

Donald A. Ritchie

THE U.S. CONGRESS

A Very Short Introduction



The U S Congress A Very Short Introduction

Mitch McConnell, Roy E. Brownell III



The U S Congress A Very Short Introduction:

The U.S. Congress: A Very Short Introduction Donald A. Ritchie, 2010-07-06 Many scholars believe that the framers of the Constitution intended Congress to be the preeminent branch of government. Indeed, no other legislature in the world approaches its power. Yet most Americans have only a murky idea of how it works. In *The U S Congress*, Donald A. Ritchie, a congressional historian for more than thirty years, takes readers on a fascinating behind-the-scenes tour of Capitol Hill, pointing out the key players, explaining their behavior, and translating parliamentary language into plain English. No mere civics lesson, this eye-opening book provides an insider's perspective on Congress, matched with a professional historian's analytical insight. After a swift survey of the creation of Congress by the constitutional convention, he begins to unscrew the nuts and pull out the bolts: What is it like to campaign for Congress? To attract large donors? To enter either house with no seniority? He answers these questions and more, explaining committee assignments and committee work, the role of staffers and lobbyists, floor proceedings, parliamentary rules, and coalition building. Ritchie explores the great effort put into constituent service as representatives and senators respond to requests from groups and individuals, as well as media relations and news coverage. He also explores how the grand concepts we all know from civics class—checks and balances, advise and consent, congressional oversight—work in practice in an age of strong presidents and a muscular Senate minority, no matter which party is in that position. In this sparkling addition to Oxford's *Very Short Introduction* series, Donald Ritchie moves beyond the cynicism and the platitudes to provide a gem of a portrait of how Congress really works. **The U.S.**

Congress Donald A. Ritchie, 2016-06-21 In the second edition of *The U S Congress*, Donald A. Ritchie, a congressional historian for more than thirty years, takes readers on a fascinating behind-the-scenes tour of Capitol Hill, pointing out the key players, explaining their behavior, and translating parliamentary language into plain English. No mere civics lesson, this eye-opening book provides an insider's perspective on Congress, matched with a professional historian's analytical insight. After a swift survey of the creation of Congress by the constitutional convention, he begins to unscrew the nuts and pull out the bolts: What is it like to campaign for Congress? To attract large donors? To enter either house with no seniority? He answers these questions and more, explaining committee assignments and committee work, the role of staffers and lobbyists, floor proceedings, parliamentary rules, and coalition building. Ritchie explores the great effort put into constituent service as representatives and senators respond to requests from groups and individuals, as well as media relations and news coverage. He also explores how the grand concepts we all know from civics class—checks and balances, advise and consent, congressional oversight—work in practice in an age of strong presidents and a muscular Senate minority. **The American Senate** Neil MacNeil, Richard A. Baker, 2015 Shares the history of the United States Senate, including its struggles with the presidency, its investigative power, and how filibustering became a common practice. **The U.S. Congress** Donald A. Ritchie, 2022 The unprecedented politics of the past four years, culminating in the mob attack on the U S Capitol on January 6, 2021, underscore

the need for a new edition of *The U S Congress A Very Short Introduction* The previous editions explored the essential necessity of compromise to accomplish anything significant in the legislative arena but recent events show that political polarization has hardened and produced gridlock This new edition explains how the parties have changed and how that has affected both the House and Senate *The US Senate and the Commonwealth* Mitch McConnell, Roy E.

Brownell II, 2019-06-07 Kentucky has long punched above its weight in the US Senate as some of the nation's most distinguished senators have hailed from the Commonwealth Despite its relatively small population for much of American history Kentucky has produced a record two Senate majority leaders a record three Senate majority whips and one of the country's greatest lawmakers Henry Clay These Kentuckians played an important role in the evolution of leadership institutions in the Senate Official positions such as Senate majority leader and majority whip are nowhere to be found in the Constitution or early American history yet today these offices have essentially eclipsed the constitutionally created legislative leadership positions of vice president and president pro tempore While Kentucky senators have played a vital role in leading the Senate and in its institutional history no book has told the story in its entirety *The US Senate and the Commonwealth* is the first book of its kind to provide a detailed yet accessible discussion of the US Senate's leadership throughout its 225 year history Senator Mitch McConnell and Roy E Brownell II weave together the history of the Senate with lively portraits of prominent Kentucky senators as well as firsthand reflections about legislative leadership by a Senate majority leader The authors illuminate and humanize this discussion by exploring the colorful and vivid lives of fifteen Kentucky lawmakers including Henry Clay Alben Barkley and John Sherman Cooper This compelling and fascinating study is an essential resource

