

RECENT REVIEWS

Privacy Rights in the Digital Age

“Edited by archivist-librarian Anglim (Univ. of the District of Columbia)—author of related works examining the Patriot Act and religion or labor from a legal perspective, including *Encyclopedia of Religion and the Law in America*, 2nd ed.—here presents an extensive reference work covering the spectrum of contemporary social, legal, and technological aspects of privacy. While the bulk of the work (more than 600 pages) is dedicated to alphabetically arranged encyclopedic entries (e.g., “Background checks,” “License plate reader system”), the work also features an introduction and essay examining cross-cultural perspectives on privacy, a 40-page bibliography, a reproduction of the Privacy Act of 1974, a time line of privacy rights, lists of privacy-related legal cases and statutes, and a glossary of terms. Most of the contributors’ signed entries have a clear connection to modern privacy issues and are well written and informative. Authors strongly emphasize the legal dimension, with a number of entries framed entirely around landmark court cases.

Summing Up: Recommended. High school through undergraduate students; general readers; professionals/practitioners.”

-CHOICE

“*Rights in the Digital Age* may serve as the definitive reference work on the subject of contemporary privacy rights. The general editor aspires to assist scholars in researching broad academic issues, students in seeking introductory material, and practitioners in searching for the origins of particular legal doctrines. The editor is Christopher T. Anglim, Associate Professor/Archivist/Reference Librarian at University of the District of Columbia, and the advisory editor for the book is Professor Jane E. Kirtley, JD, Director of the Silha Center for the Study of Media Ethics and Law at the University of Minnesota’s School of Journalism. Together, along with over 60 distinguished contributors, they have made a substantial contribution to the understanding of a significant current issue that influences our daily living and quality of life.

This volume discusses the practical, political, psychological, and philosophical challenges individuals face as technological advances transform the landscape of traditional concepts of privacy during the digital age. Scholars define the digital age, also called the information age, as the time period starting in the 1970s with the introduction of the personal computer.

Data collection applications saturate our social and civic lives: government surveillance in the name of national security, Supreme Court-sanctioned collection of DNA fingerprints of criminal suspects, targeted online ads tailored to our interests based on personal search histories, wearable computers with camera and recording devices, and cell phone GPS capabilities to track our every movement. As Kirtley points out, there is a paradox of privacy. “On one hand, we benefit from the easy exchange of personal information through digital communications. On the other, we give up

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some degree of control about what happens to that information.” This volume explores issues related to this paradox.

Enlightening entries vary in length depending on the subject matter. The writing style is concise and the editor’s topic selection offers readers a noteworthy collection of pertinent information. The book has 712 A-Z entries, an informative introduction, and appropriate font size and line spacing. It also contains bullet point information, bold font titles, primary source documents, a glossary, a bibliography, a subject index, a table of statutes, and a chronology of privacy rights. In addition, over 150 original articles cover laws, legal cases, events, organizations, individuals, technology, and important terms. Moreover, coverage is international in scope with an emphasis on U. S. legal, technological, educational, corporate, and social contexts.

Privacy Rights in the Digital Age mirrors the editor’s expertise and dedication to excellence. This encyclopedia reflects a sincere effort to meet the needs of students, scholars, and inquiring minds. Readers will likely feel motivated to peruse topics unrelated to a specific inquiry because the topic selection and writing style encourages further investigation. Library acquisition decision-makers will consider this book a welcomed addition to their research collection.”

-ARBA, November 2015

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