcing the Eighteenth Amendment."
7. "Crime may have been rampant, and illegal liquor may have been everywhere. But that did not mean he lacked an explanation."
8. "Did you ever hear of a man eating so much pie or cake or anything of that kind that he'd go home and shoot up the family?"
9. "We knew the officers and they knew us, the same as you know football players on another team."
10. "I give the public what the public wants. I never had to send out high pressure salesmen. Why, I could never meet the demand."

Chapter 18 | Quotes from pages 240-256

1. "As intelligent as she was beautiful, as energetic as she was elegant, Sabin engaged the Republican Party with the same vitality she brought to her luminous social life."
2. "Emancipated by defeat, he spent 1927 traveling the country, making the case not for the legalization of wine and beer, or for a redefinition of 'intoxicating,' but for outright Repeal."



3. "The fashionable rich demand their rum as an inalienable class privilege."
4. "He literally worked all the time."
5. "His loss would merely mean an increased devotion on his part to the cause in which he was enlisted."
6. "There is demand for action and publicity of action against 'Mr. and Mrs. Prominent Citizen.'"
7. "It would be the first time in his life Pierre had been part of something more expansive than his family business."
8. "Another important factor is the tremendous loss of revenue to our Government through the Prohibition laws."
9. "On the whole, there is much to strive for."
10. "A candidate appealing to new citizens and other hyphenates drew nearly twice as many votes as had either James Cox in 1920 or John Davis in 1924."





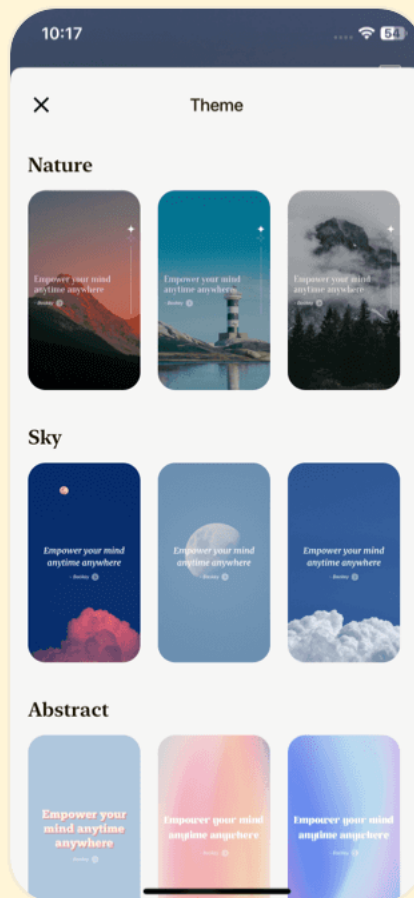
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Chapter 19 | Quotes from pages 257-269

1. What thou doest, do quickly.
2. We had no name for our organization. All that we had was youth, strength, and conviction.
3. If a law is wrong, its rigid enforcement is the surest guarantee of its repeal.
4. Public service is my motto.
5. Our only regret is that the woman was not sentenced to life imprisonment before her ten children were born.
6. The worst evil of disregard for some law is that it destroys respect for all law.
7. Without the one, you couldn't have had the other.
8. We have become accustomed to outrageous excesses.
9. The most menacing piece of repressive legislation that has stained the statute books of this republic since the Alien and Sedition laws.
10. It would be a great pity to have Detroit's two leading industries destroyed at one blow.

Chapter 20 | Quotes from pages 270-290

1. "The Eighteenth Amendment cannot be repealed within a decade and possibly not within a generation."
2. "If he can never buy a drink without repealing the Eighteenth Amendment, he had better start right in learning to make his own."
3. "Here's the good news, said Doran: in Prohibition's first nine years, the government had spent some \$141 million on all forms of enforcement...while collecting more than



\$460 million in fines, penalties, and taxes—a profit..."

4. "When people are ripe for reform, the laws will take care of themselves.

Until then, they are useless."

5. "What once was hidden had burst into the open."

6. "The hummingbird to fly to the planet Mars with the Washington Monument tied to its tail."

7. "The real strength of the Sabin organization...lies in the desire of the small-town matron to ally herself...with a congregation of bona fide, rotogravure society figures."

8. "Many a white woman has been saved from the polluting touch of lustful vengeance, and many a Negro man has been saved from the gallows or the flames."

9. "A woman of fine intelligence and breeding is Mrs. Charles H. Sabin."

10. "There could have been no clearer demonstration of the domestication of drink..."

Chapter 21 | Quotes from pages 291-303

1. No other private citizen of the United States has left such an impress upon national history.

2. Anything I might say could do nobody any good.

3. The end of Prohibition had been 'the one great disappointment and abiding sorrow' of his life.

4. By opposing the dominant position of the WCTU and its allies, Sabin and the WONPR proved that women were not a monolithic political bloc.

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5. Mr. de Latour has expended a fortune this fall. He has furnished many men with work, paid good wages and contributed to the well-being of many families in the valley.
6. The sheer magnitude of the recollections is more important than the veracity of the individual stories.
7. There can only be one atmosphere of government, the clear, pure, fresh air of free America, or the foul air of communistic Russia.
8. Prohibition cleared the field.
9. In every respect perfectly legal.
10. I acknowledge my mistake. The effort should have been directed against the XVIth Amendment.





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Last Call Discussion Questions

Chapter 1 | Thunderous Drums and Protestant Nuns | Q&A

1.Question:

What historical context does the author provide regarding America's long-standing relationship with alcohol?

America has been deeply intertwined with alcohol consumption almost since its founding. The chapter highlights how early Americans, including the Puritans, had a culture that accepted substantial drinking, using it in social interactions and daily life. For instance, John Winthrop's ship carried significantly more wine and beer than water, illustrating the central role alcohol played even in colonization. By the 1830s, per capita consumption of pure alcohol reached remarkable levels, leading to significant social consequences, including widespread drunkenness that permeated daily life, influencing everything from work attendance to social gatherings.

2.Question:

How did early temperance movements emerge in response to America's drinking culture, and what was their initial focus?

Early temperance movements began responding to the prevailing drinking culture, which many believed was damaging American society. Initially, temperance was understood as moderation in drinking, with prominent figures like Benjamin Rush advising against excessive consumption. The Washingtonian Movement in 1840 marked a shift towards a more organized resistance to alcohol, advocating for personal pledges of abstinence rather than legal prohibitions. This movement's focus was on

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moral persuasion, appealing to individual responsibility in combating alcoholism rather than seeking systemic legislative changes.

3.Question:

Who was Neal Dow, and what impact did he have on the prohibition movement?

Neal Dow was a key figure in the early prohibition movement, advocating for strict alcohol laws. As the mayor of Portland, Maine, he successfully pushed for the Maine Law, which became the first statewide prohibition statute in the United States. This law aimed to curb alcohol consumption by instituting fines for selling liquor and imprisonment for manufacturing it. Dow's efforts led to a broader movement that saw similar laws enacted in other states, marking a pivotal moment in the national dialogue around alcohol and leading to a growing demand for prohibition.

4.Question:

What role did women play in the temperance movement, particularly in the context of the Crusade led by Eliza Thompson?

Women played a crucial role in the temperance movement, particularly during the Crusade led by Eliza Thompson in 1873. Inspired by her convictions, Thompson mobilized women to pray outside bars and saloons as a form of protest against alcohol. This grassroots campaign directly targeted establishments selling liquor and resulted in significant closures in many towns. Women's involvement in these early temperance activities laid the groundwork for broader social activism, linking the fight against alcohol



to women's rights and social reform, ultimately leading to significant organizations like the Woman's Christian Temperance Union.

5.Question:

How did the temperance movement evolve to connect with the suffrage movement, and what were some key figures involved?

The temperance movement eventually became intertwined with the suffrage movement, especially through the work of influential figures like Frances Willard and Susan B. Anthony. Willard, a leader in the Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), framed temperance as a women's issue, compelling her followers to advocate for women's suffrage as a means to achieve legal prohibition. This connection emphasized that women were not just fighting against alcohol but also for their rights, with organizations like the WCTU gaining significant political strength in the suffrage movement, paving the way for women's eventual enfranchisement.

Chapter 2 | The Rising of Liquid Bread | Q&A

1.Question:

Who was Carry Nation and what was her significance in the context of Prohibition?

Carry Nation was a prominent figure in the temperance movement and a radical advocate for Prohibition in the early 20th century. Standing six feet tall and described with a stevedore's biceps, she was known for her aggressive tactics against saloons, using a hatchet as her symbol and weapon in her crusade against alcohol consumption.

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She gained notoriety for her 'hatchetations', where she would enter saloons and destroy liquor bottles and property, most famously during an attack on the Senate Bar in Top where she smashed bottles and broke beer kegs. Despite being viewed by some as a sideshow due to her extreme methods and eccentric demeanor, her actions and public speeches raised awareness and contributed to the broader temperance movement. By reducing drinking rates among future generations, her efforts symbolized a significant cultural shift in America toward alcohol consumption.

2.Question:

How did the consumption of beer change in the United States between 1850 and 1890, and what were the main factors driving this change?

Between 1850 and 1890, the consumption of beer in the United States saw a dramatic increase, skyrocketing from 36 million gallons to 855 million gallons annually. This transformation in drinking habits coincided with a tripling of the country's population, resulting in a twenty-four-fold increase in per capita beer consumption. The main driver of this change was immigration, particularly from Germany and Ireland, which introduced both beer and brewing expertise to the American populace. German immigrants, in particular, not only brought the beverage itself but also cultural practices associated with beer drinking, leading to the proliferation of saloons. The establishment of a robust brewing industry, capable of mass production and distribution facilitated by innovations like pasteurization and refrigerated transport, also immensely contributed to beer becoming America's prevalent alcoholic beverage.