The Congress Gary Lee Malecha, Daniel J. Reagan, 2021-06-24 This work will provide an authoritative and illuminating overview of the U S Congress from the history of the Senate and the House of Representatives to the rules procedures and traditions that govern its operations and lawmaking This volume provides a comprehensive survey of the history and inner workings of the United States Congress the legislative branch of the federal government It will explain its relationship to the other two branches of government executive and judicial detail the unique structures responsibilities and procedures of both houses of Congress discuss major historical events and controversies highlight particularly influential leaders in Congress from the earliest days of the Republic to the present and show readers how the priorities of the U S Congress shift depending on whether it is held by the Democratic or Republican party This book is part of ABC CLIO's Student Guides to American Government and Politics series Each volume in the series provides a student friendly introduction to a distinct component of American governmental institutions and processes and shows how it pertains to American politics and the rights and responsibilities of citizenship **The Oxford Handbook of Public History**, 2017-09-20 The Oxford Handbook of Public History introduces the major debates within public history the methods and sources that comprise a public historian's tool kit and exemplary examples of practice It views public history as a dynamic process combining historical research and a wide

range of work with and for the public informed by a conceptual context The editors acknowledge the imprecision bedeviling attempts to define public history and use this book as an opportunity to shape the field by taking a deliberately broad view They include professional historians who work outside the academy in a range of institutions and sites and those who are politically committed to communicating history to the wide range of audiences This volume provides the information and inspiration needed by a practitioner to succeed in the wide range of workplaces that characterizes public history today for university teachers of public history to assist their students and for working public historians to keep up to date with recent research This handbook locates public history as a professional practice within an intellectual framework that is increasingly transnational technological and democratic While the nation state remains the primary means of identification increased mobility and the digital revolution have occasioned a much broader outlook and awareness of the world beyond national borders It addresses squarely the tech savvy media literate citizens of the world the digital natives of the twenty first century in a way that recognizes the revolution in shared authority that has swept museum work oral history and much of public history practice This volume also provides both currently practicing historians and those entering the field a map for understanding the historical landscape of the future not just to the historiographical debates of the academy but also the boom in commemoration and history outside the academy evident in many countries since the 1990s which now constitutes the historical culture in each country Public historians need to understand both contexts and to negotiate their implications for questions of historical authority and the public historian's work The boom in popular history is characterized by a significant increase in both making and consuming history in a range of historical activities such as genealogy family history and popular collecting cultural tourism historic sites and memorial museums increased memorialization both formal and informal from roadside memorials to state funded shrines and memorial Internet sites increased publication of historical novels biographies and movies and TV series set in the past Much of this as well as a vast array of new community cultural projects has been facilitated by the digital technologies that have increased the accessibility of historical information the democratization of practice and the demand for sharing authority American Politics and Society David McKay, 2013-02-06

Now in its eighth edition this popular introduction tackles the most recent trends in American politics and society through explanation analyses and interpretations of government processes adding valuable context for students by considering these procedures and developments from an international perspective Fully updated to take account of the many recent developments in American politics and society exploring one of the most turbulent political arenas witnessed in decades Features new chapters on environmental politics and the Obama presidency Shifts its focus from the gap between public expectations and government performance to the increasingly divisive ideological climate of America's political system Benefits from a student friendly style and design with numerous illustrations and a range of helpful pedagogical features including chronologies biographies and definition boxes highlighting key concepts and controversial issues Offers thought

