CHAPTER 28

Learning Objectives

After you have studied Chapter 28 in your textbook and worked through this study guide chapter, you should be able to:

1. Examine the domestic economic problems that faced the Truman administration during the immediate postwar period; explain Truman’s actions concerning those problems; and discuss the consequences of those actions.
2. Explain the actions of the Eightieth Congress concerning major domestic issues; and discuss the consequences of those actions.
3. Examine the issues and personalities and explain the outcome of the 1948 presidential election.
4. Examine the issues and personalities and explain the outcome of the 1952 congressional and presidential elections.
5. Discuss the legacy of the Truman years, and assess the Truman presidency.
6. Discuss the 1950s as an age of consensus and conformity, and explain the beliefs associated with this consensus mood.
7. Discuss the domestic issues facing the Eisenhower administration; explain and evaluate the administration’s handling of those issues; and discuss the consequences of those actions.
8. Discuss the legacy of the Eisenhower years, and assess the Eisenhower presidency.
9. Discuss the combination of forces and incidents that caused the postwar wave of anti-Communist hysteria, and examine the various ways in which this hysteria manifested itself.
10. Explain Senator Joseph McCarthy’s rise to power and his ultimate decline, and discuss the impact of the postwar wave of anti-Communist hysteria on American society.
11. Discuss the gains of African Americans during the late 1940s and early 1950s, and examine the factors responsible for those gains.
12. Examine the reinvigoration of the civil rights movement during the 1950s; discuss the response of white southerners and of the federal government to the demands and actions of African Americans; and explain the extent to which African Americans were successful in achieving their goals.
13. Discuss the reasons for and indicate the extent of the postwar baby boom.
14. Examine the cornerstones of the postwar economic boom, and discuss the causes and consequences of the computer revolution.
15. Examine the forces that contributed to the growth of the Sunbelt, the growth of the suburbs, and the emergence of the megalopolis during the postwar period; indicate the characteristics associated with suburban life; and discuss the criticisms leveled against suburbia.

16. Discuss the concentration of ownership in industry, and explain how the merger wave of the 1950s and 1960s differed from previous merger waves.

17. Discuss the characteristics of and the trends within the labor movement and agriculture from 1945 to 1970.

18. Discuss the impact of the postwar economic boom on the environment.

19. Discuss American concepts about education and American attitudes about religion and sex during the 1950s.

20. Discuss changes in the American family, the role of women, and the concept of motherhood during the 1950s and 1960s.

21. Explain the characteristics of each of the following, and discuss their impact on American society in the 1940s, 1950s, and early 1960s:
   a. Television
   b. Motion pictures
   c. Popular music
   d. Fads
   e. the Beat writers

22. Examine the reasons for, extent of, and effects of poverty in America during the postwar era, and discuss the characteristics of the poor.

23. Examine the issues and personalities and explain the outcome of the 1960 presidential election.

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**Thematic Guide**

After the Second World War, the United States experienced an uneasy and troubled transition to peace. The Truman administration was plagued by postwar economic problems, and the administration’s handling of those problems led to widespread public discontent, which in turn led to Republican victory in the 1946 congressional elections. However, the actions of the conservative Eightieth Congress worked to Truman’s political advantage; and, to the surprise of most analysts, he won the presidential election of 1948.

During Truman’s first elected term, he and the American people had to contend with the domestic consequences of the Korean War. Although the war brought prosperity, it also brought inflation and increased defense spending at the expense of the domestic programs of Truman’s Fair Deal. Furthermore, both the nature and length of the Korean War led to disillusionment and discontent on the part of many Americans. These factors, coupled with reports of influence peddling in the Truman administration, caused the President’s approval rating to plummet and led to a Republican triumph in the presidential and congressional elections of 1952.

After a discussion of the Truman legacy, the authors turn to a discussion of the “age of consensus”—a period in which Americans agreed on their stance against communism and their faith in economic progress. Believing in the rightness of the American system, many people viewed reform and reformers in a negative light and saw conflict as the product of psychologically disturbed individuals, not as the product of societal ills. President Dwight D. Eisenhower, sharing these beliefs, actively pursued policies designed to promote economic growth and to defeat communism at home and abroad.
In pursuit of economic growth, Eisenhower tried to reduce federal spending and the federal government’s role in regulating the forces of the marketplace. Eisenhower’s farm policies reflected these efforts, and his belief that government should actively promote economic development may be seen in the St. Lawrence Seaway project, the president’s tax reform program, the Atomic Energy Act, and the Highway Act of 1956. Furthermore, Eisenhower’s conservative fiscal policy, as well as his states’ rights philosophy, may be seen in the Indian termination policy adopted during his administration. The authors relate these programs to Eisenhower’s frame of reference and study their impact on American society.

