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Book Review of The Sourcebook of Federal Courts, U.S. District and Bankruptcy

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500. **The Sourcebook of Federal Courts: U.S. District and Bankruptcy.** 2d ed. Tempe, Ariz., BRB, 1996. 410p. maps. (The Public Record Research Library). \$33.00pa. ISBN 1-879792-25-7.

Existing court directories include Information Resource Press's *National Directory of Courts of Law* (see ARBA 93, entry 586); *BNA's Directory of State and Federal Courts, Judges, and Clerks* (4th ed.; see ARBA 93, entry 582); *Want's Federal-State Court Directory* (see ARBA 94, entry 564, and ARBA 91, entry 582); and *Judicial Staff Directory* (see ARBA 94, entry 736, and ARBA 91, entry 576). More

specialized directories include *Directory of State Court Clerks and County Courthouses* (see ARBA 91, entry 574) and the *County Courthouse Book* (2d ed.; see ARBA 96, entry 588). *The Sourcebook of Federal Courts* offers a different slant from these other directories: It provides detailed information on where and how to locate case records in federal courts. A companion to the publisher's *Sourcebook of County Court Records* (see ARBA 95, entry 609), this new edition provides updated information on some recent technological innovations that affect how one locates court records, including the growth of the PACER system (an online case index and docketing database) and the Voice Case Information System (VCIS).

The first section of the sourcebook provides information on the federal court structure, court record retention, obtaining case records, and using electronic access methods such as PACER. Section 2, which comprises nearly 90 percent of the text, summarizes the federal court structure for each state, provides maps and lists for the judicial district and division in which each county lies, and profiles each district and bankruptcy court. The court profiles, which are arranged by state, then district, then division, provide information on how cases are indexed and stored within each court, how to search by telephone or mail, in-person searches, and PACER access. Addresses, telephone numbers, and fees are included. The third and final part of the directory provides information about retrieving cases from the 14 federal records centers. Also given are names and telephone numbers of selected firms that can retrieve information from the records centers.

Of course, a person no longer has to rely entirely on print. One can find helpful information on the Internet, including the Office of Federal Records Center's Home Page (<http://dolley.nara.gov.nara/frc/frchome.html>), the Directory of Electronic Public Access Services to Automated Information in the U.S. Federal Courts (<http://www.uscourts.gov/PubAccess.html>), and PACER (<http://www.teleport.com/richh/pacer.html>). *The Sourcebook of Federal Courts* is a valuable reference tool for all types of libraries whose patrons inquire about getting federal court records. At only \$33, libraries cannot go wrong on this one.—**James S. Heller**