



Ethics and Values in Librarianship: A History

Wallace Koehler

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Ethics and Values in Librarianship: A History addresses the processes of development of library and information sciences, largely but not exclusively in a western context. It focuses on the field's ethics and values.

Here, Wallace Koehler, a leading researcher in the area of information ethics, debunks the prevailing notion that library and information science concepts and ethics have and remain constant. He demonstrates that in almost all areas of practice, this is simply not so. Instead of staying the same, our professional ethics and standards have evolved or shifted in their application as well as in the recognition of those standards by practitioners and users. Some of these changes are of very recent etiology.

Topics covered include:

- the freedom of expression,
- intellectual freedom,
- libraries and democracy,
- intellectual property, copyright, and fair use and,
- professional qualifications and credentialing.

Koehler examines the development of and changes to library and information science through practice and the writings of library and information theorists and practitioners from Varro during the reign of Julius Caesar to the present. He documents technological and social changes that have had foundational implications for the information professions and argues that ethical standards may be redefined overtime and new standards may emerge, older precepts and newer ones coexist. Not only a history, this is also one of the few contemporary books suitable for use in foundational courses and courses covering information and library ethics.

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