Despite Eisenhower’s fiscal conservatism, the administration’s activist foreign policy and three domestic economic recessions caused increased federal expenditures, decreased tax revenues, and deficit spending. As a result, Eisenhower oversaw only three balanced budgets during his eight years in office. The Sherman Adams scandal and large Democratic gains in the congressional elections of 1958, meant that a beleaguered Eisenhower was on the defensive during his last two years in office.

During the late 1940s and early 1950s, the United States also witnessed a wave of anti-Communist hysteria. The tracing of events from the Amerasia case to Truman’s loyalty probe, the Hiss trial, and the Klaus Fuchs case supports the view that (1) fear of communism, long present in American society, intensified during the postwar years; (2) the building of this fear in the late 1940s was in many ways a “top-down phenomenon”; (3) revelations gave people cause to be alarmed; and (4) McCarthy’s name has been given to a state of mind that existed before he entered the scene. Further discussion supports the characterization of McCarthy as a demagogue, the idea that McCarthyism was sustained by events, and the contention that anti-Communist measures received widespread support.

Eisenhower’s strong anti-Communist views are reflected in his broadening of the loyalty program, his actions in the Rosenberg case, and his support for the Communist Control Act of 1954. Furthermore, Eisenhower chose to avoid a direct confrontation with Senator Joe McCarthy. As a result, McCarthy proceeded to add more victims to his list of alleged subversives and continued to jeopardize freedom of speech and expression. Ultimately, McCarthyism did decline, with McCarthy himself being largely responsible for his own demise.

One group that challenged the consensus mood of the age was African Americans. Under Truman, the federal government, for the first time since Reconstruction, accepted responsibility for guaranteeing equality under the law—civil rights—to African Americans. Furthermore, work by the NAACP, aid by the Justice Department in the form of friend-of-the-court briefs, and decisions by the Supreme Court resulted in a slow erosion of the separate-but-equal doctrine and of black disfranchisement in the South. Then the Supreme Court’s historic decision in Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka gave African Americans reason to believe that their long struggle against racism was beginning to pay off. However, white southerners reacted with hostility to that decision and actively resisted Court-ordered desegregation. This resistance led to the crisis in Little Rock, Arkansas, a crisis in which Eisenhower felt compelled to use federal troops to prevent violence in the desegregation of the city’s public schools. But the Little Rock crisis was merely the tip of an emerging civil rights movement as can be seen through the discussion of the Montgomery bus boycott, the formation of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, the sit-in movement, and organization of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee.

After discussion of Cold War politics and the civil rights movement, we focus on the social and cultural development of American society between 1945 and 1961. This period is characterized by sustained economic growth and prosperity. One of the consequences of this prosperity was the “baby boom,” which fueled more economic growth. This increase in population was especially important to the automobile and construction industries, two of the cornerstones of the economic expansion during the period. The third cornerstone, military spending, was sustained by the government.
As many white middle-class Americans made more money, bought more goods, and created more waste, they also continued a mass migration to the Sunbelt that had begun during the war. In addition, Americans increasingly fled from the cities to the suburbs. Drawn to the suburbs by many factors, including a desire to be with like-minded people and the desire for “family togetherness,” life in suburbia was often made possible by government policies that extended economic aid to families making such a move. Federal, state, and local expenditures on highway construction also spurred the growth of suburbia and led to the development of the megalopolis. Although suburbia had its critics, most Americans seemed to prefer the lifestyle it offered.

Government aid also played a role in other developments that would have a momentous impact on American society. In the late 1940s, government aid to weapons research led to the development of the transistor, which brought the computer and technological revolution to American society. This revolution affected employment patterns, led to the third great merger wave (characterized by conglomerate mergers), and played a role in stabilizing union membership. Consolidation in industry was matched by consolidation in labor (the merging of the AFL and the CIO) and an acceleration of the trend toward bigness in American agriculture. As the cost of farm machinery, pesticides, fertilizer, and land soared, agribusiness presented more of a threat than ever to the family farm.

Economic growth inspired by government defense spending and by the growth of a more affluent population demanding more consumer goods and larger quantities of agricultural products had a negative impact on the environment. Automobiles and factories polluted the air. Human and industrial waste polluted rivers, lakes, and streams. Pesticides endangered wildlife and humans alike, as did the waste from nuclear processing plants. Disposable products marketed as conveniences made America a “throw-away society.”

