

1997

## Book Review of Ready Reference: American Justice

James S. Heller

*William & Mary Law School*, [heller@wm.edu](mailto:heller@wm.edu)

---

### Repository Citation

Heller, James S., "Book Review of Ready Reference: American Justice" (1997). *Library Staff Publications*. 63.  
<https://scholarship.law.wm.edu/libpubs/63>

Copyright c 1997 by the authors. This article is brought to you by the William & Mary Law School Scholarship Repository.  
<https://scholarship.law.wm.edu/libpubs>

489. **Ready Reference: American Justice.** By the Editors of Salem Press. Pasadena, Calif., Salem Press, 1996. 3v. illus. maps. index. (A Magill Book). \$270.00/set. ISBN 0-89356-761-2.

Salem Press's *American Justice* includes more than 800 articles ranging in length from 200 to 3,000 words on a wide variety of topics. Written by college, university, and law school professors from throughout the United States, the articles cover important federal court decisions and legislation, significant individuals, organizations and commissions, historic events, and civil and criminal law issues. Each of the three volumes contains an alphabetic list of the entries in that particular volume and a list for the entire set. The editors also have created 12 broad categories and, in the back of each volume, assign each article to a category. The final volume has several appendixes, the most interesting of which are a listing of famous American trials (from the 1634 conviction of Roger Williams for blasphemy to the 1995 O. J. Simpson acquittal); a timeline of significant events and personages (from the 1215 Magna Carta to the 1995 Supreme Court *Adarand* decision holding unconstitutional a Department of Transportation affirmative action program); and selective Supreme Court cases.

*American Justice* covers much ground. About 180 different authors contributed to this work, and the articles are, if not uniform in style, at least lucid. This encyclopedia will not win any awards for intellectual rigor, and although it deals with law, it will be of modest use to law students and lawyers. However, the set does offer a starting point for schoolchildren, university students, and the general public researching U.S. law. It is recommended for school and university libraries and for law libraries open to the general public. [R: Choice, Nov 96, p. 425; RBB, 1 Oct 96, p. 366]—**James S. Heller**