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Most of the essays in this collection were presented at the annual Truman Legacy Symposium at Key West in May 2008. The broad purpose of this symposium series is to provide a better understanding of Harry Truman, his presidency, and his era, including the ongoing impact of his presidency.

To set the tone, the keynote by Richard Kirkendall, a founding scholar of Truman studies, explores the moral forces that guided Truman’s decisions. In addition, he provides non-specialist readers with an up-to-date guide to the essential literature about Truman and his presidency. My own remarks focus on Truman’s major actions affecting immigration, including those that stretched beyond his presidency and try to claim him as an immigration president. Many of the matters on which I touch briefly are more fully examined in subsequent essays.

Leonard Dinnerstein, a leading scholar of modern American Jewish history, provides a detailed narrative and analysis of Truman’s beliefs and activities affecting the surviving Jews of Europe, including their immigration to the United States and his recognition of the State of Israel.

Ken Hechler, a former member of Truman’s White House staff and the only contributor who actually knew the president, combines his personal experience and his research to describe how Truman overcame some of the prejudices of his family and regional background.

Ray Geselbracht, a senior member of the Truman Library staff, has used his deep knowledge of the library’s vast pictorial resources to craft a vivid graphic essay including some of the more striking documents and photographs relating to Truman and immigration.

Barbara Posadas and Roland Guyotte have written widely and well about Filipino immigration to the United States based on research done on both sides of the Pacific. Here they provide a micro-transnational portrait of aspects of that migration to Chicago. Margo Anderson, the leading historian of the U.S. Census, dissects the all-but-comic effects of competing bureaucratic efforts to reconcile the racial prejudices of American legislators with the findings of mid-twentieth-century social science.

David Reimers, a leading scholar of American immigration, explores and analyzes recent immigration from Africa, a post-Truman era phenom-
non influenced and made possible by the statutory liberalizations begun in the Truman era, and by the Johnson era reforms the Missourian helped to inspire.

Mary Evelyn Tomlin, a public programs specialist at the National Archives–Southeast Region in Atlanta, has scoured the holdings of her institution to provide and explicate a series of documents and images that give us revealing insights into the human drama involved in immigration.

Gary Mormino, the author of studies of Italian immigrants and the modern history of Florida, here shows how emergence of the modern Sun Belt in the Truman era and beyond had ethnic implications that are all too often ignored in discussions of that phenomenon.

In addition to thanking all of the contributors whose efforts I have summarized above, I wish also to thank the cadre of individuals and institutions whose support was vital to the finished product. Michael Devine, director of the Truman Library, commissioned the project and gave it unfailing support. In Key West, Robert Wolz, director of the Harry S. Truman Little White House, along with Paul Hilson and other staff members; the Harry S. Truman Little White House Foundation and its president, Ed Swift; Chris Belland (CEO), Piper Smith-Belland, and Monica Munoz of Historic Tours of America; the Spottswood Companies, Inc.; and the Monroe County Tourist Development Council each provided some kind of administrative, operational, financial, logistic, and/or moral support without which a successful two-day conference would not have been possible. At Truman State University Press, director Nancy Rediger and editor Barbara Mandell-Smith skillfully transformed a manuscript into the present volume. And last but by no means least, I thank Ray Geselbracht for his judicious counsel and efforts on every aspect of this project from day one. In addition, I must recognize the editorial efforts of Judith Daniels, my live-in editor, who, by the time this volume appears, will have improved my efforts for a half century.
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Richard S. Kirkendall is the Scott and Dorothy Bullitt Professor Emeritus at the University of Washington. A long-time student of Truman and his presidency, his latest contributions to that literature are “Harry’s Farewell Address and the Historical Significance of the Truman Presidency” in *Harry’s Farewell: Interpreting and Teaching the Truman Presidency* (2004) and “Faith and Foreign Policy: An Exploration into the Mind of Harry Truman,” *Missouri Historical Review* 102 (July 2008).


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Mary Evelyn Tomlin is public programs specialist at the National Archives–Southeast Region in Atlanta. She lectures frequently on the holdings of the National Archives.
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