3.Question:

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What role did saloons play in the lives of communities, particularly among immigrants in urban areas?

Saloons played a multifaceted role in the lives of communities, especially for immigrants in urban settings. Beyond being places to drink, saloons served as social hubs where individuals could gather for companionship and escape from daily struggles. They offered services such as cashing paychecks, providing credit, or acting as message drop points for community members. In many neighborhoods, saloons were the only establishments offering basic amenities like restroom facilities. The environments were often lively, with free food (usually salty to encourage drinking) and activities that fostered social connections amidst the often harsh realities of immigrant life. They became community centers, offering a sense of belonging in an unfamiliar country, which was particularly vital for newly arrived immigrants carving out their new lives.

4.Question:

What were the brewing industries' tactics in response to the growing temperance movement and how did they adapt their strategies over time?

The brewing industry employed a multifaceted strategy to combat the rising threats posed by the temperance movement. Initially, brewers like the United States Brewers' Association dismissed temperance advocates as 'fanatical' and rallied against any political candidates supportive of total alcohol abstinence. As the movement gained traction, brewers began forming



alliances and lobbying groups, promoting pro-beer propaganda in an attempt to reshape public perception. They strategically placed financial support behind political campaigns to gain favor and safeguard their interests, including the facilitation of local elections. They invested in public relations efforts to underscore the social benefits of beer as a 'liquid bread', arguing against the dangers of hard liquor. This shift involved not only monetary commitments but also a more organized approach to countering voter sentiments, employing tactics like flooding areas with anti-prohibition literature, and engaging in direct political influence, thereby highlighting their resilience against growing prohibitionist sentiments.

5.Question:

What was the significance of Carry Nation's actions, and how did they reflect broader societal trends regarding alcohol consumption and temperance?

Carry Nation's actions were emblematic of a growing societal concern over alcohol consumption and its perceived negative consequences. As she waged her one-woman war against saloons using her hatchet, she became a symbol of the radical side of the temperance movement, reflecting broader anxieties about the moral decay attributed to alcohol. Her confrontational approach resonated with many who feared the impact of alcohol on families and communities, contributing to the legitimation of temperance as a moral crusade. Nation's fervor and her unique persona galvanized support and brought media attention, which ultimately mobilized a more organized



movement leading to Prohibition. Her campaigns and the public discourse surrounding them influenced cultural attitudes, facilitated a shift towards moral policing of behavior concerning alcohol, and set the groundwork for legal prohibitions against alcohol, highlighting the intersection of gender, morality, and social reform during this transformative period in American history.

Chapter 3 | The Most Remarkable Movement | Q&A

1.Question:

What was the founding philosophy of Oberlin, Ohio, and how does it relate to the Anti-Saloon League (ASL)?

Oberlin, Ohio, was founded in 1833 by two Presbyterian clergymen whose chief aim was "to glorify God & do good to men." This founding philosophy attracted individuals committed to social reform and moral integrity, fostering an environment conducive to movements like temperance. The ASL drew significant inspiration from Oberlin's moral fervor, with its founder Howard Hyde Russell embodying the town's ideals. The ASL focused exclusively on the problem of alcohol, reflecting the intensity of Oberlin's mission to create a better society by opposing alcohol.

2.Question:

What strategies and tactics did the Anti-Saloon League employ to achieve its goals?

The ASL employed two primary strategies: focus and intimidation. It focused solely on the issue of alcohol, which contrasted sharply with the broader agendas of other



temperance organizations that pursued multiple social causes. By declaring a singular war on alcohol, the ASL effectively mobilized a targeted constituency that could be united in their efforts. Moreover, intimidation was framed as a democratic approach that meant political retribution against those who opposed their prohibitionist agenda. They sought to influence outcomes by rallying support from a small but determined percentage of voters.

3.Question:

How did the ASL's organization and recruitment efforts enhance its effectiveness?

The ASL leveraged the structure of literalist Protestant churches to mobilize a vast network of supporters. By securing the backing of clergy, the ASL could reach hundreds of thousands of churchgoers, effectively employing them to advocate for Prohibition during services. They held events like the annual "Field Day," which integrated ASL initiatives into church activities, thereby raising funds and spreading their message efficiently. This strategy allowed the ASL to surpass the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) in leadership within the Prohibition movement.

4.Question:

What impact did Wayne Wheeler have on the Anti-Saloon League and the broader Prohibition movement?

Wayne Wheeler significantly advanced the ASL's organizational and strategic capabilities. He transformed the league into a formidable political force, demonstrating his leadership by orchestrating campaigns that targeted



elected officials who opposed their objectives. His methods included grassroots mobilization, legal advocacy, and coalition-building across diverse groups that could further the Prohibition cause. Wheeler is credited with being instrumental in the passage of the Eighteenth Amendment, emphasizing his deep influence over national politics and the Prohibition movement as a whole.

5.Question:

How did systemic racism influence the Prohibition movement according to the narrative in Chapter 3?

Systemic racism played a pivotal role in framing the Prohibition movement, particularly through the framing of alcohol use among African Americans as a social menace. White southern politicians and reformers often conflated liquor with the perceived threat of black voters, suggesting that prohibition would mitigate crimes attributed to intoxicated black men. This narrative served to disenfranchise black citizens and solidify white supremacy, linking alcohol abuse to racial violence and social disorder. Racist ideologies thus became entwined with the Progressive movement's support for Prohibition, reinforcing discriminatory laws under the guise of moral improvement.





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Chapter 4 | “Open Fire on the Enemy” | Q&A

1.Question:

What was Alexander Hamilton's perspective on alcohol, and how did he believe it related to democracy?

Alexander Hamilton viewed alcohol as an essential component of democracy, asserting that it was widely consumed across the United States. He believed that the equal consumption of liquor represented personal choice rather than socioeconomic factors. Furthermore, he regarded the taxation of alcohol as a significant method for generating revenue for the government, which was crucial for its operation. Hamilton posited that a liquor tax might also serve a social function by potentially discouraging excessive drinking.

2.Question:

What were the implications of Hamilton's Excise Act of 1791, and how did it contribute to later events such as the Whiskey Rebellion of 1794?

Hamilton's Excise Act of 1791, which imposed taxes on alcohol, had immediate and far-reaching consequences. It led to significant unrest among rye farmers in western Pennsylvania, who relied on whiskey not only for profit but also as a medium of exchange. The farmers' rebellion, known as the Whiskey Rebellion of 1794, emerged as a response to this tax, highlighting the deep connection between alcohol and the economic practices of rural communities. This rebellion illustrated the broader conflicts within the new nation regarding federal authority and taxation.

3.Question:

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How did the Anti-Saloon League (ASL) evolve in the period leading up to the introduction of the Eighteenth Amendment?

The ASL evolved towards a more aggressive and national strategy in the early 1910s, particularly after the passage of the income tax amendment and the Congressional override of the Webb-Kenyon Act. These events demonstrated an enhanced political potency for the ASL, moving from a state-by-state approach for Prohibition to a concerted effort for a federal constitutional amendment. By adopting a policy aimed at national Prohibition, the ASL sought to capitalize on the political landscape that included the recently achieved income tax, which alleviated concerns about government revenue following the prohibition of alcohol.

4.Question:

Discuss the relationship between the suffrage movement and the Prohibition movement as described in Chapter 4. What factors contributed to their alliance?

The Prohibition and suffrage movements became intertwined during the early 20th century, as leaders from both movements recognized their mutual benefits. The suffrage movement was empowered by women who had honed their political skills in the temperance ranks, while the Prohibition movement saw the enfranchisement of women as a means to strengthen their cause against liquor interests. Many suffragists believed that giving women the vote would lead directly to the closing of saloons. Additionally, brewers' opposition to women's suffrage galvanized support for both causes among



women voters, creating a strategic alliance where both movements could support each other to achieve their respective goals.

5.Question:

What role did William Jennings Bryan play in linking the income tax and Prohibition movements?

William Jennings Bryan emerged as a pivotal figure in the intersection of the income tax and Prohibition movements. As a prominent leader of the Democratic Party and a champion of reform, he ardently supported the establishment of an income tax, seeing it as a tool to balance the financial power of the wealthy and reduce reliance on alcohol tax revenue. His leadership enabled the two movements to coalesce around a common goal; proponents of Prohibition recognized that the income tax could replace lost government revenue from alcohol prohibition, facilitating broader support for an Eighteenth Amendment. Bryan's oratory skills and commitment to social reform were critical in rallying support for both initiatives.

Chapter 5 | Triumphant Failure | Q&A

1.Question:

Who was Richmond Hobson, and how did his early experiences at the Naval Academy shape his future involvement in politics and the Prohibition movement?

Richmond Hobson was a prominent figure from Alabama, recognized as a hero during the Spanish-American War for his attempted mission aboard the USS Merrimac in Cuba. His early experiences at the Naval Academy included a confrontation with a

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fellow midshipman who bullied him, leading Hobson to assertively declare, 'I do not desire nor will I tolerate your scurrilous contumely.' This incident not only showcased his boldness and eloquence but also made him an outcast among his peers for two years as he reported their violations to authorities. His resilient response to social isolation and his commitment to his principles foreshadowed his later role as a passionate advocate for Prohibition and progressive causes in Congress.

2.Question:

What were the major themes and messages in Richmond Hobson's speeches advocating for Prohibition, and how did they reflect his views on alcohol and its societal effects?

