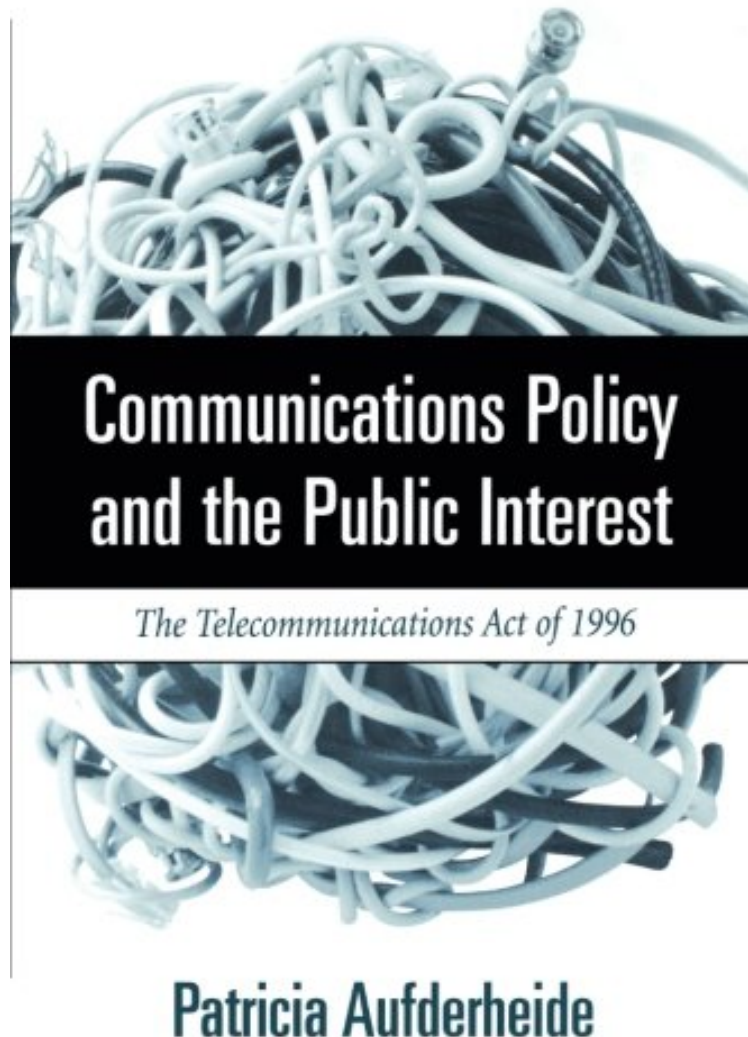


# Communications Policy and the Public Interest: The Telecommunications Act of 1996

*Patricia A. Aufderheide PhD*

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**Patricia A. Aufderheide PhD : Communications Policy and the Public Interest: The Telecommunications Act of 1996** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Communications Policy and the Public Interest: The Telecommunications Act of 1996:

3 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Communications Policy and the Public InterestBy Catherine McDowellI found this book to be an easy way to understand the policy and legislation passed by congress on the

Telecommunications Act of 1996. This book helped to explain exactly what came out of this Act and where the act came from. It also gave a great understanding of where communications stands in America and what our main goals for the communications industry are. It was an excellent way to view what the gov't wants out of the communications industry and what the future holds for the consumer. Great Buy!

1 of 4 people found the following review helpful. The Worst of Liberal Journalism By Hans Boxer This book is a problem. It presents itself as book in the public interest, but it really does a disservice to the public. Gigantic corporations reaping billions of dollars off propaganda machines of immense proportion--this story should NOT be humanized or told in such simple form. Liberal journalists are the ones who will faithfully detail how and why your flesh is being flayed off your body by the corporate-government elite. Thank you, very much. By presenting all sides, we get no ground to stand upon, no point of view. We get some critical remarks tossed off next to corporate jargon about competition. Problem is, Aufderheide should have long ago seen beyond such a lame category as "competition." If you want to see a real journalist in action, watch Bill Moyers examination of the 1996 telecommunications act in a video you can probably get at your library.

The passage of the Telecommunications Act of 1996 inaugurated a new and highly volatile era in telecommunications. The first major overhaul of U.S. communications law since 1934--when no one had a television set, a cordless phone, or a computer--the Act was spurred into being by broad shifts in technology use. Equally important, this book shows, the new law reflects important changes in our notions of the purpose of communications regulation and how it should be deployed. Focusing on the evolution of the concept of the public interest, Aufderheide examines how and why the legislation was developed, provides a thematic analysis of the Act itself, and charts its intended and unintended effects in business and policy. An abridged version of the Act is included, as are the Supreme Court decision that struck down one of its clauses, the Communications Decency Act, and a variety of pertinent speeches and policy arguments. Readers are also guided to a range of organizations and websites that offer legal updates and policy information.

"This book offers a substantial and thorough guide to the communications legislation that defines our new media world. In clear and concise language, Aufderheide brings us up to speed on what the law is today and what important and vital problems remain. Her book ought to be required reading for everyone who is struggling to make sense of the current situation, from 'inside the beltway' policy makers to average citizens. Simply one of the most important books ever published on communications law and policy." --Douglas Gomery, Professor, College of Journalism, University of Maryland, Columnist, AMERICAN JOURNALISM REVIEW, "The Economics of Television"

"This book achieves the impossible--making legislative history readable. Drawing upon her 'parallel life' as one of the nation's leading pop culture critics, Aufderheide turns the story of the 1996 Telecommunications Act into a book that is actually fun to read." --Andrew Jay Schwartzman, President, Media Access Project, Washington, DC

"Patricia Aufderheide has produced a terrifically useful volume on the Telecommunications Act of 1996. The volume reprints the Act itself as well as several pointed commentaries on telecommunications policy and the public interest. Best of all is Aufderheide's overview of the Act and the politics of its passage. She situates the Act in its various contexts-- technological, regulatory, political, economic, legal--and incisively examines the politics of the Act's passage. This is an outstanding volume for teaching purposes." --Robert B. Horwitz, PhD, Associate Professor, Department of Communication, University of California, San Diego

"Patricia Aufderheide puts a human face on a daunting, technologically complex piece of legislation. Deep within the mystifying jargon of the telecommunications industry, the author finds those interstices where the public interest still exists and needs nurturing. A compelling story is told which places recent legislative developments in their historical and regulatory context. For libraries that serve law students and graduate students the book will be a useful navigational and reference device." --Monroe Price, Law Professor, Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law, New York, Co-Director of the Programme in Comparative Media Law and Policy, Oxford University