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Using government publications: Volume I: Searching by subjects and agencies By Jean L. Sears and Marilyn K. Moody Phoenix, AZ: Oryx Press, 1985, 216 pages, (hardcover) $67.50. ISBN 0-89774-094-7. LC 83-83249

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Reviewed by Christina J. Woo

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Using Government Publications is an exceedingly specific, practical introduction to the identification of needed information available in United States government publications in all formats. Sears and Moody have successfully brought together library instruction and reference search strategies in a well-thought-out, logical, systematic approach. Experienced documents users—librarians and researchers alike—will find it a handy review and convenient sourcebook. Novice librarians, non-documents librarians unfamiliar with all of the changes in the world of Federal documents since they left library school, and beginning researchers will find that this volume is the carefully-crafted key to a rich world of information. Anyone who provides reference assistance that includes government documents will find this volume invaluable.

The immediate temptation is to open the book and peruse the "Subject Search" chapters, which constitute the bulk of the first volume. These central chapters methodically and concisely provide annotated checklists and detailed search strategy for each of twenty broad subject areas well served by government publications. Representative chapters focus on "Business Aids," "Maps," "Climate," "Genealogy," "Education," and "Environmental and Natural Resources." Each chapter is only 3-10 pages long but packed with titles, SuDocs numbers, sample pages, and a lucid introduction to identifying information on the topic in question.

One is tempted to ask, "Are such generic tools as *Monthly Catalog* and *ASI* included in each of the subject chapters?" This question is satisfied by the first three chapters in volume 1 ("Introduction," "Search Strategy and Government Documents," and "The Basics of Searching"). Reading these first 34 pages provides the coherent, structured foundation for the rest of the chapters and in fact is critical to their usefulness. Chapter 2 describes five search strategies that loosely but efficiently meet five different types of information needs: Known item, Subject, Agency, Statistical, and Special Techniques (e.g., Treaties, Technical Reports, Patents/Trademarks and others). Chapter 3 briefly explains the Federal depository system, SuDocs numbers, and the basics of using *Monthly Catalog, PRF, CIS, ASI, Index to U.S. Government Periodicals, List of Classes, Guide to U.S. Government Publications* ("Andriot"), and *Subject Bibliographies*. As in the Subject chapters, numerous sample pages and exploded entries are used as illustrations. Information in the opening chapters is referred to frequently in the rest of the volume.

The final chapters in volume 1 are devoted to "The Agency Search," appropriate for questions like, "What internship programs are available at the Library of Congress?" They cover information sources and strategies for researching Government Programs and Grants, Regulations and Administrative Actions, Administrative Decisions, and The President.

Authors Sears and Moody have wasted few words; their writing is economical and requires the full attention of readers new to the realm of government publications. Non-depository librarians will find it an indispensable collection development list. In addition, online databases—primarily those offered through BRS, DIALOG, and SDC—are included as information sources wherever appropriate. Highly recommended in hardcover; this volume will receive plenty of use.

LIST OF TITLES RECEIVED

Since the number of titles published each year of potential value to our readers is quite large, only a few can be formally reviewed. Our practice is to list works upon receipt and to include a few of them later in our "Reviews" column. By listing works, readers may be able to identify current titles having possible interest to them.

Directory of Federal Laboratory and Technology Resources, 1986-1987. Springfield, VA: National Technical Information Service 1986 (PB86-100013).

Mount, Ellis and Wilda B. Newman. Top Secret/Trade Secret: Accessing and Safeguarding Restricted Information. New York: Neal-Schuman, 1986.

Office of Technology Assessment. *Federal Government Information Technology Management, Security, and Congressional Oversight.* OTA-CIT-297. Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1986.

An Open Forum on the Provision of Electronic Federal Information to Depository Libraries. Committee Print. Joint Committee on Printing. Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1985.

Taylor, Robert S. *Value-Added Processes in Information Systems.* Norwood, NJ: ABLEX Pub. Corp., 1986.

GUIDELINES FOR REVIEWS

1. Each review begins with a complete bibliographic citation which includes:

- title
- name of author, editor, or compiler
- place of publication, name of publisher, and year of publication
- pagination
- indication of hardcover and softcover versions availability, with price. International Standard Book Number (ISBN) and Library of Congress (LC) card number for each version. Citations for U.S. government publications should include the Superintendent of Documents (SuDocs) number and Government Printing Office stock number (S/N), or National Technical Information Service order number (PB, AD, etc.).