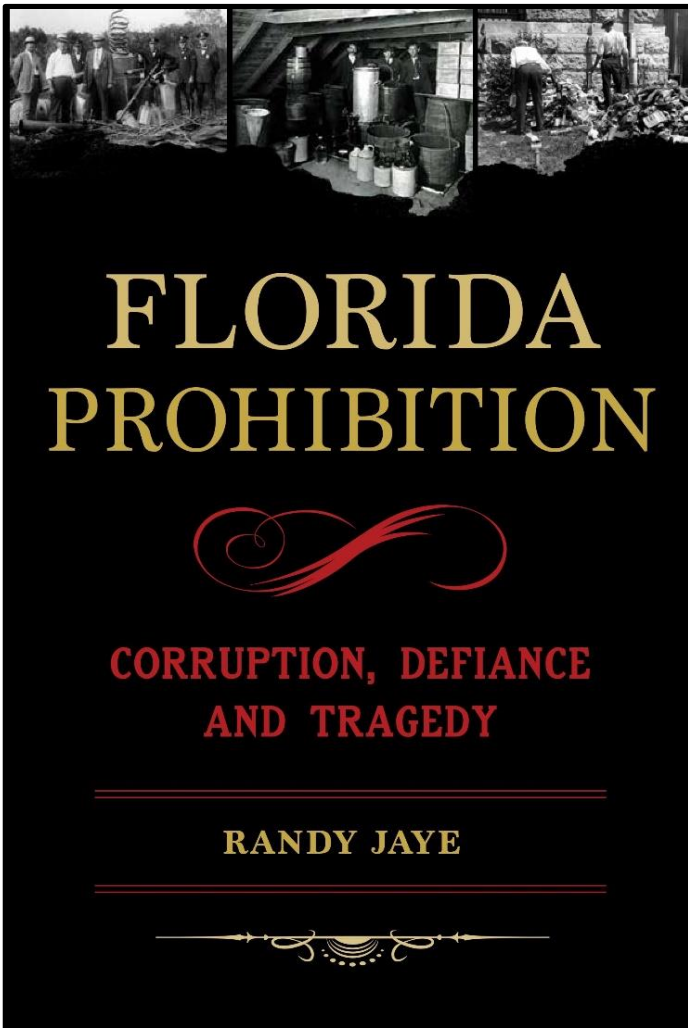


Florida Prohibition: Corruption, Defiance and Tragedy

An Intoxicating History of Florida's Dry Days

Presented by Randy Jaye

The Prohibition era in the United States lasted from 1920 to 1933, spanning through the Roaring Twenties into the early years of the Great Depression. During this time the production, importation, transportation, and sale of alcoholic beverages were outlawed nation-wide, with some exceptions, of course.



Learn how Prohibition was instigated by rural and small town Protestants who believed that newer immigrants living in urban areas were immoral because of their emphatic use of alcoholic beverages. Prohibition bred corruption, defiance of the law, and hypocrisy as illegal bootlegging, moonshining and rum running replaced legitimate taxpaying industries. Florida actually voted state-wide Prohibition into law before the dreaded 18th amendment to the U.S. Constitution, and was the only state to elect a governor from the Prohibition Party. Florida's Bill McCoy 'The Real McCoy' developed creative rum running technics, founded Rum Row, and became an international celebrity as he bamboozled the U.S. Coast Guard. Al Capone, the infamous gangster, stayed put in his Miami, Florida home while his henchmen perpetrated the St. Valentine's Day Massacre. Many virtually unknown stories of tragic killings in Florida during Prohibition are also recounted.

Prohibition also helped set the stage for the rise of 20th century women's liberation via flappers (young women who dressed in short skirts, listened and danced to jazz music, wore bobbed hair styles, drank illegal alcoholic beverages alongside men in speakeasies, and publicly flaunted contempt for what was considered socially acceptable behavior for women during this period). Many alcohol restrictions and taxation policies that still exist in Florida, and elsewhere around the nation, were influenced by Prohibition.



Randy Jaye has recently researched and nominated 5 properties that have been successfully added onto the National Register of Historic Places. He is the author of several recent books including: *Flagler County, Florida: A Centennial History* (2017); *Perseverance: Episodes of Black History from the Rural South* (2020); *Jim Crow Era Propaganda, Artifacts and Upheavals in Florida* (2022), *Florida Prohibition: Corruption, Defiance and Tragedy* (2024), and *Florida Flashpoints: Extraordinary Moments from Spanish Colony to the Space Age* (2025). He also writes articles for historical journals, local newspapers, magazines, online publications, and has appeared on several radio shows and PBS documentaries. He earned both a Master's degree and a Bachelor's degree from California State University.