

In what ways did prohibition change us society in the 1920's essay sample

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When Prohibition was passed as a law in 1919 the pressure groups who had backed it hoped for a decrease in America's social problems and criminal activities. It did bring positives such as; more productive society, men took more responsibility and boom years. But on the other hand, prohibition appeared to bring about a totally opposite change to the US society; criminal activity increased, not just within organized crime but also throughout the general public who had developed a general disrespect for the law.

Furthermore there was a rise in gangster culture due to the enforcing of prohibition; this also led to disrespect for those who were meant to uphold the law within the general public; as gangsters corrupted policemen so their criminal activities could not be prosecuted in court. To help enforce the prohibition law John. F. Crammer became the prohibition commissioner, with a force of 3, 000 prohibition agents which portrayed the importance of the situation.

The 1920's also known as the roaring 20's or Jazz Age saw prohibition affect the US society in a major way, these changes were; the rise of Al Capone, federal agents, chemists and ordinary citizens. The US society changed indefinitely due to the rise of crime when prohibition came into place, this saw the gangster era come upon the US. Each city had its own element of gangsters. But the most famous was Chicago's Al Capone.

He became " Public Enemy Number 1" due to illegal selling of alcohol and other things, over 2 years Al Capone made between \$60 million - \$100 million from his action. He employed over 1, 000 men which were his army, that were involved in the St Valentines Day Massacre and killing of rival

gangs or people that got in Al Capone's way. The reason he never got arrested or stopped was because he bribed the police and Chicago's politicians to keep things the way they are, he made sure of this by making sure the politicians got elected back to their office.

Al Capone years later had been caught out by the law for tax evasion and was put in prison for 11 years, but although this in some eyes he was a public hero. Prohibition had a major impact on ordinary citizens as it caused many people to lose profits in their businesses such as; Hotel owners, Brewers and Distillers etc, these were all affected by prohibition, most of them because the selling of alcohol was banned, therefore people looked for an alternative which were gangsters who sold alcohol illegally linking to Al Capone and co again.

Many ordinary citizens hated prohibition, one of the reasons was because they claimed that it threatened their freedom which they had rights to have but also the American Federation on labour felt that people were entitled to a drink after a days work, their slogan was " No Beer, No Work". This infuriated people because many of them didn't work as unemployment was high at that time.

Immigrants were even affected by prohibition because when they arrived in the US they couldn't drink, this would impact on the society as most communities had a lot of foreigners and they would not get along with others due to prohibition. One big change in the US society was that women got involved with the campaign against prohibition, two powerful pressure

groups were formed during this time, these two groups were, The Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) and The Anti-Saloon League.

Federal agents control over the underworld crime and illegal activities was lost due to introduction of prohibition, many people found good ways of dodging the laws, these included bootlegging and speakeasies which were popular ways to avoid the law. Federal agents struggled to cope with Gangsters smuggling and selling alcohol and many other activities although they seemed to be criminals in the eyes of federal agents, they were not in the eyes of the public, as well as this the price of alcohol soared, as a result Whisky lost \$4 a gallon and in 1926 lost \$24 a gallon.

Prohibition undermined respect for the laws as it led to police corruption; this suggests that prohibition did not help the federal agents in any way.

Although Prohibition did not prove to have many positives, it did however change the chemists for the better, this is because due to less alcohol being devoured by people, it was used in other perspectives such as e. g. : Medicines. The alcohol produced was being used for medicines and industrial alcohol this meant that those businesses/industries profited and indeed boomed from Prohibition.

In Conclusion prohibition changed the US Society by making the gangsters rise up from the underworld activity and make profits from the illegal smuggling and selling of alcohol, as well as this ordinary citizens were infuriated by the banning of alcohol, loss in businesses and threatening of their freedom etc. Also federal agents were helpless to stop the rise of

gangsters and criminal/illegal activities but on the other hand it did change the chemists as they're business boomed from prohibition.