As both education and religion gained importance in American life during the postwar years, Americans were also, paradoxically, caught up in the materialistic values and pleasures of the era. This fact is revealed through a discussion of the effects of television on American society during the postwar era. The postwar economic boom also affected the family. The changes it brought included the influence of Dr. Benjamin Spock on the parent-child relationship and the conflicting and changing roles of women as more entered the labor market.

After a discussion of the influence of the pioneering work of Dr. Alfred Kinsey in the late 1940s and early 1950s on American attitudes toward sexual behavior, we look at the emergence of a youth subculture, the birth of rock ‘n’ roll, the fads of the era, and the critique of American society offered by the Beat Generation of the 1950s.

Prosperity did not bring about a meaningful redistribution of income in American society during the period under study. Therefore, many Americans (about 25 percent in 1962) lived in poverty. The authors provide a statistical picture of America’s poor, who stood in decided contrast to the affluence around them. As before, the poor congregated in urban areas. African Americans, poor whites, Puerto Ricans, Chicanos, and Native Americans continued their movement to low-income inner-city housing, while the more affluent city residents—mostly whites—continued their exodus to the suburbs.

Within the context of a rapidly changing American society, Richard M. Nixon and John F. Kennedy became the standard-bearers for the Republican and Democratic Parties in the presidential election contest of 1960. The chapter ends with a discussion of this election and the reason’s for Kennedy’s victory.
Building Vocabulary

Listed below are important words and terms that you need to know to get the most out of Chapter 28. They are listed in the order in which they occur in the chapter. After carefully looking through the list, refer to a dictionary and jot down the definition of words that you do not know or of which you are unsure.

indulgent

volatile

reconversion

staunchly

quiescent

alienate

livid

vindicate

fruition

bona fide

pretense

syntax

status quo
unabashedly

savvy

covert

conjunction

subservient

distraught

affront

malign

sully

resurgence

tacitly

impede

perseverance

apathetic

befoul
castigate

atheistic

venerated

boorish

psychic

flaunt

abject

unsavory

**Identification and Significance**

After studying Chapter 28 of *A People and a Nation*, you should be able to identify fully and explain the historical significance of each item listed below.

1. Identify each item in the space provided. Give an explanation or description of the item. Answer the questions who, what, where, and when.
2. Explain the historical significance of each item in the space provided. Establish the historical context in which the item exists. Establish the item as the result of or as the cause of other factors existing in the society under study. Answer this question: *What were the political, social, economic, and/or cultural consequences of this item?*

postwar unemployment

Identification
Significance

postwar inflation

Identification

Significance

the threatened railroad strike of 1946

Identification

Significance

the Eightieth Congress

Identification

Significance

the Taft-Hartley Act

Identification

Significance

the Progressive Party

Identification
Significance

the Dixiecrats

Identification

Significance

the presidential campaign and election of 1948

Identification

Significance

Korean War discontent

Identification

Significance

Dwight D. Eisenhower

Identification

Significance

the congressional and presidential elections of 1952

Identification
Significance

the age of consensus

Identification

Significance

“the vital center”

Identification

Significance

dynamic conservatism

Identification

Significance

the St. Lawrence Seaway

Identification

Significance

the Atomic Energy Act

Identification
Significance

the termination policy

Identification

Significance

the congressional elections of 1954

Identification

Significance

Lyndon B. Johnson

Identification

Significance

the Highway Act of 1956

Identification

Significance

the congressional and presidential elections of 1956

Identification
Significance

the congressional elections of 1958

Identification

Significance

the military-industrial complex

Identification

Significance

the *Amerasia* incident

Identification

Significance

Truman’s loyalty program (Employee Loyalty Program)

Identification

Significance

the “Hollywood Ten”

Identification
Significance

the Alger Hiss case

Identification

Significance

Klaus Fuchs

Identification

Significance

Senator Joseph McCarthy

Identification

Significance

the Rosenbergs

Identification

Significance

the Internal Security Act of 1950

Identification
Significance

*Dennis et al. v. U.S.*

Identification

Significance

the Communist Control Act of 1954

Identification

Significance

the Army-McCarthy hearings

Identification

Significance

*To Secure These Rights*

Identification

Significance

the Employment Board of the Civil Service Commission

Identification
Significance

*Smith v. Allwright* and *Morgan v. Virginia*

Identification

Significance

*Shelly v. Kramer*

Identification

Significance

*An American Dilemma, Native Son, and Black Boy*

Identification

Significance

*Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*

Identification

Significance

White Citizens’ Councils

Identification
Significance

the Little Rock crisis

Identification

Significance

Rosa Parks

Identification

Significance

Martin Luther King, Jr.