provoking insights into the social background to contemporary politics in America while fully embracing the latest developments and considering these from a non U S perspective *The U.S. Senate* Tom Daschle, Charles Robbins, 2013-01-22 The second entry in the civics series clearly and concisely explains how the United States Senate works The U S Senate is the second book in the Fundamentals of American Government civics series exploring the inner workings of this important part of the legislative branch As with *Selecting a President* this book is written for all audiences but voiced toward high school seniors and college freshmen or any citizen interested in a concise yet authoritative exploration of this representative entity Written by former Senator Tom Daschle and co written by acclaimed journalist Charles Robbins this compelling and digestible book carefully examines and explains exactly how the Senate operates From its electoral process to voting procedure historic beginnings to modern day issues there is no area of this governmental body left un revealed Told with an insider s perspective there is not a more defining or easily accessible compendium detailing the U S Senate **The National Security Enterprise** Roger Z. George, Harvey Rishikof, 2017-07-01 This second edition of *The National Security Enterprise* provides practitioners insights into the operation missions and organizational cultures of the principal national security agencies and other institutions that shape the US national security decision making process Unlike some textbooks on American foreign policy it offers analysis from insiders who have worked at the National Security Council the State and Defense Departments the intelligence community and the other critical government entities The book explains how organizational missions and cultures create the labyrinth in which a coherent national security policy must be fashioned Understanding and appreciating these organizations and their cultures is essential for formulating and implementing it Taking into account the changes introduced by the Obama administration the second edition includes four new or entirely revised chapters Congress Department of Homeland Security Treasury and USAID and updates to the text throughout It covers changes instituted since the first edition was published in 2011 implications of the government campaign to prosecute leaks and lessons learned from more than a decade of war in Afghanistan and Iraq This up to date book will appeal to students of US national security and foreign policy as well as career policymakers *Defending the Filibuster* Richard A. Arenberg, Robert B. Dove, 2014-12-12 This award winning study of today s filibuster debate provides a historical overview of Senate rules and an updated analysis of recent controversies In an age of increasingly divided partisan politics many argue that the Senate filibuster is undemocratic or even unconstitutional Recent legislative disputes have brought criticism of Senate rules into sharp relief and demands for abolition or reform of the filibuster have increased In *Defending the Filibuster* two experts on Senate procedure a veteran Senate aide and a former Senate Parliamentarian argue that the filibuster is fundamental to protecting the rights of the minority in American politics Richard A Arenberg and Robert B Dove provide an instructive historical overview of the development of Senate rules describe related procedures and tactics and argue passionately for measured reforms Thoroughly updated this edition includes a new chapter recounting the events of 2012 13

that led to the first invocation of the nuclear option to restrict the use of the filibuster for presidential nominations as well as a new foreword by former US Senator Olympia Snowe The authors offer a stimulating assessment of the likelihood of further changes in Senate procedure and make their own proposals for reform Winner 2012 ForeWord Reviews Book of the Year Gold Medal in Political Science **The Trojan War: A Very Short Introduction** Eric H. Cline, 2013-05-30 This introduction considers whether the Trojan war actually took place and whether archaeologists have discovered the site of ancient Troy *Richard G. Lugar, Statesman of the Senate* John T. Shaw, 2012-03-16 Two time chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee Richard G Lugar has been one of the most widely respected foreign policy experts in Congress for over three decades In this illuminating profile John T Shaw examines Lugar s approach to lawmaking and diplomacy for what it reveals about the workings of the Senate and changes in that institution Drawing on interviews with Lugar and other leading figures in foreign policy Shaw chronicles Lugar s historic work on nuclear proliferation arms control energy and global food issues highlighting the senator s ability to influence American foreign policy in consequential ways The book presents Lugar s career as an example of the role Congress can play in the shaping of foreign policy in an era of a strong executive branch It demonstrates the importance of statesmanship in contemporary American political life while acknowledging the limitations of this approach to governance Historical Dictionary of the United States Kenneth J. Pantan, 2022-08-23 The evolution of the United States from a late 18th century coalition of rebel British colonies to a 21st century global superpower was shaped by several forces As the nation expanded its boundaries after the Treaty of Paris confirmed independence from Great Britain in 1783 it acquired a rich variety of resources coal fertile soils forests iron ore oil precious metals space and varied climates as well as extensive tracts of territory Technological innovations such as the cotton gin and steam power enabled entrepreneurs to exploit those resources and create wealth Federal and state legislators provided environments in which the economy could flourish and military strategists kept the country safe from external attack Diplomats negotiated commercial agreements with foreign governments and cultivated multinational alliances that strengthened freedoms Through its focus on the people and places that shaped the country s economic and political development and its detailed accounts of the processes that enabled the U S to expand across the continent Historical Dictionary of the United States contains a chronology an introduction and an extensive bibliography The dictionary section has more than 400 cross referenced entries on important personalities as well as aspects of the country s politics economy foreign relations religion and culture This book is an excellent resource for students researchers and anyone wanting to know more about the United States The Man in the Arena Rodger Eugene McDaniel, 2018-09-01 There was a time when Wyoming and other Rocky Mountain and midwestern states were as likely to elect a liberal Democrat to Congress as they were a conservative Republican Gale McGee 1915-92 was elected to the U S Senate in 1958 at the height of American liberalism He typified what Teddy Roosevelt called the man in the arena and was a major player in the development of

