

# Information Policy Bibliography

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There are many "definitions" of information policy. Mostly all of the definitions are dependent upon how one defines information. According to Weingarten, information policy is "the set of all public laws, regulations, and policies that encourage, discourage, or regulate the creation, use, storage, and communication of information." (1989) Rowlands summarizes the many views of information policy to define their common characteristics. Using Weingarten's view, Rowlands suggests "that the fundamental role of policy is to provide the legal and institutional frameworks within which formal information exchange can take place." (1996, p. 14) Rowlands also addresses Hernon and Relyea's view that there is no single information policy, but rather policies that address specific problems and issues that are often contradictory. Rowlands argues, "The situation may be messy, but it is inevitable given that the practical realities of information policy are much to do with the art of compromise: there are neither 'good' nor 'bad' policies, but maybe there can be effective compromises between competing interests." (1996, pp. 14-15) Rowlands also cites Galvin's view of balance of competing goals and interests, and suggests that information policy "should be flexible, dynamic and responsive to changing circumstances....a key objective for information policy research might therefore lie in trying to set some kind of bounds and limits to that *uncertainty*." (1996, p. 15)

A critical point by Rowlands is the differentiation between information policy shaping events as well as responding to events; in other words, serving as both an independent variable and a dependent variable. This concept concludes with Burger's definition of information policy as "societal mechanisms used to control information, and the societal effects of applying those mechanisms." (Burger, 1993) Rowlands concludes by offering a three-level hierarchical model for information policy:

1. infrastructural policies which apply across society and affect the information sector both directly and indirectly;
  2. horizontal information policies which apply to the entire information sector for particular applications such as export-control policies or data protection law; and
  3. vertical information policies that apply to a specific part of the information sector for a particular application.
- (1996, p. 15)
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