Richmond Hobson's speeches, particularly his notable oration 'Alcohol, the Great Destroyer,' emphasized the destructive nature of alcohol on individuals and society. He described alcohol as 'a loathsome excretion of a living organism' that corrupted family life and contributed to societal decay. Hobson claimed it could degrade a civilized man to a 'below the brute' state and referred to the huge economic impact of the alcohol industry, asserting that a significant portion of the nation's money circulated through it. His passionate rhetoric sought to rally public sentiment by framing Prohibition not just as a legal issue but as a moral imperative that directly impacted the nation's youth, family structures, and overall societal health.

3.Question:

What challenges did Hobson face in the political arena, particularly regarding his support for Prohibition and his views on race?



Hobson faced significant political challenges due to the prevailing views of his southern constituency. His support for Prohibition put him at odds with powerful liquor interests and political opponents who aligned with them. In a primary race against Oscar W. Underwood, who opposed Prohibition and capitalized on racial tensions, Hobson's more progressive racial views—such as advocating for the fair treatment of Black soldiers and opposing discrimination—were used against him. Underwood's campaign painted Hobson as out of touch with southern values, ultimately leading to Hobson's defeat. His insistence on integrating viewpoints on race in the military further alienated him from a voter base that prioritized segregation and racial supremacy.

4.Question:

What was the outcome of the Hobson Amendment vote in 1914, and how did it affect the Prohibition movement moving forward?

The Hobson Amendment vote in December 1914 resulted in 197 votes for and 190 against, falling short of the two-thirds majority required for constitutional amendment approval. Although it did not pass, the close result was seen as a moral victory for Prohibition supporters, signaling significant national support for their cause. It marked a shift in congressional attitudes, as nearly two-thirds of those voting for the amendment came from various regions, indicating a growing consensus among lawmakers about the dangers of alcohol. This momentum bolstered the Prohibition movement, leading to increased organizing and campaigning by the Anti-Saloon League



and other affiliated groups, ultimately contributing to the nationwide push for Prohibition which culminated in the passage of the 18th Amendment in 1919.

5.Question:

How did Richmond Hobson's legacy and approach to public speaking influence the broader Prohibition movement and political discourse of the time?

Richmond Hobson's legacy in the Prohibition movement is characterized by his dramatic oratory, which captivated audiences and became a powerful tool for advocacy. His speeches were marked by theatricality and emotional appeals, reflecting his belief in the righteousness of the Prohibition cause. By utilizing vivid imagery and stirring language, he raised awareness of the perceived evils of alcohol and its societal consequences, thereby galvanizing support among various social strata, including women and progressives. Hobson's ability to connect with the public gave the movement a charismatic voice and helped articulate its goals in a compelling manner, making him a central figure in encouraging legislative action and grassroots mobilization for Prohibition. His tactics and rhetorical style influenced other speakers and activists, shaping the way the Prohibition message was delivered and received across the nation.

Chapter 6 | Dry-Drys, Wet-Drys, and Hyphens | Q&A

1.Question:

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What was the primary motivation for the Anti-Saloon League (ASL) and its allies in promoting Prohibition in the early 1900s?

The primary motivation for the Anti-Saloon League (ASL) and its allies was a passionate commitment to reducing or eliminating alcohol consumption, which they believed was a source of social ills and moral decay. Their campaign gathered momentum as they aligned with various political movements, leveraging support from various demographic groups, including religious organizations, temperance activists, and even commercial interests that saw economic opportunity in a dry America. The ASL's leaders were driven by a vision of a transformed society free from the perceived harms of alcohol, which they believed was necessary for progress and improvement of community life.

2.Question:

How did the demographics of 'wet' supporters differ from those of 'dry' proponents during the Prohibition movement?

The demographics of 'wet' supporters were primarily composed of urban, immigrant communities, including ethnic groups and working-class individuals who enjoyed socializing in saloons and bars. They often aligned with political machines that represented their interests in cities. Conversely, the 'dry' supporters were mainly from small towns, rural areas, and Protestant backgrounds, often characterized as having deeper roots in American society. This distinction highlighted a cultural divide, where 'drys' viewed alcohol consumption as a moral failing, while 'wets' saw it as a



personal and cultural tradition.

3.Question:

What role did James Cannon play in the Prohibition campaign, particularly in the Southern states?

James Cannon, known as the 'Dry Messiah,' played a vital role in the Prohibition campaign by serving as a lobbyist for the Anti-Saloon League in Southern states. His strategic approach was essential in persuading Southern Democrats—who held significant sway over state laws and local elections—to support dry measures. Cannon's ability to navigate political and regional sensitivities, combined with his staunch opposition to alcohol, allowed him to mobilize support for Prohibition, proving influential in the passage of the Eighteenth Amendment. Despite his abrasive demeanor, Cannon effectively rallied support within his region by emphasizing the moral and social imperatives of the dry cause.

4.Question:

What were some tactics employed by brewers and distillers in response to the Prohibition movement?

Brewers and distillers employed several tactics to counter the Prohibition movement, including public relations campaigns that framed alcoholic beverages as vital and nourishing products for the working class. They attempted to improve their image by associating their products with wholesome values, such as family and health, as seen in advertisements that depicted beer as wholesome nourishment. Additionally, they organized



boycotts against businesses that supported dry laws, acquired media outlets to disseminate pro-alcohol propaganda, and tried to portray themselves as defenders of civil liberties against what they considered an overreach of governmental authority. Their efforts, however, were largely undermined by the dry movement's passionate activism and public support.

5.Question:

How did World War I influence the push for Prohibition and the perception of immigrant communities in the United States?

World War I significantly influenced the push for Prohibition as anti-German sentiment and nationalism surged, creating an environment where the association of alcohol with immigrant communities—especially German-Americans—was seen negatively. Prohibition supporters, including President Woodrow Wilson, harnessed wartime sentiments to bolster their cause, portraying Prohibition as a patriotic duty and a means of maintaining national unity. The Anti-Saloon League capitalized on war fervor to stigmatize immigrant populations and associated drinking with disloyalty. This demonization of 'hyphenated Americans'—those of foreign descent—further polarized the political landscape and galvanized support for Prohibition among white, Anglo-Saxon Protestants.





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Chapter 7 | From Magna Carta to Volstead | Q&A

1.Question:

Who was Billy Sunday and why was he significant in the context of Prohibition?

Billy Sunday was a former professional baseball player who became a prominent evangelist known for his fervent opposition to alcohol. After leaving baseball in 1890, he dedicated his life to preaching Christianity and gained immense popularity, reportedly reaching over 100 million people during his career. His strong fundamentalist views and hyperbolic preaching style helped galvanize public sentiment against alcohol, framing it as 'God's worst enemy.' His efforts were crucial in shaping the Prohibition movement in the early 20th century, influencing many to support the cause, and ultimately contributing to the ratification of the Eighteenth Amendment.

2.Question:

What were some cultural and social conditions that contributed to the rise of Prohibition in the United States?

At the turn of the 20th century, alcohol consumption was widespread in American culture, especially among working-class individuals. Many saw the dangers of alcohol as a societal ill leading to personal and family destruction, often highlighted by tragedies such as the death of baseball player Ed Delahanty, who died due to alcoholism. The Anti-Saloon League and other prohibitionist groups used patriotic and moral arguments to rally support against alcohol, framing their cause within the context of national integrity, especially during World War I when ties to Germany were politically sensitive. Furthermore, the war created a climate ripe for regulation and control, promoting the idea of Prohibition as a patriotic effort to conserve resources for



the war.

3.Question:

What role did the Eighteenth Amendment play in the Prohibition movement, and how was it ratified?

The Eighteenth Amendment, ratified on January 16, 1919, established prohibition in the United States, making the manufacture, sale, and transportation of alcohol illegal. Its ratification was expedited by the political climate influenced by World War I and emerging anti-German sentiment, leading to a focus on the disloyalty of brewers and German-American interests. The amendment was ratified through state legislatures, often under conditions where urban populations made up the majority of voters but had disproportionate representation compared to rural legislators who were more likely to support Prohibition. This led to rapid and seemingly seamless ratification despite significant opposition among the general populace.

4.Question:

How did the Volstead Act define 'intoxicating liquors' and what were its implications?

The Volstead Act, enacted to enforce the Eighteenth Amendment, defined 'intoxicating liquors' as any beverage containing more than 0.5 percent alcohol, effectively banning not just hard liquor but even low-alcohol beers and light wines. This strict definition meant that many subtle forms of intoxication were criminalized. Additionally, the Act contained provisions



for certain allowances, such as sacramental wine for religious purposes and cider, but these exceptions underscored the Act's overarching goal. The harshness of the enforcement led to widespread resistance and illicit trade—illustrating the gap between public sentiment and the legal realities of alcohol consumption.

5.Question:

What were the consequences of Prohibition as predicted by Andrew Volstead and others?

Andrew Volstead acknowledged the difficulties of enforcing Prohibition, predicting that while laws could be established, violations would inevitably occur. He believed that Prohibition would not eliminate drinking but instead push it underground, leading to an era characterized by organized crime, corruption, and widespread lawbreaking. His warnings highlighted the complex relationship between legislation and human behavior, foreseeing a shift from legal, regulated alcohol to illegal and often dangerous alternatives, ultimately leading to the societal chaos and moral dilemmas that became synonymous with the Prohibition era.

Chapter 8 | Starting Line | Q&A

1.Question:

What event marks the beginning of Prohibition as described in Chapter 8 of 'Last Call'?

