



American Prohibition Movement through Popular Music

Materials related to “American Prohibition Movement through Popular Music” in the collections of the Center for Popular Music, Middle Tennessee State University.

Compiled by: Miranda Barnett, Jan.-Mar. 2024

What does Prohibition mean?

Prohibition in the United States started with the passing of the 18th Amendment, also known as the Volstead Act, in 1919 and its implementation in 1920 until its repeal in 1933 with the 21st Amendment. However, the calls for temperance and concerns about alcohol consumption in the United States first started gaining traction in the 1820s, along with several other social reform movements at the same time. This call for temperance led to the creation of the Prohibition Movement, which is also referred to as the Temperance Movement. During the period of Prohibition, the manufacture, sale, transportation, importation, and exportation of alcohol in the United States and its territories. The amendment did not, however, make illegal the consumption or possession of alcohol. While the amendment was intended to lessen and eliminate crime thought to be caused by intemperance and alcohol, the law was hard to enforce, and crime often increased with the rise of bootleggers and organized crime.

Why does Prohibition research matter?

Research on the Prohibition Movement in the United States is important because it is one of the first main movements for social reform in the United States with women taking and leading the charge for change, with another being the Suffrage Movement to give women the right to vote. People who supported the Prohibition Movement were worried with what they saw as the “moral degradation” that was caused by drinking and intemperance, and they believed if they outlawed the production, sale, and distribution of alcohol that people would stop drinking as much or altogether. While this amendment was later repealed, it is a good example of one of the social movements and reforms of the Progressive Era.

What can this Prohibition Movement research guide do for me?

This guide will provide a few ways and resources to help you understand the ways that the Prohibition Movement can frame your historical research. The types of primary and

secondary sources included in this guide are sheet music, song broadsides, songbooks, sound recordings, and secondary source books.

Additional research material is included at the end of this research guide and includes outside databases, online repositories, and online exhibits with information about the Prohibition Movement in the United States to help broaden your understanding and research.

“How do I search for these primary source materials?”

Online Searching:

Most of these primary source materials are searchable online through the Center’s website. Sound recordings can be searched in the Center’s Reading Room through the in-house database.

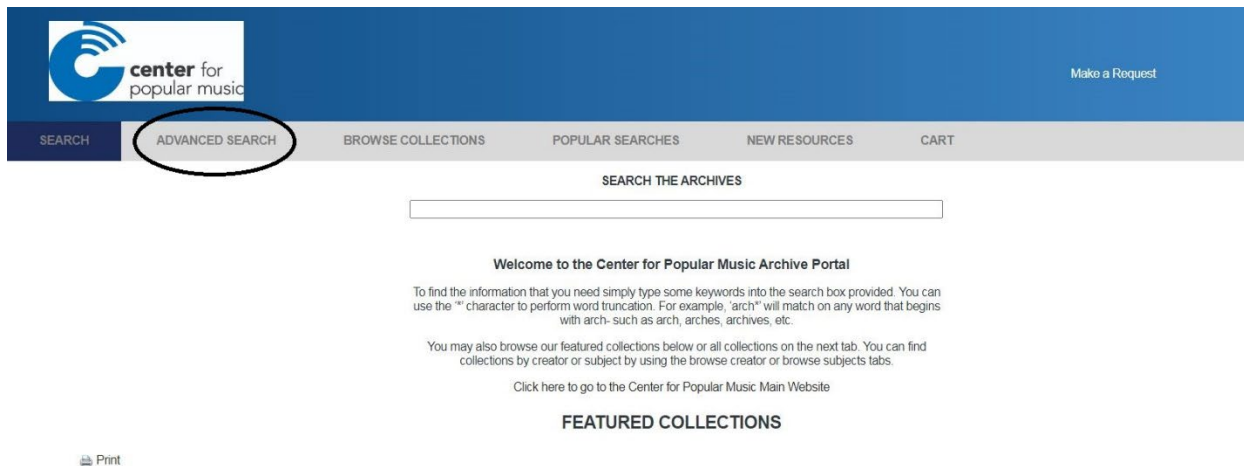
To search for these materials online, visit the [CPM's website](#). The catalog will search for materials in the following collection categories: **Manuscript Collections, Rare Books, and Scores; Song Broad­sides** (which are inexpensive printed sheets of paper that normally only contain the lyrics to one or more songs); **Posters, Playbills, and Programs; Trade Catalogs; Photographs; and Periodicals: Secondary Collection.**