Identification

Significance

the Southern Christian Leadership Conference

Identification

Significance

the Montgomery bus boycott

Identification
Significance
the Civil Rights Act of 1957
Identification
Significance
the sit-in movement
Identification
Significance
the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee
Identification
Significance
John F. Kennedy
Identification
Significance
the baby boom
Identification
Significance

the housing boom

Identification

Significance

growth of the suburbs

Identification

Significance

the megalopolis

Identification

Significance

the Sunbelt

Identification

Significance

the computer revolution

Identification
conglomerate mergers

Identification

Significance

the postwar labor movement

Identification

Significance

agricultural consolidation

Identification

Significance

the environmental costs associated with economic growth

Identification

Significance

Silent Spring

Identification
Significance

William H. Whyte and C. Wright Mills

Identification

Significance

the GI Bill of Rights

Identification

Significance

the National Defense Education Act

Identification

Significance

the postwar religious revival

Identification

Significance

television

Identification
Significance

Dr. Benjamin Spock

Identification

Significance

Momism

Identification

Significance

the Kinsey reports

Identification

Significance

rock 'n' roll

Identification

Significance

Slinky, Silly Putty, 3-D movies, and hula hoops

Identification
Significance

*Invisible Man*

Identification

Significance

the Beat writers

Identification

Significance

inner-city and rural poverty

Identification

Significance

Operation Wetback

Identification

Significance

the National Housing Act of 1949

Identification
Significance

*The Other America*

Identification

Significance

the presidential campaign and election of 1960

Identification

Significance

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**Organizing Information**

Enter reminders (notes) in the two charts “The Citizenry’s Confronting of the Issues 1945–1961” and “Government’s Confronting of the Issues 1945–1961” to help yourself remember and understand key issues covered in Chapter 28. The reminders you enter in the “Key Issues” portion of each chart should concern ways of confronting each of the issues, and the reminders you enter in the “Outcomes” portion of each chart should indicate both the positive and negative impacts those ways of confronting the issues had.
### The Citizenry’s Confronting of the Issues 1945–1961

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<th>Those Confronting the Issues</th>
<th>The Key Issues</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
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Interpreting Information

Your goal in this exercise is to anticipate essay questions that might come up on your next history test by analyzing your entries in the Organizing Information charts for Chapter 28 and how they are or could be organized.

Study the organization of the two charts “Government’s Confronting of the Issues 1945–1961” and “The Citizenry’s Confronting of the Issues, 1945–1961” and the entries you made in them. Based on those two factors, what would you say are some questions that you could be asked on your next test? What would you ask if you were the professor? Do you see any potential comparison or contrast questions or causal analysis questions, for instance?

On the basis of your own analysis of the two charts, formulate several essay questions on major issues of the period between the end of World War II and the early 1960s that should appear on a test covering that period and compose working drafts of essays answering your two best questions. (One or two of the questions you formulate may appear among those listed at the end of this chapter in your study guide.)

Ideas and Details

Objective 1

1. Truman’s popularity suffered in the period before the congressional elections of 1946 because
   a. his stance on the threatened railroad strike angered organized labor.
   b. his veto of the National Health Insurance Act angered liberals and the elderly.
   c. manufacturers and farmers were angered when he lifted OPA controls.
   d. his stand on civil rights angered black leaders.

Objective 6

2. Which of the following was a characteristic of American thought in the 1950s?
   a. A belief that the faults of American society should be publicly debated
   b. A belief that reform was unnecessary
   c. An often-expressed fear that Americans could not withstand the pressures of the Cold War world
   d. A belief that people in positions of authority were to be questioned and forced to justify their decisions
Objective 7

3. As a result of the termination policy supported by the Eisenhower administration,
   a. Indian reservations were expanded and Indian culture further protected.
   b. Native Americans were successfully relocated to urban areas and assimilated into
      American society.
   c. federal benefits to Indian tribes were withdrawn, causing the displacement and
      impoverishment of many Indians.
   d. the federal government agreed to aid Indian reservations in the extraction of natural
      resources from tribal lands.

Objectives 9 and 10

4. Which of the following contributed to the emergence of McCarthyism?
   a. The use of red baiting by politicians
   b. News of a treaty of alliance between Mexico and the Soviet Union
   c. The rapid increase in Communist Party membership
   d. Discovery of a well-formed Communist conspiracy under the leadership of Henry
      Wallace

Objectives 7, 9, and 10

5. Which of the following is true of the Communist Control Act of 1954?
   a. The liberal senators who opposed the act were labeled Communist sympathizers.
   b. Liberal Republicans who opposed the act were expelled from the Republican Party.
   c. The act was supported by liberals and conservatives and made membership in the
      Communist Party illegal.
   d. Debate over the act split the Democratic Party causing heavy losses in the
      congressional elections of 1954.