The onset of Prohibition is marked by an event on January 16, 1920, at the First

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Congregational Church in Washington, where key figures in the temperance movement gathered to celebrate the enforcement of the Volstead Act. This event culminated in a speech by William Jennings Bryan that inspired attendees, marking a significant moment of triumph for the prohibitionists.

2.Question:

How did the public initially respond to Prohibition in terms of alcohol consumption?

Initially, a considerable portion of the American population either respected the new laws or felt deterred by the complexity of the Volstead Act, resulting in a measurable decline in alcohol consumption. Reports indicate that alcohol-related deaths and public drunkenness arrests fell, especially in areas like Muncie, Indiana, where civic leaders chose to go dry, setting an example for others.

3.Question:

What was the impact of Prohibition on different socio-economic classes, based on the chapter's content?

Prohibition's impact varied widely between socio-economic classes. Wealthier individuals often circumvented the law by legally stockpiling alcohol before the amendment took effect due to a loophole in the Volstead Act. Conversely, poorer communities faced more significant struggles, turning to makeshift stills, homemade beverages, and illegal smuggling, illustrating a divide where the affluent retained access to alcohol while the working class suffered from legal restrictions.

4.Question:

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Describe the events in Iron River, Michigan, and what they reveal about societal compliance with Prohibition.

In Iron River, Michigan, a conflict arose between federal Prohibition agents and local authorities following the seizure of homemade wine from immigrant grocery store owners. District Attorney McDonough arrested an agent for illegally confiscating the wine, igniting a public outcry. This rebellion reflected a broader resistance to Prohibition among working-class immigrants who depended on homemade wine. McDonough's actions received significant support from the local populace, indicating a lack of compliance and a willingness to defy Prohibition enforcement.

5.Question:

What was the significance of the political maneuvering during the Democratic and Republican national conventions regarding Prohibition?

During the conventions, both the Republican and Democratic parties chose to largely ignore Prohibition in their platforms, which Wayne Wheeler and the Anti-Saloon League saw as a victory. This silence indicated a strategic retreat from what had been a contentious issue. Meanwhile, figures like William Jennings Bryan attempted to push for stronger anti-Prohibition measures within the Democratic platform but faced significant opposition, ultimately leading to his resolution's defeat. This struggle illustrates the mounting tensions within the political landscape regarding the future of Prohibition.



1.Question:

What were the primary sources of illegal liquor during Prohibition as described in Chapter 9 of "Last Call"?

During Prohibition, various methods were utilized to access illegal liquor across the United States. In New England, ships anchored beyond the three-mile limit ferried liquor to the shore using a fleet of small boats. Philadelphia sourced its alcohol from the chemical industry, where denatured alcohol was diverted, renatured, and flavored for sale. In Chicago, the Genna brothers managed a vast network of home stills, while moonshine technology was developed uniquely in southern states, each contributing its own still design. Kansas was notorious for a locally made concoction called 'Deep Shaft', and in Detroit, proximity to Canada made illegal liquor easily accessible.

2.Question:

How did Warren G. Harding's view of Prohibition influence his actions while in office?

Warren G. Harding viewed Prohibition with skepticism, believing it to be largely ineffective and not something he personally supported. His past behavior indicated that he had complied with dry sentiments out of political necessity rather than conviction. Once in office, he engaged in behaviors that undermined Prohibition, such as having liquor stockpiled at the White House and mingling with political allies who openly flouted the laws. Harding's inability to decisively support the Prohibition agenda and his tendency to cater to the Anti-Saloon League's demands showcased his ambivalence towards the Eighteenth Amendment.

3.Question:



What role did Wayne Wheeler play in shaping Prohibition enforcement during Harding's presidency?

Wayne Wheeler, as a key figure in the Anti-Saloon League, held significant influence over both Congress and the presidency during Prohibition. He was diligent in ensuring that Harding and Congress maintained a dry stance and often succeeded in pushing for federal enforcement strategies that aligned with dry principles. Wheeler's control extended to appointments within the Prohibition Bureau, including the selection of Roy A. Haynes as Prohibition commissioner, demonstrating his ability to manipulate political appointments and maintain the momentum of the dry movement.

4.Question:

Discuss the character and effectiveness of Roy Haynes as the Prohibition commissioner. What were some of the challenges he faced?

Roy Haynes was described as a complacent and inept figure in charge of enforcing the Volstead Act. His qualifications for the role were seen as lacking, and he was depicted as a puppet of the Anti-Saloon League, prioritizing loyalty to Wheeler over effective enforcement. Despite claiming successes in moral uplift due to Prohibition, his agency was marred by corruption and inefficiency. Haynes faced challenges such as underfunding, a lack of training for agents, and competing loyalties within the law enforcement community, which made effective enforcement of Prohibition difficult.

5.Question:

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How did Mabel Willebrandt's role as assistant attorney general reflect the contradictions of the Prohibition enforcement efforts during the 1920s?

Mabel Willebrandt, as assistant attorney general, emerged as a prominent figure in enforcing Prohibition laws despite her initial indifference to the Eighteenth Amendment. Described as a strong and competent leader, Willebrandt used her legal acumen to navigate and challenge the inefficiencies of the Prohibition Bureau, advocating for more rigorous enforcement. However, she was caught in a contradictory environment, where her enforcement initiatives were often undermined by the indifference of her superiors and the lack of government funding. Thus, while Willebrandt fought to uphold the law, she was limited by a politically entrenched system that was rife with corruption and disinterest in actual enforcement.

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Chapter 10 | Leaks in the Dotted Line | Q&A

1.Question:

What motivated Sam Bronfman to make the difficult journey by dogsled to Lake of the Woods in 1916?

Sam Bronfman undertook the challenging 120-mile journey by dogsled primarily to secure a business opportunity related to liquor. In the context of a convoluted Prohibition landscape in Canada, he sought to meet a hotel owner who was selling premises that had a license to store liquor, a potential depot for his growing liquor business. This journey illustrated his determination and commitment to advancing his business ambitions in a unique legal environment that allowed individual provinces to ban alcohol sales while not preventing its manufacture or transportation.

2.Question:

How did the legal landscape of Prohibition in Canada provide opportunities for entrepreneurs like Sam Bronfman?

The legal framework of Prohibition in Canada created a unique situation where individual provinces could ban alcohol sales but could not stop its manufacture or interprovincial shipment. This allowed savvy entrepreneurs to exploit the loophole by transporting liquor from 'wet' areas (where alcohol was legal) to 'dry' areas (where it was banned). This circumvention made it possible for Sam Bronfman to establish a liquor distribution network by acquiring a hotel with a liquor storage license in Kenora and eventually shipping liquor across provincial borders, particularly to the Prairie Provinces, aligning his business strategies with ambiguous legal boundaries.

3.Question:

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What strategies did the Bronfman brothers employ to adapt to the changing laws surrounding liquor sales during Prohibition?

The Bronfman brothers strategically adapted to the changing laws of Prohibition in several ways. Initially, they focused on the medicinal liquor market, collaborating with local physicians by paying them bonuses for fulfilling liquor prescriptions, thereby working within the legal confines to maintain business activity. Moreover, they expanded their operations into large-scale smuggling as the environment became more permissive for illicit trade. They began mixing imported whiskey with raw alcohol and redistributing it as lower-quality products back into the U.S., effectively capitalizing on the Prohibition to grow their enterprise significantly. Their ability to navigate the legal intricacies and exploit opportunities within them marked a transition from legitimate business practices to a more robust and often illicit operation.

4.Question:

What impact did the Bronfman liquor business have on local economies and the perception of the Jewish community in Canada during Prohibition?

The Bronfman liquor business substantially impacted local economies, particularly in rural areas where their 'boozoriums' operated. These establishments created jobs and generated tax revenues, fostering a sense of economic dependence on the liquor trade. However, this booming business also had sociopolitical ramifications; anti-Semitic sentiments were



exacerbated as the Bronfman brothers, being Jewish, became scapegoats in wider societal accusations about the negative impacts of liquor trade. Prominent figures associated with organized religion and law enforcement expressed prejudiced views, framing the Bronfman operation and other Jewish bootleggers as national threats, thus intertwining business success with racial and ethnic tensions.

5.Question:

Describe the evolution of Sam Bronfman's ambitions in the liquor industry following his initial ventures during Prohibition.

Following his initial ventures during Prohibition, Sam Bronfman's ambitions evolved significantly as he recognized the long-term profitability of the liquor industry. Initially focused on opportunistic distribution and smuggling tactics, he later aimed to establish a more legitimate, sustainable business model. By acquiring distilleries, such as the Greenbrier Distillery in Kentucky, and establishing partnerships with established brands in Scotland, Sam transitioned from merely smuggling liquor to becoming a significant player in the industrial liquor market. His eventual formation of Distillers Corporation Limited and his association with British distillers underscored his shift toward a robust legal business, culminating in the creation of the Seagram's empire, which solidified his status as one of North America's most influential businessmen.

Chapter 11 | The Great Whiskey Way | Q&A

1.Question:

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What was the significance of the cargo ship Lake Ellerslie's voyage from Baltimore in January 1920?

The Lake Ellerslie's voyage marked a pivotal moment in the onset of Prohibition in the United States. Departing with a massive cargo of 438,000 bottles' worth of whiskey and wine, its journey symbolized the beginning of an era where liquor would become increasingly difficult to obtain legally in the U.S. Yet, the departure also foreshadowed the burgeoning illegal liquor trade, particularly through destinations like Nassau in the Bahamas, which would soon flourish as a hub for bootlegging operations.

2.Question:

How did the Bahamian economy change in response to the Prohibition era in the United States?

