

TRUMAN REVISITED
IRP, Spring 2015, Syllabus

Coordinated by Michael D. Shapiro (mdshaps06371@gmail.com)
Based on *Truman* by David McCullough

Week 1

Discussion of issues to be analyzed.

Read Ch. 2—pp. 39-65

Upbringing and childhood.

Ch. 3—pp. 62-102

Early years on the family farm.

Week 2

Read Ch. 4—pp. 102-138

Soldiering years in WW1.

pp. 141-151;

HST's business attempt and subsequent failure;

pp. 151-161;

HST's beginnings with the Pendergast organization;

pp. 161-192

First campaign for political office;

Week 3

Read Ch. 6—pp. 193-252;

The Pendergast machine provides the apparatus for HST's election and re-election to the Senate.

Week 4

Read Ch. 7—pp. 253-291;

HST grows as a Senator and chairs the Senate Special Committee to investigate the National Defense Program;

pp. 292-342;

HST selected 1944 Vice-Presidential candidate and succeeds to Presidency upon death of FDR.

Week 5

Read Ch. 9—pp. 345-404;

HST oversees WWII and learns of atomic bomb.

Week 6

Read Ch. 10—pp. 404-464;

The Potsdam conference with Churchill and Stalin; The decision to drop the bomb;
Course pack: The Decision to Use the Bomb: A Historiographical Update; J. Samuel Walker.

Week 7

Reports and Discussion on atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Report on Hiroshima by John Hersey.

Course Pack: The Case of the Enola Gay. Richard H. Kohn;

Course Pack: Columbia Guide to Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Report: Films. Hiroshima Mon Amour. Letters from Iwo Jima.

Course pack: Hiroshima/Nagasaki as History and Politics.

Week 8

Read 539-566; pp. 579-583;

The Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan;

pp. 595-620;

HST and the recognition of the State of Israel.

Report: Genesis: Truman, American Jews, and the Origins of the Arab-Israeli Conflict by John Judis.

Week 9

Read pp. 653-717;

The 1948 Presidential campaign. “Dewey defeats Truman”.

Week 10

Read pp. 723-740;

Truman Inaugural. Forrestal ordeal.

pp. 759-770;

The McCarthy affair.

Course Pack: Robert Caro, Master of the Senate, Ch. 23, Tail- Gunner Joe, pp. 542-556.

Excerpts from film, Point of Order.

Report, The Paranoid Style in American Politics, Richard Hofstadter.

Week 11

Read pp. 784-856;

The Korean War. The firing of MacArthur.

Report- PBS film MacArthur

Clips of MacArthur’s “Old Soldiers Never Die” speech to Congress. Ticker tape

parade up Canyon of Heroes, NYC.

Week 12

Read pp. 887-923;

The steel strike and HST's withdrawal from the 1952 Presidential election.

Course Pack: HST and the Burden of Modernity. Robert Griffin.

Week 13

Discussion and reexamination of concepts and themes presented in the course.

Truman's legacy and influence on American foreign policy to the present.

