

Resources on the Net: Ethical Issues

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Codes of Ethics and Ethical Values

American Library Association. (1995). **Code of Ethics of the American Library Association**. Retrieved July 4, 2005, from <http://www.ala.org/ala/oif/statementspols/codeofethics/codeethics.htm>

The Code of Ethics of the American Library Association is a statement of recommended ethical standards for the library profession in the United States. First issued in 1939, the code has been periodically revised, most recently in 1995. The eight clauses contained in the statement are meant to guide ethical decision making, however "they cannot and do not dictate conduct to cover particular situations." Also of note on this site is *Librarian Speech in the Workplace*, an explanatory statement of the ALA Code of Ethics. Released in July 2001, its aim is to clarify issues of freedom of expression in the library workplace.

American Library Association. (2004). **Core Values Task Force II Report**. Retrieved July 07, 2005, from <http://www.ala.org/ala/oif/statementspols/corevaluesstatement/corevalues.htm>

The Core Values Task Force II was mandated to develop a core values statement for the library profession. It was believed that this would help both librarians and library school students to discuss their understanding of, and commitment to, the essential values that librarianship represents. The final report, adopted June 29, 2004, by the ALA Council, identified eleven core professional values. This core set of values is based on and reinforced by existing ALA policy statements. The values presented in the report are the result of a consensus reached within the profession and are "embraced by the majority of librarians as the foundations of their practice."

Koehler, W., Hurych J., Dole, W. (2000, June). **Librarians and Ethical Values in a Cross National and Cross Disciplinary Context**. Paper presented at the 2000 Conference on Libraries and Associations in the Transient World, Crimea. Retrieved July 7, 2005, from <http://www.gpntb.ru/win/inter-events/crimea2000/doc/tom1/222/Doc1.HTML>

This paper reports on an international survey that sought to identify whether or not there are universal ethical values in librarianship. Librarians from different professional categories in thirteen countries, representing both developed and developing nations, were surveyed. Even among different categories of librarians, certain universal values emerged from the survey. Highest ethical value was placed on service to the patron, followed by intellectual freedom, preservation of the record, and equality of access. The survey identified divergent values between librarians in developed and developing nations which were attributed to socio-economic factors.

Leuzinger, P. & Marnane, B. (2004). **'But You're Restricting Access to Information' – The Ethical and Cultural Dimensions of Installing Access Gates in the UTS City Campus Library (Blake Library)**. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Australia Library and Information Association. Retrieved July 10, 2005, from: <http://conferences.alia.org.au/alia2004/pdfs/leuzinger.p.paper.pdf>

Leuzinger and Marnane summarize the decisions taken prior to making the UTS Library the first university library in Australia to install access gates at the entrance to its largest campus library. This paper "discusses the ethical and cultural issues worked through by the Library management group, with staff, primary clients and the broader community. It also describes the access policies developed to protect the interests of personal researchers in the community and summarizes the Library's experience, noting the positive outcomes a year down the track." This case study may of interest to other academic libraries that

are currently grappling with similar issues related to the provision of general access to collections.

Smith, M.M. (2002). **Global Information Ethics: A Mandate for Professional Education**. Paper presented at the 68th IFLA Council and General Conference, Glasgow. August 18-24, 2002. Retrieved July 10, 2005, from: [http:// www.ifla.org/IV/ifla68/papers/056-093e.pdf](http://www.ifla.org/IV/ifla68/papers/056-093e.pdf)

Smith reflects on emerging issues within the field of library and information science, namely access, intellectual property, privacy, security, and human rights and notes they will demand "critical ethical reflection and dialogue across boundaries of geography, language, and cultural background." Based on twelve years of research that has followed the development of information ethics as an emerging field in applied ethics, Smith presents "Ten Reasons to Teach Global Information Ethics" along with a brief model of courses in global information ethics and she "defines the scope, content, and various approaches for courses to be taught co-operatively involving faculty and students from all around the world."

Sturges, P. (2003). **It's Not Cricket: Laws of the Game, or Guidance in Ethical Reflection for Information Professionals in Western Europe**. Paper presented at the World Library and Information Congress: 69th IFLA General Conference and Council, Berlin. August 1-9, 2003. Retrieved July 10, 2005, from: [http:// www.ifla.org/IV/ifla69/papers/090e-Sturges.pdf](http://www.ifla.org/IV/ifla69/papers/090e-Sturges.pdf)

Sturges uses the game of cricket as a metaphor in a discussion of the codes of ethical conduct by information professionals. Using examples of codes of ethical conduct for information professionals from Western European countries, Sturges examines whether these codes "either seek to prescribe lines of conduct, or to encourage ethical reflection and well-considered decisions by individual professionals. An approach to developing systems of guidance on professional ethics based on codes of ethics, but incorporating case study material and the codes of other relevant associations, is suggested."