With the advent of Prohibition, the Bahamian economy experienced a dramatic transformation. Liquor shipments surged, with Scotch exports rising from 914 gallons in 1918 to 386,000 gallons by 1922. The government of the Bahamas successfully leveraged this demand, collecting export taxes on liquor that allowed it to shift from a deficit to a surplus budget, funding improvements such as a sewage system and modernized infrastructure. This transition positioned Nassau as a bustling way station for bootleggers.

3.Question:

Who were some of the key figures in the bootlegging industry discussed in Chapter 11, and what roles did they play?



Key figures included Bill McCoy, who became a renowned rumrunner operating from Nassau, known for moving large quantities of liquor up the Atlantic coast. His narrative contributed to the mythology of bootlegging, including the phrase 'the real McCoy.' Other notable figures were Gertrude Lythgoe, dubbed 'Queen of the Bootleggers,' who operated in Nassau, and Roland Symonette, who amassed a fortune from liquor trade and later transitioned into legitimate business and politics.

4.Question:

What were the operational strategies employed by rumrunners to evade law enforcement during Prohibition?

Rumrunners like Bill McCoy employed several methods to evade detection. These included sailing under foreign flags to escape American laws and using makeshift vessels such as the Dreamland, an anchored barge that facilitated smuggling. Moreover, they engaged in bribery or extortion of law enforcement personnel, used coded communication, and established hidden landing spots along the coast to facilitate the transfer of liquor from ship to shore, effectively creating an entire underground market.

5.Question:

What was the reaction of the British government to the Prohibition laws in the United States, particularly in terms of its colonies' involvement in liquor trade?

The British government was largely resistant to American demands for stringent enforcement of Prohibition against its colonies. Figures like



Winston Churchill emphasized the sovereignty of British law, refusing to curb the burgeoning liquor trade in places like the Bahamas. The British also negotiated the expansion of the three-mile limit for U.S. enforcement but stopped short of restricting the liquor trade, as it proved economically beneficial for their colonies.

Chapter 12 | Blessed Be the Fruit of the Vine | Q&A

1.Question:

Who was Horatio F. Stoll and what motivated him to start California Grape Grower?

Horatio F. Stoll was an enthusiastic publicist and advocate for the California wine industry. Prior to starting the magazine California Grape Grower in December 1919, Stoll had spent years promoting the wine industry, including writing articles for major newspapers and working in vineyards. His motivation to start the magazine was to advocate for the growers and winemakers as they faced the impending threat of Prohibition, specifically the Eighteenth Amendment, which threatened to eliminate their livelihoods. Stoll's efforts included raising awareness of the potential negative impacts of Prohibition on the wine industry, as shown by his signs and brochures aimed at the growers and public.

2.Question:

What misconceptions did the California wine growers have about Prohibition as it approached in 1919?

As Prohibition loomed, many California wine growers, including notable vintners like

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Sam Sebastiani, were overly optimistic and believed that the threat of national Prohibition was exaggerated. They thought that wine production would continue to flourish and that wine consumption would increase, particularly with returning soldiers inspired by European wine culture. Most growers failed to anticipate the severe impact of the Eighteenth Amendment, believing foolishly that it would not restrict their ability to sell wine or that the ban would soon be lifted. Their lack of preparation or acknowledgment of the long-standing agitation for Prohibition blinded them to the changing landscape of their industry.

3.Question:

How did the fruit juice clause of the Volstead Act contribute to the demand for California grapes during Prohibition?

The Volstead Act included a fruit juice clause that permitted families to produce up to 200 gallons of fermented fruit juice per year for personal consumption. This loophole allowed many individuals, especially those with access to vineyards, to produce wine at home. Consequently, there was a spike in demand for wine grapes, particularly from California. Entrepreneurs and home winemakers seized on this opportunity, significantly increasing grape prices and the overall grape economy in the region, which led to a boom in grape production despite the broader restrictions of Prohibition.

4.Question:

What role did Georges de Latour and his Beaulieu Vineyards play during Prohibition?

Georges de Latour, through his Beaulieu Vineyards, adeptly navigated the



challenges posed by Prohibition by focusing on the production of sacramental wines. With a longstanding relationship with the Catholic Church and strong ties to the Archbishop of San Francisco, de Latour secured an early and favorable position in the market for altar wines, which were in high demand. By obtaining the Prohibition Bureau's first permit to produce sacramental wines, he managed to legally produce and sell substantial quantities of wine while effectively capitalizing on the loopholes in Prohibition legislation. His business prospered, and by the mid-1920s, he was shipping vast amounts of wine and amassing considerable wealth.

5.Question:

What were the broader impacts of the Prohibition-era wine industry on American society, particularly among immigrant communities?

The Prohibition era significantly transformed the American wine landscape, especially among immigrant communities. Grapes, traditionally used for winemaking, became widely available and sought after, largely due to the legality of producing sacramental wine for religious purposes. This led to a thriving market for grapes, fostering a culture of home winemaking that permeated many neighborhoods, particularly those with significant Italian and Eastern European populations. The rise of underground and black market activities alongside legal loopholes showcased a divergence in cultural norms, where established immigrant traditions of winemaking flourished despite restrictive laws. This proliferation not only bolstered economic opportunities for immigrant growers and bootleggers but also



contributed to a broader pattern of resistance against Prohibition.

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Chapter 13 | The Alcohol That Got Away | Q&A

1.Question:

What was Tom Buchanan's assumption about Jay Gatsby's wealth, and how was it interpreted differently by Daisy Buchanan and Tom?

Tom Buchanan speculated that Gatsby's wealth came from owning drug-stores, implying this as a reputable business venture. However, Daisy Buchanan, lacking knowledge, accepted this explanation without skepticism. In contrast, Tom, who had a more cynical worldview, interpreted Gatsby's wealth as being derived from bootlegging, associating it with illegal trade and moral corruption. This reflects the social class divide between the naive view of the 'new money' represented by Gatsby and the 'old money' perspective held by Tom.

2.Question:

How did the Volstead Act create loopholes for the sale of alcohol during Prohibition, particularly through medicinal uses?

The Volstead Act allowed the legal sale of alcohol for medicinal purposes, leading physicians and pharmacists to exploit this exemption extensively. It authorized doctors to prescribe alcohol, which could then be dispensed by pharmacies. This created a thriving market where prescriptions became a lucrative business, with many doctors writing numerous prescriptions. The act also encouraged pharmacists to bypass liquor restrictions through clever marketing strategies and false pretenses, positioning liquor as medicinal while enabling their lucrative sales. This loophole effectively circumvented the intent of Prohibition.

3.Question:

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Describe the business practices of George Remus during Prohibition and the unique strategies he employed to profit from medicinal liquor.

George Remus, initially a lawyer and former pharmacist, saw the potential for profit in the medicinal liquor business during Prohibition. He purchased bonded warehouses that stored vast quantities of whiskey, then leveraged his pharmacy to legally withdraw alcohol for medicinal use. However, he engaged in illegal practices by hijacking his own trucks carrying the 'medicinal liquor' to distribute it in the illicit market. He ran an extensive operation, making millions by sidestepping legal channels, bribing officials, and engaging in sophisticated tax evasion strategies. Remus's ability to navigate both the legal and illegal spheres of the alcohol trade exemplifies the pervasive corruption and opportunism of the era.

4.Question:

What was Lydia Pinkham's role in the alcohol market during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and how did it reflect the contradictions of the temperance movement?

Lydia Pinkham became a significant figure in the alcohol market by marketing her Vegetable Compound, which contained a substantial amount of alcohol, as a remedy for women's health issues. Despite being an abolitionist and temperance advocate, her product thrived in a society where women faced restrictions on direct alcohol consumption. Pinkham's success revealed the hypocrisy within the temperance movement—while advocating for sober living, societies found loopholes in the medicalization of liquor.



Her product empowered women by providing access to alcohol under the pretense of medicinal necessity, highlighting the complex dynamics of gender, consumer culture, and social propriety during that time.

5.Question:

How did the enforcement of Prohibition laws reveal the social and political dynamics in cities like Philadelphia?

The enforcement of Prohibition laws in Philadelphia, highlighted by General Smedley Butler's efforts to curb bootlegging, showcased the deep corruption and influence of organized crime. Operators like Boo Boo Hoff were able to bribe officials and run extensive illegal alcohol distribution networks without significant obstruction. Butler's ambition to clean up the city ultimately clashed with powerful interests tied to the political elite, who were unwilling to disrupt their own access to illicit liquor. This incident reflects how Prohibition not only fostered criminal enterprises but also revealed the complicity of government and law enforcement in perpetuating illegal activities, as well as the connection between social status and access to moral loopholes.

Chapter 14 | The Way We Drank | Q&A

1.Question:

What literary work is mentioned as presenting a stark contrast to the drinking behavior of characters during Prohibition, and what was its author's stance on liquor?

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Upton Sinclair's work is highlighted as presenting a contrasting view regarding drinking during Prohibition. Sinclair initially supported Prohibition ('dry') but ended up writing more favorably about alcohol as the era progressed, ultimately becoming more of a hardline 'dry' advocate as he concluded the Prohibition era. This suggests a complexity in his relationship with the subject of alcohol, as he grappled with the moral implications of drinking in American society.

2.Question:

How did drinking habits in the 1920s evolve regarding gender dynamics, according to the chapter?

The evolution of drinking habits during the 1920s indicated significant shifts in gender dynamics. Women began to increasingly drink in public spaces, particularly speakeasies, which transformed social practices. Speakeasies offered environments that encouraged coeducational drinking, with some establishments specifically catering to women through table service and entertainment. This marked a notable change from the past, where drinking was typically a male-dominated activity. Women's presence at speakeasies contributed to a feminized drinking culture, enriching social interactions and altering long-standing norms about women and alcohol.

