Disability and Information Technology examines the extent to which regulatory frameworks for information and communication technologies (ICTs) safeguard the rights of persons with disabilities as citizenship rights. The book adopts a comparative approach focused on four case studies: Canada, the European Union, the United Kingdom, and the United States. The discussion focuses on the tension between social and economic values in the regulation of ICTs and calls for a regulatory approach based on a framework of principles that reflects citizenship values such as equality and dignity. The analysis identifies common challenges encountered in the jurisdictions examined and points toward the rights-based approach advanced by the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities as a benchmark in protecting the rights of persons with disabilities to have equal access to information. The research draws on a wealth of resources, including legislation, cases, interviews conducted at organizations representing persons with disabilities, consultation documents, and responses from organizations representing persons with disabilities.

Eliza Varney is a Lecturer in the School of Law at Keele University. She completed her LL.B at the University of Hull (1999), her LLM in Romania (2001), and her Ph.D. at the University of Hull (2006). Her publications include articles in the Northern Ireland Legal Quarterly, Communications Law, Utilities Law Review, Comparative Socio-Legal Research: Zeitschrift für Rechtsoziologie, Scripted, Yearbook of Consumer Law, and Minnesota Journal of Law, Science and Technology.
CAMBRIDGE DISABILITY LAW AND POLICY SERIES

The Disability Law and Policy series examines these topics in interdisciplinary and comparative terms. The books in the series reflect the diversity of definitions, causes, and consequences of discrimination against persons with disabilities while illuminating fundamental themes that unite countries in their pursuit of human rights laws and policies to improve the social and economic status of persons with disabilities. The series contains historical, contemporary, and comparative scholarship crucial to identifying individual, organizational, cultural, attitudinal, and legal themes necessary for the advancement of disability law and policy.

The book topics covered in the series also are reflective of the new moral and political commitment by countries throughout the world toward equal opportunity for persons with disabilities in such areas as employment, housing, transportation, rehabilitation, and individual human rights. The series will thus play a significant role in informing policy makers, researchers, and citizens of issues central to disability rights and disability antidiscrimination policies. The series grounds the future of disability law and policy as a vehicle for ensuring that those living with disabilities participate as equal citizens of the world.

Books in the Series


Larry M. Logue and Peter Blanck, *Race, Ethnicity, and Disability: Veterans and Benefits in Post–Civil War America*, 2010


Alicia Ouellette, *Bioethics and Disability: Toward a Disability-Conscious Bioethics*, 2011


Eliza Varney, *Disability and Information Technology: A Comparative Study in Media Regulation*, 2013
Disability and Information Technology

A COMPARATIVE STUDY IN MEDIA REGULATION

ELIZA VARNEY

School of Law, Keele University
To Mike and Alex Varney
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Abbreviations

ACB  American Council of the Blind
ADA  Americans with Disabilities Act
AEBC  Alliance for Equality of Blind Canadians
AFB  American Foundation for the Blind
API  Application programme interface
ATVOD  Authority for Television on Demand
AVMS  Audiovisual Media Services
BEREC  Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications
CAB  Canadian Association of Broadcasters
CAD  Canadian Association of the Deaf
CAS  Conditional access system
CCB  Canadian Council of the Blind
CCD  Council of Canadians with Disabilities
CHRA  Canadian Human Rights Act
CNIB  Canadian National Institute for the Blind
COAT  Coalition of Organizations for Accessible Technology
CRTC  Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission
CVAA  Twenty-First Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act
DCMS  Department for Culture, Media and Sport
DDA  Disability Discrimination Act
DED  Disability Equality Duty
EBU  European Broadcasting Union
ECNS  (Regulatory framework for) Electronic Communications Networks and Services
EDF  European Disability Forum
EECMA  European Electronic Communications Market Authority
EHRC  Equality and Human Rights Commission
EPG  Electronic programme guide
Abbreviations

EqA  Equality Act
FCC  Federal Communications Commission
HDTV  High definition television
HRA  Human Rights Act
ICP  Internet content provider
ICT  Information and communications technology
ISP  Internet service provider
MeAC report  Report on measuring the progress of accessibility in Europe
NAD  National Association of the Deaf
NCD  National Council on Disability
NMBUs  New media broadcasting undertakings
NMEO  New Media Exemption Order
NRA  National Regulatory Authority
NSS  Neil Squire Society
ODPS  On-demand programme service
OHCHR  Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
PSB  Public service broadcaster
PSED  Public Sector Equality Duty
PVR  Personal video recorder
RNIB  Royal National Institute of Blind People
RNID  Royal National Institute for Deaf People (now Action on Hearing Loss)
SCC  Supreme Court of Canada
SCRPD  Secretariat for the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
STB  Set-top box
TAG  Telecommunications Action Group
TFEU  Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union
UNCRPD  UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
USDOJ  United States Department of Justice
VOD  Video on Demand
VoIP  Voice over IP
W3C  World Wide Web Consortium
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