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## Book Review of The World Almanac of U.S. Politics

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# POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT

## *United States*

### Almanacs

726. **The World Almanac of U.S. Politics.** Sharilyn Jee, ed. New York, World Almanac/St. Martin's Press, 1989. 414p. maps. index. \$29.95. ISBN 0-88687-432-7. ISSN 1043-1535.

This is a potpourri of factual and descriptive information about federal, state, and local governments. The almanac begins with introductions by Senators Paul Simon and Richard Lugar, whose names are prominently noted on the book's cover. Their essays read more like campaign statements and have little to do with the substance of the almanac.

The book includes brief essays on the federal legislative and budget processes, the electoral college, the political parties, campaign financing, and ways to contact congresspeople. A political glossary is also provided, as is a synopsis of the 1988 presidential campaign. General information on federal agencies, brief descriptions of popular federal programs, and concise biographies of cabinet members and presidential advisors are furnished. The section on the judiciary has biographies of the Supreme Court justices, a synopsis of the Court's 1987-1988 term, the names of federal appellate and district court judges, and a brief essay on how civil and criminal cases move through the courts.

The section on Congress begins with essays on a typical day in the lives of representatives and senators and what our elected officials can do for us. There are descriptions and memberships of House and Senate committees and a synopsis of the 101st Congress. Most of the almanac focuses on Congress. Arranged by state, each section has biographical and committee information for senators and representatives, demographic figures for each representative's district, and elected officials' voting records on 10 key bills before the 100th Congress. Presidential election results (1988) by county are also provided. Significantly less attention is given to state and local governments. This section has general demographic data and the names of high-level officials for the states and the 50 largest cities. The almanac concludes with comprehensive name and subject indexes.

This work's main competitors are *The Almanac of American Politics* (National Journal, 1990) and *Politics in America* (see ARBA 86, entry 694). These two publications are superior. While much of the information in the three almanacs is similar, the latter two offer more information on elected officials and the political terrain of the jurisdictions those officials represent. Information in *The World Almanac of U.S. Politics* that is not found in the other two almanacs can readily be found in other sources. The price is right, however. — **James S. Heller**