

Why prohibition failed essay sample

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Why Prohibition Failed Prohibition: Help or Harm? Prohibition damaged America Imagine this”| It’s 12: 30 am in a dark New York City street during the 1920s. Everything is silent. Then a man walks around to the back of an old saloon, closed due to Prohibition. He knocks three times on the back door then mutters the words ” Joe sent me”. The door opens to the sound of ragtime music and people singing. The door shuts and it is silent again”| That was an example of just on of the 100, 000 “ speak-easies” that was open in New York City at the time.

“ Speak-easies” were basically back door bars. Speak-easies were opened because the Volstead Act made the distribution of any intoxicating drink illegal. By 1925 (only about 5 years after Prohibition began) there were over 100, 000 speak-easies opened in New York City alone. One of many speak-easies still stands. Today it is called the “ 21 Club”. Which is located 21 West 52nd Street. Where they will give a tour of the old speak-easy which is still intact.

One reason why so many Speak-easies were allowed opened was because of the lack of enforcement. There were not enough federal agents or police to prevent liquor from entering the country. With only 1, 550 federal agents and the east coastline and the Canadian-American borderline it’s no wonder that they managed to impound 5% of smuggled liquor. Also the illegal liquor business came to the control of the mob, which overpowered most police. Not only that but also most bootleggers (people who made their own liquor) bribed federal agents, police, or anyone else who was trying to enforce the Prohibition law.

You see most Prohibitionists hoped that Prohibition would decrease drunkenness and the crime rate. Well at first the crime rate did have a minor drop but it didn't wait long to sky rocket to nearly twice that of the pre-prohibition period. Serious crimes such as homicides, assault, and battery increased and have never returned to pre-prohibition levels. These crimes increased 24 percent between 1920 and 1921. However minor crimes such as swearing and mischief did decrease. The crime rate probably increased because prohibition destroyed legal jobs, created a black market, diverted enforcement for other laws, and increased prices that people had to pay for prohibited goods.

The results of Prohibition is clear. Organized crime grew, police corruption grew, and the consumption of the prohibited substance grew. It's easy to see that Prohibition had a reverse effect on America. Not enough police enforced the law so they were ignored. People flagrantly violated the law, drinking more alcohol. Prohibition was suppose to solve crimes like crime which grew worse. Not only was Prohibition a failure but it damaged the people and the society that it was suppose to help. My thought is that it should have never have gone on.