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Kevin Lyles

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THE GATEKEEPERS

Federal District Courts
in the Political Process

KEVIN L. LYLES

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Kevin Lyles : The Gatekeepers: Federal District Courts in the Political Process (Modern Dramatists Research and) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Gatekeepers: Federal District Courts in the Political Process (Modern Dramatists Research and):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Interesting mind at work, for stretchesBy A CustomerIf only there weren't so much padding in this book!I was especially intrigued by the discussion of the divergence between campaign rhetoric and reality for each of the presidencies from John Kennedy's to William Jefferson Clinton's. The divergence is great everywhere but (since this is the US) perhaps greatest of all in the field of race relations.In a lengthy end note, Lyles discusses competing theories among political scientists and historians over the degree to which Kennedy ever believed what he was saying during the campaign, regarding civil rights. Lyles sides, in the end, with Bruce Miroff, who has written that in the early 1960s advocates of fairness for black Americans had their hopes "raised and dashed repeatedly as deeds failed to follow the word of administration encouragement."But I'm afraid for most people's budgets the book is priced too high for the benefit one gets from its various diamonds in the rough.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A Review From A Student Of Lyles'By SuzanneI was forced to read this book for all three of the classes I took with Professor Lyles and have to say that I am glad that I had to read it. It is an excellent look into the court system of the United States.A plus for students is the fact that this book is extremely repetitive. I told Professor Lyles that he did the students a favor by starting with each chapter with an overview of what he was going to discuss, then going on to discuss it, and then concluding each chapter with a this is an overview of what I just discussed. In reality you only have to read a third of the book thanks to this process! That saved me tons of time!This book was excellent and I highly recommend it for ANY political science student, law student, or anyone who just as an interest in the legal system and court system in the United States.

There are more than 600 Federal district judges serving today, and they decide some 230,000 civil cases each year. About 90% of the decisions they reach are final. Lyles argues that these lower court judges not only influence the flow of information to the judicial hierarchy, but they formulate questions that influence how higher courts, including the Supreme Court, respond. As such they are key elements in the formulation and implementation of public policy. To cite a few examples, they desegregate school districts, run mental institutions and prisons, break up monopolies, and reapportion legislatures.Lyles begins by examining the structure and function of federal courts and detailing the history, operation, and purpose of the district courts. He then turns to the selection, nomination, and appointment of district judges. Lyles then analyzes the extent to which presidents might advance policy objectives through their judicial appointments to the district courts. After examining how African-American, Latino, and white judges, male and female, view their roles as policy actors, Lyles concludes with a discussion of the implications of the study. Important for students and scholars of contemporary public policy and the court system.

"Lyles has prepared an excellent volume on a subject that is increasingly receiving greater attention by public law scholars: decision-making by federal district judges....The book is clearly written and contains an excellent bibliography."-Choice"Kevin L. Lyles has done an admirable job in analyzing the role of the federal district courts. He has developed a work that raises a number of interesting questions about these courts....The author's style of writing makes it easy to understand the material presented in the book. Assuming one has a modest background in the subject of American government, it should be relatively easy to grasp the main points made by the author. The work will therefore be appreciated by various individuals who are associated with a wide variety of academic backgrounds. In addition, those individuals who specialize in analyzing the formulation of public policy resulting from the judiciary will be especially interested in this book."-The Journal of Politics?Lyles has prepared an excellent volume on a subject that is increasingly receiving greater attention by public law scholars: decision-making by federal district judges....The book is clearly written and contains an excellent bibliography.?-Choice?Kevin L. Lyles has done an admirable job in analyzing the role of the federal district courts. He has developed a work that raises a number of interesting questions about these courts....The author's style of writing makes it easy to understand the material presented in the book. Assuming one has a modest background in the subject of American government, it should be relatively easy to grasp the main points made by the author. The work will therefore be appreciated by various individuals who are associated with a wide variety of academic backgrounds. In addition, those individuals who specialize in analyzing the formulation of public policy resulting from the judiciary will be especially interested in this book.?-The Journal of Politics?The overall strengths of this book include the author's use of the fresh data taken from the National District Court Judge Survey which he carefully collected while serving as a Post Doctoral Fellow at Stanford University. The data set is truly a major contribution in the Public Law realm....Another strength of the book is Lyles' highly competent and careful analysis. He has an accurate and keen understanding of the judicial selection process, and the conclusions he comes to based on his empirical findings seem fair and reasonable....[T]he text is well written in terms of syntax and style, and the selected bibliography at the end will prove useful to scholars and students alike. The book warrants reading by all scholars in the public law realm, and by attorneys and members of the judiciary's "attentive public" who are interested in the relationship between courts and public policy.?-The Law and Politics Book "The overall strengths of this book include the author's use of the fresh data taken from the National District Court Judge Survey which he carefully collected while serving as a Post Doctoral Fellow at Stanford University. The data set is truly a major contribution in the Public Law realm....Another strength of the book is Lyles' highly competent and

careful analysis. He has an accurate and keen understanding of the judicial selection process, and the conclusions he comes to based on his empirical findings seem fair and reasonable....[T]he text is well written in terms of syntax and style, and the selected bibliography at the end will prove useful to scholars and students alike. The book warrants reading by all scholars in the public law realm, and by attorneys and members of the judiciary's "attentive public" who are interested in the relationship between courts and public policy."-The Law and Politics Book About the Author KEVIN L. LYLES is Associate Professor of Political Science at the University of Illinois at Chicago.