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## Chasing the White Dog: An Amateur Outlaw's Adventures in Moonshine

Max Watman

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#1166182 in Books 2011-02-15 2011-02-15 Original language: English PDF # 1 8.44 x .80 x 5.50l, .57 #File Name: 1416571795304 pages | File size: 69.Mb

**Max Watman : Chasing the White Dog: An Amateur Outlaw's Adventures in Moonshine** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Chasing the White Dog: An Amateur Outlaw's Adventures in Moonshine:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A wonderful historical guide to a romanticized American "activity"

written by a wonderful story-teller. By John Jorg Considering the subject (Mr. Watman's personal search for the how, why, and where of nontaxed, illegally made whiskey), Mr. Watman has presented a remarkably balanced - and entertaining - report on small-volume whiskey-making in these United States. After a brief survey of whiskey-making pre-20th Century, he narrates his personal experiences with distilling at home and with seeking out persons who made, or now make, and consume moonshine. His wonderful stories capture the romanticized view of moonshining, but he balances this with some hard, and occasionally uncomfortable, descriptions of the basic business of selling untaxed whiskey for profit. He also introduces us to some of the persons responsible for, and currently contributing to, the current growth in craft distilling which grew out of that complex business we oh so simply call moonshining. Where his personal biases or internal conflicts arise, as in his attempt to distinguish those who are making whiskey for family and friends from those who make, literally, rotgut, he carefully and humorously shows how difficult it is to draw a line. For example, just how big can that group of "friends" be before the maker becomes a business? This is not a how-to book. This is an excellent addition to the literature about American whiskey. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. This Ain't Dogpatch... or is it? By Ellen J This book is a **\*\*MUST READ\*\*** for anyone interested in understanding liquor's place in America's history... and its present. There are other books on the subject, some much more comprehensive. But Watman's style of choosing just a few very specific subjects and examining them in detail really focuses the reader. And the subjects he chooses could not be more representative of the culture. Each example is treated almost as a stand-alone article, and indeed would win high praise on its own. But Watman doesn't take on the role of teacher, nor even guide. Rather he writes from the perspective of the reader... a reader who just wants to learn how to distill old farmer-style corn whiskey moonshine and who, in attempting to do so, learns more and more about the ever more fascinating shadow world of 'shine and its culture. Linda and John (Ellen J) Lipman American Spirits [...] 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By gr\_ssman Bought as gift for son who likes it.

In the summer of 1794, drunk and armed outlaws gathered in Monongahela, Pennsylvania, intent on preventing the collection of the Whiskey Tax. George Washington mustered 13,000 troops to quell the rebellion, but by the time they arrived, the rebels had vanished; America's first moonshiners had packed up their stills and moved on. From these moonshine pioneers, to the bathtub gin runners of the 1920s, to today's booming bootleg businessmen, journalist Max Watman traces the historical roots and contemporary story of white lightning, which has played a surprisingly large role in American history. It touched the election of Thomas Jefferson, the invention of the IRS, and the origins of NASCAR. It is a story of tommy guns, hot rods, and shot houses, and the story is far from over. In this fascinating, centuries-long history of illicit booze, Watman infiltrates every aspect of small-scale distilling in America, taking us from the backwoods of Appalachia to the gritty nip joints of Philadelphia, from a federal courthouse to Pocono Speedway. Along the way, this unrepentant lover of moonshine profiles the colorful characters who make up white whiskey's lore and hilariously chronicles his own attempts to distill hooch from his initial ill-fated batch to his first successful jar of shine.

From Publishers Weekly Journalist Watman chronicles America's longstanding love affair with distilled spirits, a love that he shares. As long as people have been making booze, the government has wanted to control it, and Watman colorfully illustrates a conflict that stretches from the Whiskey Rebellion through Prohibition. Watman travels from Colorado to Virginia to cover the current battles between moonshine producers and government agents, a journey that takes him from nip houses to NASCAR events. Watman also details his own complicated, and comical, attempts to manufacture hard liquor at home. He is a capable journalist and has an impressive grasp of the craft of distillation and the science behind it. His historical writing is lively as well, and he profiles fascinating, little-known characters and events like Johnny McDonald and the Whiskey Ring scandal during the Grant administration. Despite Watman's talents, however, his narrative meanders, in large part because Watman doesn't write as well about himself as he does about other people. Yet even though the parts don't add up to a satisfying whole, they remain entertaining enough to keep the pages turning. (Mar.) Copyright copy; Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. From Booklist Although most of us associate moonshine with Prohibition and the cross-border gin runners of the 1920s, the first moonshiners actually were outlaws who protested the new tax on whiskey; this was in the 1790s, and it was such a serious rebellion that George Washington and Alexander Hamilton sent 13,000 troops into Pennsylvania to quash it. Moonshine is, in parts of the U.S., still a booming business and an important part of the economy of the South. Watman, a journalist and southerner, takes us on an exciting and often-eccentric ride through the history (and present) of the moonshine business, at the same time chronicling his own frequently disastrous efforts to produce home-grown alcohol. Written in a lively, you-are-there style, and featuring some truly out-of-left-field characters, the book is sure to entertain as it informs. --David Pitt "Watman's a good storyteller because he's a good listener--curious, amiable and game for anything; a merry companion, with a fondness for down-home wisdom and hell-raising." --Mick Sussman, The New York Times Book "Wildly entertaining." --Jason Wilson, The Washington Post "Chasing the White Dog uncovers the moral quandaries behind moonshine's sheen of hick stereotypes and sheds light on an underground industry that shows no

signs of letting up." —Eddie Dean, Wall Street Journal "The maven of modern-day moonshine."  
—Wayne Curtis, The Atlantic Monthly "Highly readable, crisply written . . . serves up every aspect of  
small-scale distilling in America." —Larry Cox, Tucson Citizen