America's post World War II foreign policy and almost every legislative milestone in U.S. history from the 1950s to 1980. McGee's careers as an academic, a senator, and an ambassador spanned World War II, the Red Scare, the Korean and Vietnam Wars, and the activist Congress of the 1960s. This elegantly conceived biography of a liberal from the conservative rural state of Wyoming offers readers a glimpse into formative political shifts of the twentieth century. The national liberal consensus of the 1960s, in which McGee played a major role, gave the nation Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, the minimum wage, and the right to collective bargaining, as well as landmark civil rights and environmental reforms. That consensus had ended by the mid 1970s, as McGee's liberalism would no longer be welcome to represent the Equality State. Moving beyond biography, Rodger McDaniell addresses the significant shift in government and details how the attribution liberal became a candidate's epitaph, as widespread distrust of government cast a shadow on the many benefits acquired through the old liberal consensus. McDaniell's insights into the past, as well as McGee's experiences in the arena, shed unexpected light on the present state of U.S. politics and government.

Three Speeches that Saved the Union Peter Charles Hoffer, 2025-09-09. How three skilled orators navigated a polarized political landscape. For the generation of politicians who inherited the Republic and the Union, the opening months of 1850 were a desperate time filled with increasing animosity between free and slave state leaders over issues of the expansion of slavery. Following the end of the Mexican American War and the subsequent expansion of American territory, came a series of fiery debates over how this new territory would be governed and whether to allow California's admission to the Union as a free state. *Three Speeches That Saved the Union* provides the first ever deep content analysis of the three most eventful speeches delivered in the U.S. Senate. Historian Peter Charles Hoffer offers a thorough analytical study of the roles of the great triumvirate of American political leaders: Henry Clay, John C. Calhoun, and Daniel Webster played in preserving the American Union. All three were lawyers, and for lawyers, especially, words mattered. As is the case today, practicing law meant knowing and using terms of art correctly and knowing which words would sway a jury or a nation. Despite their opposing viewpoints, these skilled orators urged for some kind of compromise that would diffuse the possibility of civil war. Providing all three speeches in their entirety alongside a running commentary framing the political climate and manner in which each of these speeches were delivered, Hoffer demonstrates how intractable the slavery issue had become, how near a civil war was, and how it was prevented at least for a time. *Three Speeches That Saved the Union* is an invaluable study of a nation that three speeches pulled from the brink of dissolution.

Landmark Legislation 1774-2022 Stephen W. Stathis, 2024-04-09. *Landmark Legislation 1774-2022* Third Edition is a comprehensive guide to important laws and treaties enacted by the U.S. Congress. This updated edition includes landmark legislation from the last five Congresses (2013-2022) on issues like climate change, criminal justice, education, and more. It features carefully selected acts and treaties with historical significance and has an updated index and bibliography for easy access. A must have for public and academic libraries with American history or political science collections.

