

The American Congress



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Congress is the heart and soul of our democracy, the place where interests are brokered, laws are established, and innovation is turned into concrete action. It is also where some of democracy's greatest virtues clash with its worst vices: idealism and compromise meet corruption and bitter partisanship. The American Congress unveils the rich and varied history of this singular institution. Julian E. Zelizer has gathered together forty essays by renowned historians to capture the full drama, landmark legislation, and most memorable personalities of Congress. Organized around four major periods of congressional history, from the signing of the Constitution to the creation of the Department of Homeland Security, this volume brings a fresh perspective to familiar watershed events: the Civil War, Watergate, the Vietnam War. It also gives a behind-the-scenes look at lesser-known legislation debated on the House and Senate floors, such as westward expansion and war powers control. Here are the stories behind the 1868 vote to impeach President Andrew Johnson; the rise of Jeannette Rankin, the first woman elected to Congress and a leading advocate for pacifism; and the controversy surrounding James Eastland of Mississippi, who carried civil rights bills in his pockets so they could not come up for a vote. Sidebars further spotlight notables including Huey Long, Sam Rayburn, and Tip O'Neill, bringing the sweeping history of our lawmaking bodies into sharp focus. If you've ever wondered

how Congress worked in the past or what our elected officials do today, this book gives the engaging, often surprising, answers.

作者介绍:

Julian E. Zelizer, Ph.D., is a Professor of History at Boston University. He is author of ON CAPITOL HILL: THE STRUGGLE TO REFORM CONGRESS AND ITS CONSEQUENCES, 1948-2000, Taxing America: Wilbur D. Mills, Congress, and the State 1945-1975 (Cambridge Univ. Press, 1998), which won the Organization of American Historian's 2000 Ellis Hawley Prize and the Lyndon B. Johnson Foundation's 1998 D.B. Hardeman Prize. He is author of dozens of publications, articles, book chapters, and book reviews on American government, esp. Congress, and is a prominent young scholar in the American history world.

目录:

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