

# ***Bootleg: Murder, Moonshine, and the Lawless Years of Prohibition***

by Karen Blumemthal

## **STUDY QUESTIONS**

**These are for discussion purposes ONLY. Be prepared to answer these questions with the class when we return in August. Make sure to complete the Epilogue questions on the last page, these will be collected by your teacher.**

**There will be a short quiz on this the first week of school.**

### **Valentine's Day, 1929**

1. How did the rival gang gain entry to "Bugs" Moran's gang?
2. How did Moran's seven men respond to the "officers"?
3. What was Prohibition supposed to do?
4. What, in fact, did Prohibition actually do?

### **Chapter 1- The Little Sheppard**

1. Describe Sheppard's childhood.
2. What factors helped Sheppard win the seat of the U.S. House of Representatives?
3. When Sheppard arrived at Yale, what were his circumstances, his actions, and the results of his actions?
4. Summarize Sheppard's quote in your own words:

*"The fact that alcohol undermines the brain and paralyzes the will of man, planting in him and his posterity the seeds of physical and moral degeneracy, the seeds of disease, the seeds of poverty, the seeds of crime, makes it a peril to the very existence of free government. Let the people of this Nation insert in the National Constitution, the source of the Nation's life, a clause prohibiting an evil that will prove to be the source of the Nation's death."*

### **Chapter 2- Hot and Cold Water**

1. Why do you think "Rum was almost a form of money, paid as wages and exchanged for basic goods."
  2. What was the nation's first tax on American goods?
- 
3. How did farmers in Pennsylvania, North Carolina and Virginia use whiskey?
  4. What was the Whiskey Insurrection?
  5. What are some of the reasons given that people drank whiskey?
  6. Were the attempts at Temperance successful?

### **Chapter 3- Home Destroyers and Defenders**

1. Describe a saloon, as it is presented in the book.
2. Were the women crusaders successful? Explain why or why not.
3. On page 30, why is mentioning Morris Sheppard as an example particularly effective?
4. Describe one of the classroom tactics that teachers were encouraged to perform.

### **Chapter 4- A Nation Divides**

1. Describe Mother Nation's marriage.
2. What did Mother Nation feel God led her to do?
3. Why was Mother Nation not arrested in Kiowa?
4. What effect did Mother Nation's "hatchetation" have on the U.S.?

### **Chapter 5- War!**

1. What is the war between the "drys" and the "wets"?
2. Why did brewers and distillers oppose a woman's right to vote?
3. What was the "familiar, powerful message" given by the "drys"? (p 49)
4. Using the photos in this chapter, explain how both sides used propaganda.

### **Chapter 6- Dry!**

1. How did many people spend the day before Prohibition (took effect)?
2. What had the "drys" assumed about the changing of the law? How did it actually turn out?
3. Describe "blind pigs" were – and where the name came from.
4. What was Leroy Ostransky's close call?

### **Chapter 7- Milk and Moonshine**

1. During Prohibition, how did the White House get rid of alcohol?
2. How did the rebellion against Prohibition touch children?
3. Were children (like Kenneth Nestell) being targeted by blind pigs?
4. What was the real purpose of the dehydrated grapes "warning"?
5. How did Henry Ford's automobile both help and hurt Prohibition?

### **Chapter 8- Snorky and Scarface**

1. How did Al Capone describe himself?
2. How does the author describe Al Capone differently?
3. Why was the killing of McSwiggin different?
4. What did Al Capone want for his son?
5. Describe Richard James "Two Gun" Hart.

### **Chapter 9- Wet, Again**

1. What was Pauline Morton Sabin's stance on Prohibition?
2. What does "... a hummingbird to fly to the planet Mars with the Washington Monument tied to its tail..." reference?
3. Describe Al Capone's downfall.
4. Although the President Roosevelt and the House of Representatives passed the repeal of the 18<sup>th</sup> Amendment, what more needed to be done?
5. For the first- and only- time in American history, a part of the U.S. Constitution had been

\_\_\_\_\_.