3.Question:

What insight does A. H. R. Murray provide regarding the impact of Prohibition on youth drinking behaviors, and what cultural observations come from this era?

A. H. R. Murray's observations highlight that despite the intent of



Prohibition to curb alcohol consumption, it actually led to an increase in drinking among the youth. Cultural observations reveal that the appeal of drinking was as much influenced by the behavior of their elders as by their own desires. Events such as high school dances often had excessive drinking present, and the glamorization of illegal drinking through media contributed to youth engaging in similar behaviors. This suggests that the act of drinking became a societal norm, signaling both rebellion against the law and a yearning for acceptance among peers.

4.Question:

What does the chapter reveal about the quality of liquor consumed in speakeasies compared to the saloons before Prohibition?

The quality of liquor consumed in speakeasies during Prohibition was significantly inferior to that available in pre-Prohibition saloons. In speakeasies, patrons often dealt with liquor that ranged from professionally distilled spirits to dangerous concoctions of industrial alcohol that were poorly disguised under fake labels. Counterfeit and diluted spirits proliferated, leading to health risks and poisoning incidents. In contrast, saloon liquor primarily came from reputable distillers, ensuring better quality and safety, thus reflecting a stark decline in drinking standards during the Prohibition era.

5.Question:

How did Prohibition influence social gatherings and the concept of nightlife in America?



Prohibition heavily influenced social gatherings and the nightlife landscape in America by driving drinking from traditional settings like saloons into clandestine venues known as speakeasies. The rise of integrated social gatherings allowed men and women to drink together, often in vastly different atmospheres than those found in saloons. Events became social hubs with lively jazz music, dancing, and crafted invitations hinting at lawbreaking. As a result, nightlife flourished, characterized by a blend of adventure and rebellion, transforming American social patterns and attitudes regarding alcohol consumption for decades.

Chapter 15 | Open Wounds | Q&A

1.Question:

What was Calvin Coolidge's approach to Prohibition during his presidency, and how did it differ from Warren Harding's?

Calvin Coolidge's approach to Prohibition was notably characterized by a reluctance to enforce it aggressively. While Warren Harding had initially advocated for more stringent enforcement of Prohibition—especially during a notable speech in Denver—it appears that even he was not fully committed to the cause, as he had only recently attempted to stop drinking under pressure from his wife and the influence of Wayne Wheeler, the Anti-Saloon League leader. In contrast, Coolidge was more skeptical about the role of government, believing that minimal interference in citizens' lives was ideal. He would later cut the budget of the Prohibition Bureau, signifying his disinterest in robust enforcement. Thus, while Harding showed sporadic interest in enforcing Prohibition, Coolidge's presidency is marked by a definitive indifference, viewing it as



something to be avoided entirely.

2.Question:

How did Wayne Wheeler influence Congress and political outcomes during the Prohibition era?

Wayne Wheeler's influence on Congress during the Prohibition era was profound and multifaceted. He was a powerful figure in the Anti-Saloon League and used both intimidation and strategic alliances to control congressional votes on Prohibition-related matters. He prided himself on the ability to ensure the defeat of any congressman who opposed Prohibition, often stating he could have them 'shot at sunrise' on election day. His influence helped dry candidates win elections in various districts, effectively aligning with Republicans who supported Prohibition and ensuring they remained in power. Wheeler's presence was particularly notable in congressional votes, as he would deliver support and endorsements to candidates, significantly affecting their electoral prospects. His tactics also involved mobilizing popular influences and managing the Anti-Saloon League's endorsement processes, empowering him to shape legislative outcomes related to the Volstead Act and the Eighteenth Amendment.

3.Question:

Discuss the demographic and political shifts prompted by the Prohibition Act that affected the 1920s socio-political landscape in the United States.

The enforcement of the Prohibition Act prompted significant demographic



and political shifts in the United States during the 1920s. The Act catalyzed a sizable underground economy dominated by bootleggers, which was substantially filled by immigrants, particularly those from southern and eastern Europe. This new landscape created 'dazzling opportunities' for these communities, leading to increased urban crime and a robust black market for alcoholic beverages. Politically, the resistance to Prohibition galvanized numerous factions. On one hand, it united progressives who supported the reform for moral reasons; on the other hand, it encouraged a coalition of wealthy conservatives, urban voters, and groups like the Klan to lobby against Prohibition, which they felt hindered their rights and economic freedoms. The Prohibition debate heightened tensions between rural and urban Americans, creating a distinct 'wet' and 'dry' divide. Consequently, this divide resurfaced in political representations and decisions, such as the 1924 Democratic National Convention, which showcased internal strife over the issue, further cementing Prohibition as a critical socio-political factor.

4.Question:

What strategies did the Anti-Saloon League (ASL) use to maintain the dry policy amid growing opposition?

The Anti-Saloon League employed several critical strategies to maintain dry policy amid increasing public and political opposition. One significant tactic involved fostering a broad coalition that included various social and political groups, from feminist and progressive reformers to more conservative elements like the Klan. This inclusive strategy helped solidify a unified front



against both the 'wets' and the evolving criticisms about the efficacy of Prohibition. Additionally, the ASL sought to control the political dialogue by influencing legislative processes and candidate support heavily—through campaign contributions, threats of electoral reprisals, and strategic placements of their representatives, like Wheeler in Congress. Their efforts also extended to manipulating public sentiment using propaganda that emphasized morality and public health, thereby framing opposition as un-American. Such machinations allowed the ASL to continue pushing for Prohibition enforcement, even as public disillusionment grew.

5.Question:

How did the 1924 Democratic National Convention illustrate the societal conflicts over Prohibition, and what were the results?

The 1924 Democratic National Convention served as a vivid illustration of the societal conflicts surrounding Prohibition, showcasing deep divides within the party between 'drys' and 'wets.' The crux of the conflict arose from differing opinions on whether to endorse Prohibition within the party platform. The dry faction aimed to maintain a firm stance supporting the Eighteenth Amendment, while the wet supporters sought to repeal or at least alter Prohibition policies. Delegates were engaged in a heated struggle over multiple resolutions, notably including a condemnation of the Ku Klux Klan, which divided members further along sectional and ideological lines, revealing the intersections of racial, cultural, and legal issues. Ultimately, the convention led to a prolonged deadlock, resulting in 103 ballots before



John W. Davis was nominated largely due to the inability of either the dry or wet factions to secure a consensus candidate. This indecisiveness highlighted not only the challenges facing the Democratic Party but also the fragmented nature of American society regarding Prohibition, exposing how these wounds would affect future political dynamics.

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Chapter 16 | “Escaped on Payment of Money” | Q&A

1.Question:

Who was Irving Fisher and how did he contribute to the dry movement during Prohibition?

Irving Fisher was a prominent American economist, whose work during the Prohibition era established him as one of the leading proponents of the dry cause. He claimed that alcohol consumption negatively impacted work productivity, basing these claims on dubious studies. For example, he cited a study suggesting that drinking 1.5 to 3 glasses of beer could slow learning efficiency by 18%. Fisher extrapolated these findings to conclude that enforcing Prohibition could significantly increase national output, estimating potential gains ranging from \$7.5 to \$15 billion annually. Beyond his numerical analyses, he actively participated in public speaking, writing pamphlets and books advocating for Prohibition, and maintained a fervent belief in the necessity of the dry laws, attributing many societal problems to alcohol consumption.

2.Question:

What role did statistics play in the arguments made by both proponents and opponents of Prohibition?

Statistics were heavily utilized by both sides of the Prohibition debate to support their positions, though often in misleading ways. Prohibition supporters like Fisher and Commissioner Roy Haynes presented figures to claim that Prohibition led to societal improvements, such as fewer arrests for 'foul language' and increased housing construction. However, these claims rarely considered broader context or alternative explanations. On the other hand, opponents of Prohibition, including the United States



Brewers' Association, manipulated statistics to argue that dry laws were detrimental, pointing to lower birth rates and economic downturns in dry states without acknowledging other socioeconomic factors. The manipulation of statistics created a polarized environment where each side tried to leverage numerical data to validate their perspectives, complicating an objective assessment of Prohibition's effects.

3.Question:

How did the brewing industry adapt to Prohibition according to the chapter?

The brewing industry found ways to adapt to the constraints of Prohibition primarily by creating non-alcoholic or low-alcohol products, such as near beers, which were legally permissible. Companies like Anheuser-Busch introduced beverages like Bevo, which initially enjoyed limited popularity. As demand for these products waned, breweries shifted focus to malt syrup, a legal product that could be converted back into alcoholic beer through fermentation. This innovation allowed many breweries to survive financially during Prohibition as sales of malt syrup soared. Anheuser-Busch, for instance, sold over six million pounds of malt syrup annually. This transition demonstrated how quickly the industry could pivot to seize on emerging markets even under restrictive laws.

4.Question:

What challenges did law enforcement face in implementing Prohibition laws, especially in major cities?

Law enforcement faced significant challenges in effectively enforcing



Prohibition laws due to a combination of corruption, insufficient resources, and public indifference towards the laws. In cities like New York and Chicago, local police often engaged in bribery, which undermined enforcement. Emory Buckner highlighted the chaotic and overcrowded conditions of federal courts that struggled to process thousands of Prohibition-related cases. Complaints arose regarding systemic corruption among law enforcement, where officers were suspected of receiving protection money from speakeasies. Moreover, attempts to prosecute bootleggers were further complicated by the sheer volume of illegal activity and the lack of judicial support, leaving federal courts overwhelmed and local authorities largely ineffective due to their own mismanagement or complicity.

