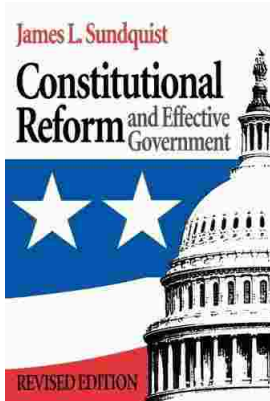


# Constitutional Reform and Effective Government (Institutional Studies)



Constitutional Reform and Effective Government  
(Institutional Studies)

SI-38962

US/Data/Law

3.5/5 From 386 Reviews

James Sundquist

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*2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Still usefulBy ((Marco Buendia)))This short book, written for the interested general reader (and college students, if their interest can be awakened), describes the history of the modification of the US Constitution, which history began, of course, even before it was ratified. The author begins with a discussion of what larger reforms might be considered in our current epoch; this is not a history of constitutional amendments, merely. He proceeds through time, from the settling of the "constitutional structure", through various stresses on the body politic in the USA which resulted in calls for constitutional reform: presidential tenure, direct election of senators, and war powers among the many. Two whole chapters are devoted to: Forestalling divided government, and Reconstituting a failed government. Much of the book tends to toward favoring efficiency in federal government action; another chapter is titled "Fostering Interbranch Collaboration. Such endeavors may prevent the book from appealing to those sort of libertarians who favor grossly reduced governance and a return to rule by whatever local dominant apes are able to assert themselves. Cynics may remember such enthusiastic adventures as the Prohibition Amendment when they think of this sort of thing. The "Progressive Era" also produced the sanctification, by constitutional amendment, of the income tax and the right of women to vote. We still have blowhards who object to these innovations. However, the author writes as an observer of law and government, not as a polemicist. A final chapter on the "Prospects for Constitutional Reform". The author found the prospects for everything but term limits a bit dim.*

*For years the public has become increasingly disillusioned and cynical about its governmental institutions. In the face of alarming problems-most notably the \$400 billion budget deficit-the government seems deadlocked, reduced to partisan posturing and bickering, with the president and Congress blaming each other for failure. And neither party can be held accountable. The public tendency is to blame individual leaders- or politicians as a class-but an insistent and growing number of experienc ...*