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Book Review of The Dorsey Dictionary of American Government and Politics

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640. Shafritz, Jay M. **The Dorsey Dictionary of American Government and Politics**. Chicago, Dorsey Press, 1988. 661p. illus. \$34.95; \$18.95pa. LC 87-72401. ISBN 0-256-05639-0; 0-256-05589-0pa.

Jay Shafritz describes his work as “a tool for those who seek information on American national, state, or local government and politics” (preface). *The Dorsey Dictionary* defines and explains terms and concepts used for the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of American government. Also included are descriptions of major federal laws and landmark decisions of the United States Supreme Court, brief biographies of significant political figures, and chronologies of important events in American history. The book’s appendices include a guide to federal government documents and guides to statistical information and online databases on American government.

Shafritz’s professed goal is to “capture the language, concerns, and professional literature of American governance in one volume” (preface); he succeeds quite admirably. Following many definitions he has included references to books or journal articles where one may further research the term defined. While many of these references are current and provide valuable information to the reader, too many others are dated.

Notwithstanding some minor shortcomings, this dictionary will be a useful addition to most academic and public libraries. In paperback for \$18.95, it is a real bargain. [R: Choice, Oct 88, p. 296; LJ, 15 Mar 88, p. 51; RBB, 15 June 88, pp. 1719-20] James S. Heller