

**Keeping Chicago Dry: Eliot Ness and the**  
**Untouchables**

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**Group Website**

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### **How did we choose our topic?**

A few years ago, one of our group members was able to visit the ever-so-famous, Alcatraz prison, where Capone was confined. This sparked our interest and we wondered who had been the cause of Capone's downfall. From here, we were led to Eliot Ness. Eliot Ness began as a starting point for us, which then had expanded to the entire clan of corruption-fighting prohibition agents, The Untouchables.

### **How did we conduct our research?**

We began our research on the Internet, trying to obtain a background about Eliot Ness. After getting an understanding of his work and his impact, we started moving towards books, websites, images, and newspaper articles. We were fortunate to have been able to interview the author of *The Rise and Fall of an American Hero*, Douglas Perry, and the assistant manager of the American Prohibition Museum, Caitlin Hamilton. In addition, we were able to visit the Chicago History Museum, where which we were able to gather more information about Eliot Ness and Al Capone.

### **Why did we choose our category and how did we create our project?**

Our decision to create a website in order to present our argument was based on our belief on how essential media would be to our project. Our topic, The Untouchables (headed by Eliot Ness), occurred in a time where media was starting to emerge and become more prominent. Therefore, the use of a website to display our information perfectly encompasses how technology began to play a larger role in daily life during the 1920's. Our group is also rather large, and using a digital method to present our findings, such as Weebly, guaranteed we would all be able to work on it at different times and at different places, essential for our project's success. At one of our first group meetings, we started out by splitting the work up and assigning certain paragraphs to certain group members. Following our initial work, we started to piece together the information on our website, focusing on essential questions such as who took a stand, how did he do it, why did he do it, when, where, and with what?

### **How does our topic relate to the theme?**

Prohibitionist Eliot Ness and his team worked to keep the city of Chicago, ravaged by corruption and illicit businesses, free of corruption (which had then been prohibited by the 18th Amendment). He had begun this fight because corruption indirectly threatened public safety and made upholding the law an extremely difficult task. Ness had taken a stand by becoming leader of the "Untouchables," a group who had been tasked with fighting against Capone (the gangster infamous for bribing government officials) and through the press, where he announced to the world that he couldn't be bought. Ness did not tolerate police officers who accepted bribes and fired them immediately. As a result of his stand, Ness has left behind a legacy of honesty and integrity in the law enforcement community.