

## “Ya Got Trouble” from *The Music Man*

Context (from Wikipedia): *In July 1912, a traveling salesman, "Professor" Harold Hill (Robert Preston), arrives in the fictional location of River City, Iowa, intrigued by the challenge of swindling the famously stubborn natives of Iowa ("Iowa Stubborn"). Masquerading as a traveling band instructor, Professor Hill plans to con the citizens of River City into paying him to create a boys' marching band, including instruments, uniforms, and music instruction. Once he has collected the money and the instruments and uniforms have arrived, he will hop the next train out of town, leaving them without their money or a band.*

*With help from his associate Marcellus Washburn (Buddy Hackett), who is now living in River City and is the only one who knows Hill's real name, "Gregory," Professor Hill incites mass concern among the parents of River City that their young boys are being seduced into a world of sin and vice by the new pool table in town ("Ya Got Trouble"). He convinces them that a boys' marching band is the only way to keep the boys of the town pure and out of trouble, and begins collecting their money ("76 Trombones").*

### Lyrics

#### Harold:

Well, ya got trouble, my friend, right here,  
I say, trouble right here in River City.  
Why sure I'm a billiard player,  
Certainly mighty proud I say  
I'm always mighty proud to say it.  
I consider that the hours I spend  
With a cue in my hand are golden.  
Help you cultivate horse sense  
And a cool head and a keen eye.  
Did ya ever take and try to give  
An iron-clad leave to yourself  
From a three-rail billiard shot?  
But just as I say,  
It takes judgement, brains, and maturity to score  
In a baulk line game,  
I say that any boob can take  
And shove a ball in a pocket.  
And they call that sloth.

The first big step on the road  
To the depths of deg-ra-Day--  
I say, first, medicinal wine from a teaspoon,  
Then beer from a bottle.  
An' the next thing ya know,  
Your son is playin' for money  
In a pinch-back suit.  
And list'nin to some big out-a-town Jasper  
Hearin' him tell about horse-race gamblin'.

Not a wholesome trottin' race, no!  
But a race where they set down right on the horse!  
Like to see some stuck-up jockey'boy  
Sittin' on Dan Patch? Make your blood boil?  
Well, I should say.

Friends, let me tell you what I mean.  
You got one, two, three, four, five, six pockets in a table.  
Pockets that mark the difference  
Between a gentlemen and a bum,  
With a capital "B,"  
And that rhymes with "P" and that stands for pool!  
And all week long your River City  
Youth'll be frittering away,  
I say your young men'll be frittering!  
Frittering away their noontime, suppertime, chore time too!  
Get the ball in the pocket,  
Never mind gettin' Dandelions pulled  
Or the screen door patched or the beefsteak pounded.  
Never mind pumpin' any water  
'Til your parents are caught with the Cistern empty  
On a Saturday night and that's trouble,  
Oh, yes we got lots and lots a' trouble.  
I'm thinkin' of the kids in the knickerbockers,  
Shirt-tail young ones, peekin' in the pool  
Hall window after school, ya got trouble, folks!

Right here in River City.  
Trouble with a capital "T"  
And that rhymes with "P" and that stands for pool!

Now, I know all you folks are the right kinda parents.  
I'm gonna be perfectly frank.  
Would ya like to know what kinda conversation goes  
On while they're loafin' around that Hall?  
They're tryin' out Bevo, tryin' out cubebs,  
Tryin' out Tailor Mades like cigarette fiends!  
And braggin' all about  
How they're gonna cover up a tell-tale breath with Sen-Sen.

One fine night, they leave the pool hall,  
Headin' for the dance at the Armory!  
Libertine men and Scarlet women!  
And Rag-time, shameless music  
That'll grab your son and your daughter  
With the arms of a jungle animal instinct!

Mass-steria!

Friends, the idle brain is the devil's playground!

**People:**

Trouble, oh we got trouble,

Right here in River City!

With a capital "T"

That rhymes with "P"

And that stands for Pool,

That stands for pool.

We've surely got trouble!

Right here in River City,

Right here!

Gotta figure out a way

To keep the young ones moral after school!

Trouble, trouble, trouble, trouble, trouble...

**Harold:**

Mothers of River City!

Heed that warning before it's too late!

Watch for the tell-tale sign of corruption!

The minute your son leaves the house,

Does he rebuckle his knickerbockers below the knee?

Is there a nicotine stain on his index finger?

A dime novel hidden in the corn crib?

Is he starting to memorize jokes from Capt. Billy's Whiz Bang?

Are certain words creeping into his conversation?

Words like, like 'swell?'"

And 'so's your old man?'"

Well, if so my friends,

Ya got trouble,

Right here in River city!

With a capital "T"

And that rhymes with "P"

And that stands for Pool.

We've surely got trouble!

Right here in River City!

Remember the Maine, Plymouth Rock and the Golden Rule!

Oh, we've got trouble.

We're in terrible, terrible trouble.

That game with the fifteen numbered balls is a devil's tool!

Oh yes we got trouble, trouble, trouble!

With a "T"! Gotta rhyme it with "P"!

And that stands for Pool!!!