To search the materials in the Center’s archive, click on “**Archive Collection Search.**”



You can search for specific titles, songs, or artists in **Basic Search** or **Advanced Search**. You can examine secondary source materials before searching for primary sources if you do not have any specific names in mind. Terms such as “Prohibition Movement” and “Temperance Movement” have not been used in the cataloging process, so they will not yield significant results. Searching using terms such as “temperance” and “prohibition” will yield lists of items that may or may not correlate to the topic.

To limit your search to a particular field or type of material, click on the [Advanced Search link](#). You can limit your search by title, dates, song lyrics, song titles, collections, creators, authors, performers, and many other different specifications.



At the Center (in-house searching only):

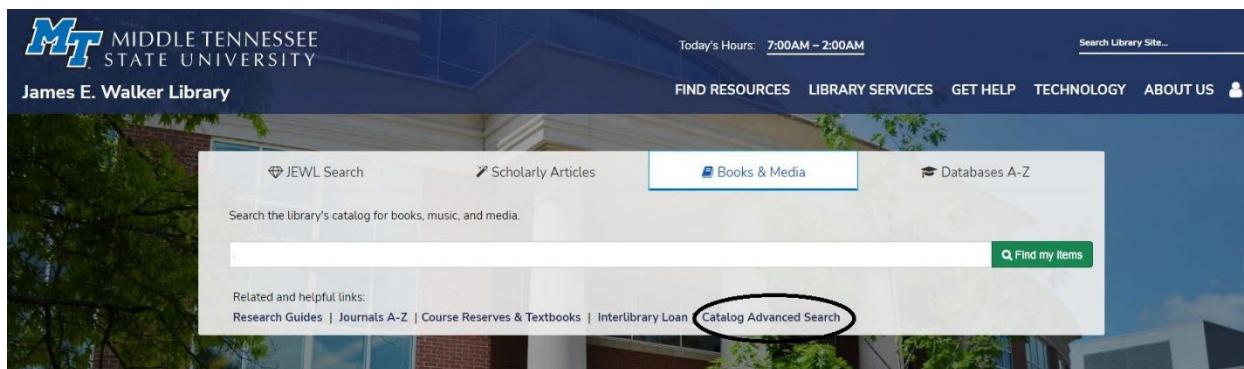
To search for Sound Recordings, please visit the Center and use our in-house database or email the **Center** at popular.music@mtsu.edu

Some photographic and manuscript materials also require staff assistance to locate. Please contact **Archivist** with questions.

“What secondary source materials do you have?”

To search for Secondary Source Materials available in the Center’s Reading Room– go to MTSU’s [Walker Library catalog](#) and use search terms like “Prohibition Movement,” “Prohibition,” “Temperance,” “Temperance Movement,” “Intemperance,” and “Intemperance Movement”.

If you are only interested in materials held at the CPM, click on “Catalog Advanced Search” at the bottom of the Search box.



Then select “Center for Popular Music (Mass Comm.)” under the “Collection” menu.

Advanced Search

Search for: [] [All Fields] [Match: ALL Terms]

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Call Number: [A - General Works] [Language: [Afrikaans] [Format: [Audio] [Collection: [Center for Popular Music (Mass Comm.)]

Illustrated: [Year of Publication]

US Prohibition Movement through Popular Music Bibliography

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