5.Question:

What was the public's perception of Prohibition and how did it shape enforcement strategies during the era?

Public perception of Prohibition was often characterized by skepticism and outright defiance, particularly in urban areas where drinking cultures were deeply ingrained. Many viewed the dry laws as overreaching and cumbersome, leading to widespread noncompliance. The legality of consumption did not deter demand; instead, it transformed drinking practices, resulting in the proliferation of underground speakeasies and illicit distilleries. This public disregard complicated enforcement strategies, as authorities often prioritized arrests over meaningful enforcement, leading to



a focus on quantity rather than the quality of prosecutions. Citizens collectively opted to sidestep the law, leading local and federal agencies to sometimes adopt plea bargains and shortcuts to manage their overwhelming caseloads, showing a dichotomy between legal enforcement and the prevailing cultural ethos of the time.

Chapter 17 | Crime Pays | Q&A

1.Question:

Who is Wayne Wheeler and what role does he play in this chapter?

Wayne Wheeler is a prominent advocate for Prohibition in the United States, specifically serving as a national leader of the Anti-Saloon League (ASL). In Chapter 17, titled 'Crime Pays', Wheeler is depicted as a skilled political manipulator, adept at navigating congressional committees to promote dry legislation and enforce Prohibition laws. He is characterized as calm, polite, and strategic, often using his charisma to counter opposition from wet representatives. The chapter details one of his most challenging confrontations with wet forces in Congress, led by Senator Jim Reed, which ultimately leads to a noted shift in public and legislative sentiment surrounding Prohibition.

2.Question:

What was the main focus of the Senate Judiciary Committee hearings in April 1926?

The hearings held in April 1926 by a Senate Judiciary subcommittee were ostensibly convened to discuss amendments to the Volstead Act, which enforced Prohibition.



However, the actual focus shifted dramatically to questioning the effectiveness of Prohibition itself and the enforcement efforts against illegal alcohol. Senator Jim Reed, who was known for his fierce opposition to dry policies, used the hearings to highlight the failures of Prohibition and to challenge the implications of law enforcement under the law. It became a battleground for debate over the legality and morality of Prohibition, transforming the issue from just alcohol consumption to broader questions of governance and civil liberties.

3.Question:

How does the chapter illustrate the growing criminality associated with Prohibition?

The chapter provides a detailed account of how Prohibition led to the rise of organized crime and corruption in America. It describes how the illegal liquor trade, valued at staggering sums, prompted criminals like Al Capone and various gangs to emerge and dominate this black market. The enforcement of Prohibition laws became a lucrative opportunity for both criminals and corrupt officials. The narrative illustrates instances of violence within these criminal enterprises, such as bloodshed among rival gangs over territory and control of the liquor trade, revealing the deepening entrenchment of organized crime as a response to the prohibitory laws.

4.Question:

What impact did Senator Jim Reed have on the public perception of Prohibition during the hearings?

Senator Jim Reed's role during the hearings was pivotal in shifting public



perception about Prohibition. Through his aggressive questioning and the emphasis he placed on the failures of enforcement, Reed cast doubt on the efficacy of Prohibition laws, suggesting they were not only bearable but unsustainable. His charisma and confrontational style drew significant media attention, framing the issue as an active debate rather than a settled law. Reed's performance effectively reignited the conversation around Prohibition, highlighting the large-scale criminal activity and corruption associated with it, thus weakening the dry arguments in favor of keeping Prohibition stringent.

5.Question:

How did Wayne Wheeler respond to the challenges posed during the hearings, and what was his eventual fate after the events?

Wayne Wheeler, despite being physically unwell during the hearings, rose to the occasion and presented his arguments in favor of Prohibition. He sought to rebut the criticisms leveled against the ASL and defend the enforcement mechanisms in place, claiming that illegal activities were, paradoxically, evidence of the necessity for the law. However, after the hearings concluded and facing immense pressure and personal health issues, Wheeler ultimately sought a rest cure for his chronic heart troubles. The hearings had seriously affected his well-being, and he described the experience as draining, indicating the heavy toll that the battle over Prohibition was taking on him both personally and politically.

Chapter 18 | The Phony Referendum | Q&A

1.Question:

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What role did Pauline Sabin play in the 1926 Senate campaign of James Wadsworth Jr., and how did her background influence her political actions? Pauline Sabin was a vocal supporter of James Wadsworth Jr. in his 1926 Senate reelection campaign, despite her opposition to Prohibition, which Wadsworth supported. Their friendship matched their aristocratic backgrounds—both were wealthy Republicans from notable lineages. Her upbringing as an affluent woman involved in high society allowed her to navigate the political landscape effectively, as evidenced when she advised Wadsworth to shift a scheduled rally to Carnegie Hall for better access to an audience and to maintain a dignified atmosphere. This reflects her understanding of political strategy and her established connections within the Republican Party.

2.Question:

How did the Anti-Saloon League (ASL) respond to the 1926 Senate election, and what were the implications of their actions?

In the 1926 Senate election, the ASL chose to punish Wadsworth for his wet stance by endorsing a third-party candidate, Franklin W. Cristman, whose platform was a more stringent enforcement of Prohibition. This decision splintered the Republican vote, allowing the wet Democrat Robert F. Wagner to win the election. The ASL's move signaled a substantial push against wet Republicans, illustrating their influence in shaping electoral outcomes and foreshadowing the increasing tensions between wet and dry factions within politics, especially when following this loss, Wadsworth became more vocal



about his call for the Repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment.

3.Question:

What was the significance of Wayne Wheeler's death for the Anti-Saloon League, and how did it affect their strategic position?

Wayne Wheeler's death in 1927 dealt a significant blow to the ASL's influence, creating a power vacuum that led to infighting among its leaders. Wheeler had been a formidable political manipulator, and his absence undermined the unity and direction of the organization. Internal struggles erupted between factions advocating for punitive enforcement versus those promoting educational and persuasive methods to tackle alcohol consumption. This disorganization weakened the ASL's previously entrenched position and marked a shift in momentum toward the opposition, represented by growing wet sentiments against Prohibition.

4.Question:

How did Pierre du Pont's involvement in the Association Against the Prohibition Amendment (AAPA) alter the trajectory of the repeal movement?

Pierre du Pont's engagement transformed the AAPA from a struggling advocacy group into a formidable organization opposing Prohibition. His significant financial backing and leadership raised the AAPA's profile, attracting prominent supporters from various sectors, including business and finance. Du Pont's resources and political acumen marked a shift from combatting Prohibition through mere reform efforts to an outright campaign



for repeal, consolidating influential figures and funds towards a singular goal. His strategy emphasized mobilizing public sentiment against Prohibition and eventually became a critical catalyst in the broader movement for repeal, culminating in the eventual ratification of the Twenty-First Amendment.

5.Question:

What were the underlying factors contributing to the perception of the 1928 presidential election as a referendum on Prohibition, and how accurate was this characterization?

The 1928 presidential election, featuring the pro-Prohibition Herbert Hoover against the wet Al Smith, was widely portrayed as a referendum on Prohibition. However, this characterization was misleading. Many voters' opposition to Smith stemmed more from anti-Catholic sentiment than a commitment to dry policies. Despite Hoover's victory, evidence suggested declining support for Prohibition among the general public, with many states rejecting enforcement laws. The 1928 election thus highlighted the complex interplay of religion, ethnicity, and class within American politics, revealing that while anti-Prohibition sentiments were rising, they were overshadowed by partisan allegiances and prejudices rather than a singular focus on alcohol issues.





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Chapter 19 | Outrageous Excess | Q&A

1.Question:

What significant event occurred on December 12, 1928, involving John J. Raskob, and what does it reveal about his views on Prohibition?

On December 12, 1928, John J. Raskob purchased 14 cases of gin, 7¼ cases of Scotch, and 3 cases of rum, totaling \$1,651. This purchase, costly yet trivial for him, reveals Raskob's hypocrisy regarding Prohibition. Although he publicly claimed to oppose drinking and promoted a family-oriented image, he indulged in illicit alcohol and stocked liquor on his yachts, indicating that despite his position against Prohibition, he was an active participant in the very culture he condemned. His statements in public contrasted sharply with his private behavior, suggesting that he wanted to maintain a respectable image while enjoying the luxuries of bootlegging.

2.Question:

How did public perception of drinking and enforcement change among the elite classes and the general public, as detailed in the chapter?

By 1929, drinking among the privileged in major cities like New York had become more open and socially acceptable, contrasting sharply with the earlier clandestine behavior during the onset of Prohibition. The chapter describes speakeasies that once required passwords no longer needing such measures, and ads for home bar setups marketed to the wealthy. However, excessive enforcement efforts, illustrated by violent police raids and harsh penalties under laws like the Jones Law, started to shift public perception. The brutality and absurdity of enforcement measures, such as the harsh sentencing of ordinary people, sparked outrage and led to growing dissatisfaction and



visibility of unlawful alcohol consumption. High-profile cases like that of Etta Mae Miller, who received a life sentence for a minor infraction, drew public sympathy and criticism toward the laws themselves.

3.Question:

What impact did the Jones Law have on Prohibition enforcement, and how did it affect public opinion towards it?

The Jones Law, passed with the intent to intensify Prohibition enforcement, magnified public backlash against the law. It escalated penalties dramatically, turning minor offenses into felonies, thus creating widespread fear of severe punishment among common citizens. Instead of deterring illegal activities, these stringent laws alienated the public, as they recognized the disproportionate punishment meted out for minor infractions.

