

Applied Information Ethics in Grey Literature: Introducing a new paradigm for enhancing professional practice

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Abstract

Applied information ethics is concerned with the impact of information-based decisions on the underlying moral compass of an organization and in turn on the business impact of ethical decisions. Preliminary analyses of the professional landscapes in grey literature and applied information ethics suggests significant areas of common concern with respect to professional practice. For example, whilst new technologies offer both opportunities and risks in managing grey literature, so too ethical questions are raised in the application of such new technologies in the digital preservation of archives. These shared concerns are increased by the relatively poor understanding of our professional roles. In addition, education and debate in these two fields is deemed less important than emerging technologies and the influence of globalization and new ways of working. We suggest that our overlapping professional domains are at risk of marginalization, and therefore our professional landscape (publishing, librarianship, records, and information management) is at risk of irreparable diminution. We invite collaboration to explore these shared concerns. We also present an innovative and practical approach to reducing the risks inherent in our shared concerns through the development an Information Audit Toolkit.

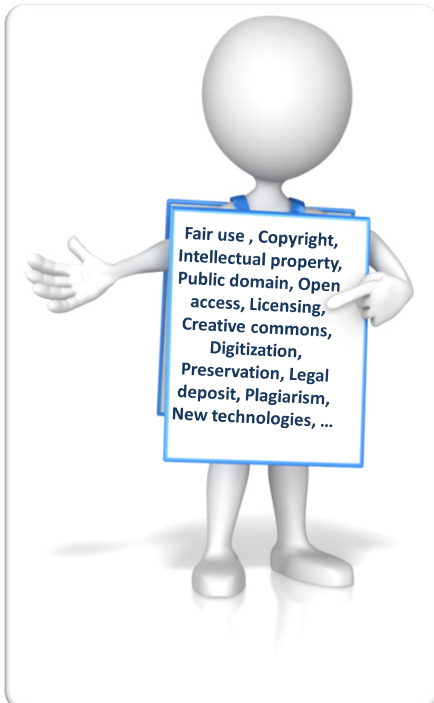
Information Audit Toolkit

Our holistic approach combines audit of an organization's information landscape with analysis of ethical concerns .



Are digitally preserved materials truly preserved? ♦ Are we witnessing a paradigm shift in information tools? Is there a 'Google generation'? ♦ Are we equipped to challenge or even understand the questions of open access? ♦ How do we manage the increased risk of suboptimal standards or validation? ♦ How do we resolve the inherent weaknesses in informal (e.g. open) peer review? ♦ Can we avoid the influence of self-interest in citations? ♦ How do we protect the rights of individuals at the same time as enabling valuable open access? ♦ Are new technologies always a better thing if risk of loss is increased? ♦ Is our professionalism through use of surveys, ethnographers, etc. compromised? ♦ Blurred distinction between the user & provider of information services. Can we collectively resolve these common concerns? ♦ Can or should dissemination of information be improved (access, cost, equitability)? ♦ How do we ensure the validity (objectivity) of metadata standards? ♦ Both GL and IE are marginalised in LIS curricula. ♦ Do educators or practitioners provide the best case studies from which to learn?

Grey Literature areas of interest



Our analysis of the information landscape identifies themes of major concern in both the grey literature and information ethics domains. We argue that by combining professional activity across these domains we generate further opportunities for research:

- Rigorous debate and alignment of perspectives on areas of shared interest; pathways to professional responsibility.
- Adaptability to change for our combined professions, with early warning of emerging areas of shared interest.

Information Ethics areas of interest



Invitation for partnership

We invite interested practitioners, academics and thought leaders to collaborate with us to validate our hypotheses.

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