Objective 11

6. African Americans made gains in American society in the postwar period because
   a. Congress passed a strong voting rights bill.
   b. racist practices at home made it more difficult to compete with the Soviet Union for
      the support of nonaligned nations.
   c. Truman persuaded southern congressmen to support federal laws against lynching
      and against the poll tax.
   d. Congress took a decisive stand against racist organizations by outlawing the Ku Klux
      Klan.

Objective 12

7. In the Brown decision, the Supreme Court held that
   a. the poll tax was unconstitutional.
   b. segregation in public educational facilities was unconstitutional.
   c. black Americans had benefited from segregated public educational institutions.
   d. racial discrimination in public accommodations was unconstitutional.
Objective 12
_____ 8. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., urged his followers to adhere to the philosophy of
   a. accommodation.
   b. socialism.
   c. nonviolence.
   d. Black Power.

Objective 14
_____ 9. The economic basis of the consumer culture of postwar America was
   a. the rising value of stocks and bonds.
   b. the rise in GNP.
   c. credit.
   d. the computer.

Objective 13
_____ 10. Which of the following is true of the postwar baby boom?
   a. The boom had little impact on the American economy.
   b. The boom was largely due to an increase in the birthrate among immigrants and poor
      Americans.
   c. Ignorance concerning birth control and family planning was probably the most
      important reason for the boom.
   d. The boom was in part due to sustained economic growth and prosperity.

Objective 17
_____ 11. The decline of the family farm during the 1950s and 1960s was due in large part to
   a. the absence of technological improvements to reduce the drudgery of farm life.
   b. a decline in the value of farm output.
   c. the expense of land, machinery, and fertilizers necessary for modern farming.
   d. the decrease in farm labor productivity.

Objectives 15 and 21
_____ 12. Movie theaters during the postwar years
   a. steadily closed and decreased in numbers.
   b. found most of their patrons to be the elderly pre-TV generation.
   c. were unable to attract young patrons.
   d. experienced no significant change in the total number of patrons.

Objective 21
_____ 13. The Beats were important because they
   a. introduced the “bebop” style.
   b. introduced the new, sophisticated advertising techniques associated with the television
      era.
   c. were the first group to perform rock ’n’ roll publicly.
   d. produced some important literary works in which they challenged the materialism of
      the 1950s.
Objective 22

14. In 1960, a woman was more likely than a man to be poor because
   a. occupational segregation limited the availability of well-paying jobs.
   b. the courts did not award child-support payments in divorce proceedings.
   c. women were generally overeducated for the 1960s job market.
   d. women were more likely to suffer from catastrophic illnesses.

Objective 22

15. Which of the following is true of the black population between 1940 and 1970?
   a. Most blacks moved from inner-city ghettos to the suburbs.
   b. The black population became increasingly urban.
   c. The south-to-north pattern of black movement was reversed during this period.
   d. Poverty among blacks decreased dramatically.

Essay Questions

Objective 11

1. Discuss the Truman administration’s record on civil rights.

Objectives 9 and 10

2. Defend the following statement: “The Cold War heightened anti-Communist fears at home, and by 1950 they reached hysterical proportions. McCarthy did not create this hysteria; he manipulated it to his own advantage.”

Objective 6

3. Defend or refute the following statement: “During the 1950s, Americans were confident to the verge of complacency about the perfectibility of American society, anxious to the point of paranoia about the threat of communism.”

Objectives 12

4. Discuss the reaction of the southern states and the Eisenhower administration to the Brown decision.

Objective 12

5. Discuss the emergence of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., as the leader of the civil rights movement that emerged in the aftermath of the Brown decision and explain Dr. King’s philosophy.

Objective 12

6. Discuss the successes and failures of the civil rights movement from the Montgomery bus boycott through the 1960 presidential election.
Objective 8
7. Discuss Dwight D. Eisenhower as a leader and evaluate his tenure as president of the United States.

Objectives 13 and 14
8. Discuss the baby boom, and explain its social and economic impact on American society.

Objective 17

Objectives 15 and 20
10. Discuss the concept of the American family and American attitudes concerning gender roles during the 1950s and early 1960s.

Objective 20
11. Discuss the following statement: “A reason for woman’s dilemma was the conflicting roles she was expected to fulfill.”

Objective 22
12. Examine the reasons for and the extent of poverty in American society during the 1950s and early 1960s.