Intellectual Property

The Ethics of Information Use: A Teacher's Guide. (2001). [Special issue]. *School Libraries in Canada*, 20(1). Retrieved July 10, 2005, from: [http://www.sd22.bc.ca/redgie/ictresources/ documents/ ethics.pdf](http://www.sd22.bc.ca/redgie/ictresources/documents/ethics.pdf)

This complete issue of *School Libraries in Canada* provides a comprehensive description of the issues related to the ethical use of information (e.g. copyright, plagiarism, intellectual property etc.), especially within the context of the Internet. Designed to improve the information literacy skills of K-12 teachers and students, a number of lesson plans, handouts, and evaluation rubrics are included as resources.

Vaagan, R. & Koehler, W. (2005). **Intellectual Property Rights vs. Public Access Rights: Ethical Aspects of the DeCSS Decryption Program**. *Information Research*, 10(3) paper 230. Retrieved July 10, 2005 from: <http://InformationR.net/ir/10-3/paper230.html>

"In 1999-2000, a Norwegian youth cracked a DVD-access code and published a decryption program on the Internet. He was sued by the US DVD Copy Control Association (DVD-CCA) and the Norwegian Motion Picture Association (MAP), allies of the US Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA), arrested by Norwegian police and charged with data crime. Two Norwegian court rulings in 2003 unanimously ruled that the program did not amount to a breach of Norwegian law, and he was fully acquitted. In the US, there have been related cases, some with other outcomes." During their discussion of this case, the authors provide an interesting analysis of four ethical issues related to information systems: privacy, accuracy, property and access. See also: Vaagan, R. (2005). LIS infoethical survival kit. *Scandinavian Public Library Quarterly* 38(1). Available from http://www.splq.info/issues/vol38_1/06.htm

Links to Sites

Koehler, W. (n.d.). **Ethics Links to Librarian and Information Manager Associations**. Retrieved July 6, 2005, from Valdosta State University, Master of Library and Information Studies Web site: <http://books.valdosta.edu/mlis/ethics/resources.htm>

This site, created by Dr. Wallace Koehler, Associate Professor at the Library and Information Studies Program at Valdosta State University, presents a comprehensive list of ethical codes and standards for library and other information professions and associations around the world.

Center for Art and Media Karlsruhe. (2001). **International Center for Information Ethics**. Retrieved July 4, 2005, from <http://icie.zkm.de/>

The International Center for Information Ethics (ICIE), established by Rafael Capurro in 1999, is an international and intercultural organization dedicated to the exchange of information on the research and teaching of information ethics. This site lists institutions and teaching personnel specializing in the field, it provides international news, and it links to a virtual library of scholarly full-text materials. The ICIE also publishes and provides links to the scholarly online journal *International Review of Information Ethics*. The current issue and an archive of articles dating back to 2004 are available.

International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions. (2004, September). **IFLA Committee on Free Access to Information and Freedom of Expression (FAIFE)**. Retrieved July 6, 2005, from <http://www.ifla.org/faife/index.htm>

The Committee on Free Access to Information and Freedom of Expression (FAIFE) was established by IFLA in 1997. Its mission is the defense of freedom of expression and freedom of access to information in all aspects, directly or indirectly, related to libraries and librarianship. This site provides links to codes of ethics adopted by national libraries and library associations in thirty-one countries. It also provides news, and it links to "basic reports, articles and other documents on internet regulation in general and on filtering and rating in libraries - and the intellectual freedom implications of such measures."

Information Ethics. (n.d.). Retrieved July 6, 2005, from University of Pittsburgh, School of Information Sciences Web site: <http://www2.sis.pitt.edu/~ethics/>

The University of Pittsburgh's School of Information Sciences was one of the first library schools to offer a regular course on the ethical concerns of information professionals. This site includes a chronological history of the study of information ethics at the University of Pittsburgh. It also provides links to a selected bibliography of recent print and electronic resources on information ethics.

UNESCO. (2000). **Right to universal access to information in the 21st century**. Papers presented at the third UNESCO Congress on Ethical, Legal and Societal Challenges of Cyberspace, Paris. November 13-15, 2000. Retrieved July 12, 2005, from: <http://webworld.unesco.org/infoethics2000/index.html>

The goal of this Congress, hosted by UNESCO, was to "stimulate reflection and debate on the ethical, legal and societal aspects of the Information Society. "The presenters provide an extensive overview of the global issues including a look at the role of public authorities, the concept of "fair use," and suggestions on how to protect human dignity. A PDF of the final report and proceedings is also available from this site.

Authors' note: Text that is enclosed within quotations marks has been taken directly from the document.

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