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Grade Level: 9 – US History

Primary Source Citation: “The Modern Devil Fish,” Hughes, Victor. 1904. Re-published in 1925.

Allow students as individuals, to analyze the cartoon which shows students how the image of the octopus can be used to represent a variety of issues in American society. It also allows students to understand what saloons did to enhance crime in the 1920s and why prohibition was put into place with the 18th amendment.

Level I Description:

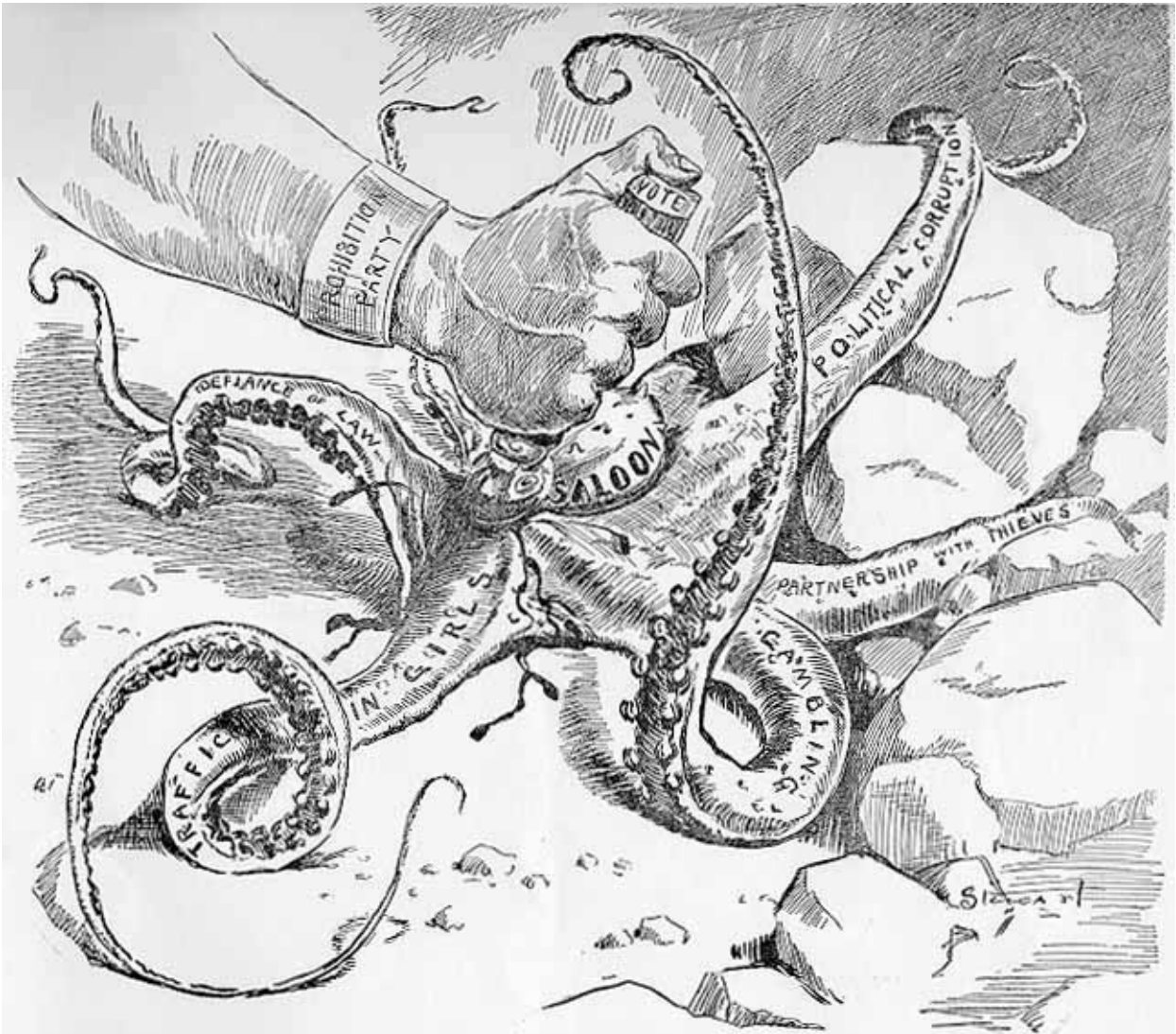
1. What do you see in the cartoon?
2. What does the octopus represent?
3. What is the hand doing to the octopus?

Level II Interpretation:

1. What does the title of the cartoon imply about the picture shown?
2. What is significant about the word “vote” on the knife?
3. What do the tentacles of the octopus represent?

Level III Analysis:

1. What does the picture tell you about the views of the Prohibition Party?
2. Describe how the action in the cartoon explains the caption.
3. How could someone who is opposed to prohibition and the 18th amendment use this cartoon against those who are for prohibition?



The Modern Devil Fish

"The tentacles of the Devil Fish cannot be destroyed unless the HEAD, the source of their sustaining power, is destroyed."—Victor Hugo's "Toilers of the Sea."

"The tentacles of the devil fish cannot be destroyed unless the head, the source of their sustaining power, is destroyed."

- Victor Hughes "Toilers of the Sea"