Doing Oral History Donald A. Ritchie, 2014-09-19. *Doing Oral History* is

considered the premier guidebook to oral history used by professional oral historians public historians archivists and genealogists as a core text in college courses and throughout the public history community Over the past decades the development of digital audio and video recording technology has continued to alter the practice of oral history making it even easier to produce quality recordings and to disseminate them on the Internet This basic manual offers detailed advice on setting up an oral history project conducting interviews making video recordings preserving oral history collections in archives and libraries and teaching and presenting oral history Using the existing Q A format the third edition asks new questions and augments previous answers with new material particularly in these areas

- 1 Technology As before the book avoids recommending specific equipment but weighs the merits of the types of technology available for audio and video recording transcription preservation and dissemination Information about web sites is expanded and more discussion is provided about how other oral history projects have posted their interviews online
- 2 Teaching The new edition addresses the use of oral history in online teaching It also expands the discussion of Institutional Review Boards IRBs with the latest information about compliance issues
- 3 Presentation Once interviews have been conducted there are many opportunities for creative presentation There is much new material available on innovative forms of presentation developed over the last decade including interpretive dance and other public performances
- 4 Legal considerations The recent Boston College case in which the courts have ruled that Irish police should have access to sealed oral history transcripts has re focused attention on the problems of protecting donor restrictions The new edition offers case studies from the past decade
- 5 Theory and Memory As a beginner s manual Doing Oral History has not dealt extensively with theoretical issues on the grounds that these emerge best from practice But the third edition includes the latest thinking about memory and provides a sample of some of the theoretical issues surrounding oral sources It will include examples of increased studies into catastrophe and trauma and the special considerations these have generated for interviewers
- 6 Internationalism Perhaps the biggest development in the past decade has been the spreading of oral history around the world facilitated in part by the International Oral History Association New oral history projects have developed in areas that have undergone social and political upheavals where the traditional archives reflect the old regimes particularly in Eastern Europe the Middle East Asia Africa and Latin America The third edition includes many more references to non U S projects that will still be relevant to an American audience These changes make the third edition of Doing Oral History an even more useful tool for beginners teachers archivists and all those oral history managers who have inherited older collections that must be converted to the latest technology

The People's Choice Ray Boomhower, 2012-09 This first ever biography of Congressman Jim Jontz examines his remarkable long shot political career and lifetime involvement in local state and national environmental issues As a liberal Democrat he preferred the terms progressive or populist usually running in conservative districts Jontz had political pundits predicting his defeat in every election only to see him celebrating another victory with his happy supporters always clad in a scruffy plaid jacket with

a hood from high school that he wore for good luck I always hope for the best and fight for the worst said Jontz He won five terms as state representative for the Twentieth District Benton Newton Warren and White Counties served two years in the Indiana Senate and captured three terms in the U S Congress representing the sprawling Fifth Congressional District in northwestern Indiana that stretched from Lake County in the north to Grant County in the south Jontz told a reporter that his political career had always been based on my willingness and role as a spokesman for the average citizen In his career Jontz also led an unsuccessful campaign to stop the passage of the North American Free Trade Agreement with the Citizens Trade Campaign helped protect the Endangered Species Act when it was under attack in the 1990s as director of the Endangered Species Coalition campaigned to save old growth forests as executive director of the Western Ancient Forest Campaign and tried to foster progressive causes as president of the Americans for Democratic Action **A Companion to John F.**

Kennedy Marc J. Selverstone, 2014-06-03 b A COMPANION TO JOHN F KENNEDY A COMPANION TO JOHN F KENNEDY Marc J Selverstone has compiled an indispensable volume of essays on John F Kennedy and his presidency written by a stellar cast of scholars What stands out in sharp relief in this wide ranging and authoritative book is how consequential were Kennedy s thousand days for the United States and for the world and how controversial is his legacy Fredrik Logevall Stephen and Madeline Anbinder Professor of History Cornell University Marc J Selverstone has brought together a remarkable group of scholars who illuminate the many important ideas of and events that occurred during this brief administration This book is the best record of the Kennedy years Alan Brinkley Allan Nevins Professor of American History Columbia University This collection of talented scholars and their research and thoughts on John F Kennedy is an invaluable resource a deeply informed conversation for the ages Richard Reeves writer syndicated columnist and senior lecturer at the Annenberg School for Communication at the University of Southern California

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