Sensational media coverage highlighted instances of excessive enforcement, including violent raids and unjust sentencing, which painted Prohibition as an oppressive regime rather than a moral crusade. High-profile critiques from influential journalists and even politicians further damaged the credibility of the dry movement, highlighting the law's failures and thus increasing public support for its repeal.

4.Question:

What actions did Pauline Sabin take following President Hoover's inaugural address regarding Prohibition, and how did these actions signal a shift in her political stance?

Following Hoover's inaugural address on March 4, 1929, where he



emphasized strict enforcement of Prohibition laws, Pauline Sabin felt disillusioned and resigned from the Republican National Committee. Her subsequent actions included gathering socially prominent women to form a group advocating for the abolition of Prohibition, reflecting her shift from a dry advocate to an active opponent of the Eighteenth Amendment. Sabin's actions signaled a broader movement among influential women who once supported Prohibition but now recognized its failures and envisioned a new approach to alcohol regulation. Together, they represented a significant political pivot, recognizing that Prohibition could not be reformed but needed to be dismantled altogether.

5.Question:

How did Herbert Hoover's presidency and his approach to Prohibition illustrate the tensions surrounding the law during this period?

Herbert Hoover's presidency was marked by attempts to address the rampant lawlessness propagated by Prohibition. Though he initially prioritized enforcement, believing in strict adherence to law, he faced growing challenges as civil unrest and public disdain for Prohibition escalated. His appointment of the Wickersham Commission aimed to investigate the effectiveness of Prohibition enforcement reflected a conflicted stance—he recognized the shortcomings of the law yet struggled to navigate the political ramifications of reversing it. Hoover's administration effectively highlighted the tension between the idealistic goals of Prohibition supporters and the practical realities of widespread noncompliance, corruption, and violence



stemming from heightened enforcement. His inclination to rationalize governance through systematic reforms clashed with an increasingly unsupportive public, eventually leading to doubts about the sustainability of Prohibition altogether.

Chapter 20 | The Hummingbird That Went to Mars | Q&A

1.Question:

What were the main arguments and challenges faced by advocates of Repeal in the early 1930s as highlighted in Chapter 20?

Advocates of Repeal faced several formidable challenges according to Chapter 20. Firstly, historical precedent was against them—no amendment in U.S. history had ever been repealed, particularly during the Eighteenth Amendment, which had established Prohibition. Legal hurdles included needing a two-thirds majority in both houses of Congress, which could easily be thwarted by a minority of dry senators. Additionally, they would require the approval of three-quarters of the states for ratification, a particularly daunting prospect since a small number of states could effectively block the process forever. The chapter emphasizes the skepticism from both wet leaders, who doubted the feasibility of repeal, and dry advocates who believed the undertones supporting Prohibition were still strong in American society.

2.Question:

How did the economic conditions of the Great Depression impact the push towards Repeal?

The Great Depression had a profound influence on the movement for Repeal. Economic



struggles significantly weakened the ability of the government to enforce Prohibition as funding for the enforcement of the law was drastically reduced—from \$300 million requested to just \$12 million allocated. With massive unemployment and a collapsing economy, the fiscal arguments favoring Repeal grew stronger. Business leaders and political figures recognized that legalizing alcohol could not only generate substantial tax revenues but also create jobs in breweries, distilleries, and various sectors reliant on alcohol production. Al Capone famously countered the government's failure to provide for the needy by opening a soup kitchen, thereby showcasing how the Prohibition enforcement efforts were failing at a time when relief and recovery were desperately needed. This shift in public sentiment toward addressing economic woes rather than moral laws propelled the movement for Repeal as advocates argued it was a practical solution to the country's pressing problems.

3.Question:

What role did the public perception and social activity surrounding drinking play in the late stage of Prohibition as described in the chapter?

Chapter 20 outlines how public attitudes toward drinking underwent a significant shift during the latter years of Prohibition. Despite the legal restrictions, drinking became increasingly normalized, with speakeasies and illicit alcohol establishments thriving. The chapter cites evidence of widespread drinking habits, indicating that consumption had increased rather than decreased over the years since Prohibition was enacted. Socially, the acceptance and participation in drinking were seen in various social settings,



from high-class clubs and restaurants to more discreet venues, suggesting a disregard for the laws prohibiting alcohol sales. The public's adaptation to circumvent the law meant that drinking was no longer viewed as illicit but rather as a social norm, framing a cultural backdrop that favored the Repeal arguments espoused by the wets.

4.Question:

Discuss how influential individuals and organizations contributed to the Repeal movement's momentum as described in Chapter 20.

Influential individuals like Pierre du Pont and John Raskob, who led the Association Against the Prohibition Amendment (AAPA), played a key role by leveraging their resources to finance Repeal efforts, primarily due to economic self-interest as well as ideological opposition to Prohibition. On the organizational front, the Women's Organization for National Prohibition Reform (WONPR), under Pauline Sabin's leadership, effectively mobilized social elites and promoted Repeal as a respectable cause. Their influence extended to public opinion and political circles, creating a robust network of support across various demographics. The involvement of women of high social standing helped reframe the Repeal narrative, making it palatable and respectable, thus broadening the base of support for the movement.

Additionally, the shifting attitudes among some Republicans and prominent members of society indicated a growing consensus that Repeal was both politically and economically advantageous in light of the ongoing Depression.

5.Question:

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What was the significance of the Twenty-First Amendment as described in Chapter 20 and how was it passed?

The significance of the Twenty-First Amendment, as articulated in Chapter 20, lies in the fact that it marked a historic reversal of the Eighteenth Amendment, effectively ending national Prohibition. It was a reflection of changing public opinion, economic necessities, and the political landscape of the early 1930s as voters and politicians recognized the detrimental effects of Prohibition on society and the economy. The passage of the Twenty-First Amendment to the Constitution involved a sequence of events that started with a favorable political climate for Repeal, characterized by Democratic successes in the 1932 elections. Advocates managed to garner significant support that led to a filibuster in the Senate by Morris Sheppard, which ultimately failed. The Senate voted 63-23 in favor of Repeal, followed by the House passing the resolution without significant debate. This decisive legislative action was augmented by a ratification process that was ultimately completed when Utah became the thirty-sixth state to ratify the amendment in December 1933, leading to the official end of Prohibition.

Chapter 21 | Afterlives, and the missing man | Q&A

1.Question:

What was the significance of Wayne B. Wheeler's death in 1927, and how did it impact the perception of Prohibition?

Wayne B. Wheeler's death in 1927 was significant because he was a prominent figure in the Prohibition movement, known for his strategic leadership in the Anti-Saloon



League (ASL) and influence on national policy. The Washington Post described him having made a considerable impact on national history. However, after Prohibition was repealed in 1933, Wheeler's name largely disappeared from public memory and historical texts, despite his crucial role in shaping the movement. This suggests that the legacy of Prohibition became detached from its architect, as Wheeler's influence faded along with the movement he championed.

2.Question:

How did the former advocates of Prohibition respond to its repeal, and what paths did they pursue?

After the repeal of Prohibition, former advocates took various paths. For instance, James M. Doran shifted from leading the Prohibition Bureau to leading a liquor manufacturers' trade organization. Izzy Einstein, once a proponent of Prohibition, voiced nostalgia for the quality of bootlegged alcohol compared to post-Repeal options. Mabel Willebrandt transitioned into a successful legal career in the entertainment industry. Andrew J. Volstead, the author of the Volstead Act, desired to be remembered for other legislative achievements but found his legacy tied to Prohibition. Morris Sheppard, author of the Eighteenth Amendment, continued to advocate against alcohol even after Repeal, revealing a deep dedication that persisted through his later years.

3.Question:

What were the economic implications of Repeal for the liquor industry, particularly for beer and wine manufacturers?

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The economic implications of Repeal for the liquor industry were substantial. Big breweries that had survived Prohibition emerged dominant, as only 31 of the 1,345 American brewers operating pre-Prohibition returned to the market quickly. This consolidation meant that by 2009, three companies controlled 80% of the beer market. In contrast, the wine industry struggled to regain its footing due to a lack of prepared inventories and lost winemaking expertise. Georges de Latour, who had a unique arrangement to supply sacramental wine during Prohibition, thrived, while many others failed to compete effectively after Repeal.

4.Question:

Describe the transformation and decline of organizations that advocated for Prohibition after its repeal, particularly the WCTU and ASL.

Post-Repeal, organizations like the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) and the Anti-Saloon League (ASL) struggled with their relevance and resources. The WCTU diminished into a shadow of its former self, with its national convention focused on minimal funding and shifting its priorities toward international issues. The ASL attempted to rebrand but ultimately lost its presence and influence, resembling a fraction of what it had been. In stark contrast, they became more reflective of conservative trends, with the WCTU aligning with newer social issues; this decline signified a significant shift in social and political dynamics following Repeal.

5.Question:

How did the reputation and legacy of figures like Joe Kennedy change in



the public narrative surrounding Prohibition and organized crime?

Joe Kennedy's reputation transitioned dramatically over time, as his early involvement in liquor importation turned into a narrative of alleged bootlegging, particularly in the decades following Prohibition. Initially successful as a legitimate businessman acquiring liquor licenses, Kennedy's association with the liquor industry was later marred by rumors connecting him to illegal activities. Despite a clear lack of evidence supporting claims of bootlegging, the myth persisted, with later portrayals linking him to organized crime and casting his rise in wealth through a dubious lens. This shift reflects how myths surrounding Prohibition were shaped and transformed over time, continuing to impact the legacy of individuals associated with the era.

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