

## Leadership Breakthroughs (Tim Kaine)

Jepson School Spring 2011—Mondays 9:00 until 11:30 am

Leadership is most often needed to push organizations and causes toward steady improvement and incremental change. But, there are moments when leadership is needed to produce big leaps forward, dramatically changing what came before. This course will explore the personal traits, organizational circumstances, social conditions, and accidents of fate and timing that can lead to monumental change.

We will explore this question in the context of four books. The first three books deal with huge changes in American life from the 1930's through the 1950's. We will close with a current book about the American policy debate over greenhouse gas emissions and climate change.

In January, we will spend the first three classes on David McCullough's biography "Truman." Harry Truman was a pivotal figure in history and ranks among the most remarkable of American Presidents. He was the last President who did not attend college. His political career was a combination of perseverance, accident and deep faith in American governmental institutions and the electorate. He played a key role in the desegregation of American life, the formation of the United Nations, the establishment of the foreign policy that became the 40+ year Cold War, the decision to use the atomic bomb against Japan to end World War II, the creation of the nation of Israel, the Marshall Plan to rebuild the Axis nations, the Korean War and the decision to fire General MacArthur to demonstrate civilian rule of the military. He was the first sitting President to propose a bill to achieve universal health care for American citizens (Teddy Roosevelt was the Presidential first candidate to do so!).

Please buy or check out the Truman biography (you can find it online or at any bookstore) and start reading now.

The discussion on January 10 will focus on Truman's life through the death of FDR and his ascendancy to the Presidency in 1945. This is Parts I and II of the biography—about 345 pages of reading. Pay special attention to the roles that Truman's military service, work as a farmer, business failures and early moral dilemmas in local government played in the development of the character that would sustain him in office. Also, the unusual story in Chapter 8 about how Truman was chosen to replace Henry Wallace as FDR's running mate in 1944 is a classic.

On January 17, we will focus on Parts III and IV of the biography, which cover Truman's momentous first term through the 1948 re-election campaign, one of the 2 or 3 most compelling Presidential campaigns in American history. Truman became President after barely 80 days as Vice-President and immediately faced two of the most momentous decisions ever to face any President—whether to use the atomic bomb against Japan to end World War II and how to negotiate with Joseph Stalin over the future of Europe. In the 1948 election, we will also briefly encounter California Governor Earl Warren, who will play a key role later in the course.

On January 24, we will focus on Parts V and VI of the biography, Truman's second term as President, the Korean War, the end of his Presidency and his post-Presidential life.

We will next spend four class periods (1/31, 2/7, 2/14/, 2/21) on Richard Kluger's superb work "Simple Justice." Kluger's book is three interrelated stories. The first third of the book tells the story of how the American constitution and laws were used from the beginning of the nation to enshrine racial segregation at odds with the Jeffersonian declaration that "all men are created equal." The middle portion of the book tells the story of American lawyers who began in the 1920's to mount an assault on the legal segregation of American life, especially segregated public schooling. These lawyers, primarily educated at Howard Law School, fought all over the United States for more than two decades as part of a closely coordinated strategy organized principally by Thurgood Marshall and the NAACP, with great assistance from two Richmond lawyers, Oliver Hill and Spottswood Robinson. (The University of Richmond also plays a role in this section of the book.) The final section of the book looks at how the United States Supreme Court, led by its new Chief Justice Earl Warren, grappled with 5 cases (including one from Prince Edward County, Virginia) over the course of nearly 3 years before conclusively declaring that racial segregation in public education was unconstitutional in 1954. We will use this book to explore the organizational dynamics within the NAACP and Supreme Court that led to the most momentous legal ruling in American history.

We will then spend four classes (2/28, 3/14, 3/21, 3/28) moving into the world of science, war and military strategy by reading "The Making of the Atomic Bomb" by Richard Rhodes. (Rhodes served as a research assistant for Richard Kluger in the writing of "Simple Justice".) The book examines how the development of 20<sup>th</sup> Century physics and evolving thoughts about warfare combined in a race by scientists around the world to produce nuclear weapons capable of winning World War II. There are many strands to this complex work—the international character of scientific discovery, competition among nations to harness technology and obtain military superiority, the ethical argument over use of weapons of mass destruction that began in World War I and continue to this day and the organizational challenges of running the Manhattan Project, the single largest government project ever undertaken by the American government. The role of science and advances in human knowledge in producing the "breakthrough" of atomic weaponry will be the main focus of our discussion here.

Finally, in our three classes in April (4/5, 4/12, 4/19) we will explore an area awaiting a breakthrough—American energy and climate policy. We will read "The Climate Wars" by Eric Pooley (the Deputy Editor of Bloomberg Businessweek) to gain an understanding of the debate over this complex topic and learn about the perspectives of environmentalists, business leaders and American policy makers as they confront the need (questioned by some) to make significant change in the way we live in order to save the planet. I will also assign additional readings to highlight the activities of other nations grappling with the same challenge.

The class will be conducted as a discussion! Participate assertively as we figure out the leadership characteristics that produce big and meaningful changes. Grades will be based 1/3 on class participation (including each student taking one turn as discussion leader during the semester), 1/3 on short papers that will be written about each of the first three books and 1/3 on a final take-home exam.

I will throw in a few offbeat readings just to show how the “breakthrough” concept transcends all disciplines. Here’s a fun one—google “Dick Fosbury” and you will find reference to an article in the 9/14/09 Sports Illustrated called “The Revolutionary.” It is about how an awkward high school athlete in the mid-1960’s revolutionized the sport of high jumping by developing a new technique that virtually all high jumpers now use. It is a quick and funny read. Bring your own favorite readings on the topic to share with the class if you can,

Please feel free to contact me by phone, email or drop by the office during the semester. My office is Room 111 at the Law School (right next to the Jepson School). My phone is 289-8360. I am normally in the office all day Monday, but on the road the rest of the week. If you want to come by the office, the best way to arrange it is to call my executive assistant, Sherrie Harrington, at 289-8354. She has an adjoining office, Room 110, at the law school and is there Monday through Friday.

If you want to email me, use [tkaine@richmond.edu](mailto:tkaine@richmond.edu). Or, you can email Sherrie at [sharring@richmond.edu](mailto:sharring@richmond.edu).

I am looking forward to a great semester with you.