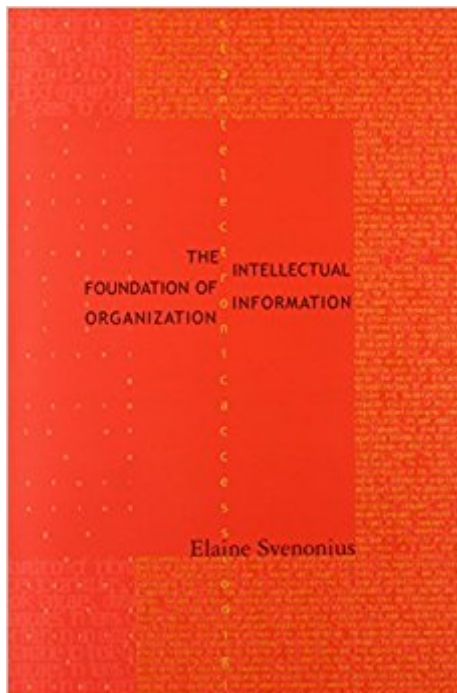




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# The Intellectual Foundation Of Information Organization (Digital Libraries And Electronic Publishing)



## Synopsis

Instant electronic access to digital information is the single most distinguishing attribute of the information age. The elaborate retrieval mechanisms that support such access are a product of technology. But technology is not enough. The effectiveness of a system for accessing information is a direct function of the intelligence put into organizing it. Just as the practical field of engineering has theoretical physics as its underlying base, the design of systems for organizing information rests on an intellectual foundation. The subject of this book is the systematized body of knowledge that constitutes this foundation. Integrating the disparate disciplines of descriptive cataloging, subject cataloging, indexing, and classification, the book adopts a conceptual framework that views the process of organizing information as the use of a special language of description called a bibliographic language. The book is divided into two parts. The first part is an analytic discussion of the intellectual foundation of information organization. The second part moves from generalities to particulars, presenting an overview of three bibliographic languages: work languages, document languages, and subject languages. It looks at these languages in terms of their vocabulary, semantics, and syntax. The book is written in an exceptionally clear style, at a level that makes it understandable to those outside the discipline of library and information science.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This book is learned, well thought out, finely proportioned, and timely. There is nothing quite like it available, in that it lucidly covers the full range of current bibliographic systems at a theoretical level. (Howard White, Professor, College of Information Science and Technology, Drexel University) This book is a highly significant contribution to the field. Most books on information organization focus on how-to and rules at the expense of the underlying principles. This book successfully synthesizes a diverse literature into coherent and understandable principles. (Edward T. O'Neill, Consulting Research Scientist, OCLC Online Computer Library Center, Inc.) The Intellectual Foundations of Information Organization is a dense, intellectually rigorous, and well-written book.... A major contribution to the field of cataloging. (Journal of the Association for History and Computing) This book provides sound guidance to future developers of search engines and retrieval systems. The work is original, building on the foundations of information science and librarianship of the past 150 years. (Barbara B. Tillett, Director, ILS Program, Library of Congress)

Professor Emerita, Department of Information Studies, UCLA. Professor Svenonius' research continues to be in the area of bibliographical control, including cataloging, classification, and indexing. Her particular focus has been on the design and evaluation of cataloging systems and documentary languages in the automated environment, and she is currently conducting an analytic study of rule types used in the Anglo American Cataloging Code in conjunction with developing a hypertext interface for the Code.

Everything went great with this order. The condition was exactly as stated and I got quickly. Great price! Needed for school.

Gives pertinent information on the topic. Bought for class.

Book arrived in fine condition. Just don't care for the content. Required MLS reading. Please library science teachers, this is not a great textbook.

I keep this book close to me at work and usually stick it in my laptop case when I leave for home. It is my bible for metadata. The first time I read it, I carefully underlined passages with a fine light pencil. Now I've tossed book decorum to the winds and use highlighter pens! To mention just one general topic, Elaine Svenonius grapples with all of the key issues that trained librarians face when cataloguing digital materials. She also covers controlled vocabularies from several perspectives,

and understands the challenges/difficulties of applying standard "book" classifications to rich media collections. That it took me a long time to get through this book has nothing to do with her style -- Elaine Svenonius writes clearly, often beautifully -- but rather with the amount of information and the mind-expanding concepts, which I still mull over as I wrestle at work with asset management.

I think that a lot of people who work in information technology tend to think that the problems that we have with things like web-based search and retrieval are unique to Internet search engines and catalogue databases. I know that I've been working in the field while lacking an adequate sense of the historical basis of information organization. Svenonius breaks information organization down into ideology (purposes and principles), the formalization of the processes involved in information organization, knowledge based on research, and key problems that need to be solved. It's information that's very useful for anybody who is involved with organization of information-- even for people like me who work more on the technical than conceptual side of content management systems.

I purchased the book as a textbook for class. The information it covers is great, but I find the author uses too many parentheticals (I'm not sure why), which make it difficult to read. The "I'm not sure why" is an author comment and not necessary to read that last sentence I wrote, but I wanted to use an example.. I felt like the author was interjecting these types of comments throught the book and it took away from the wonderful content value that she put together. Otherwise, the book would get 5 stars for content.

The author certainly has a sophisticated vocabulary. However, it's unfortunate that the vocabulary often upstages the content or the attempt to convey meaningful content. The writing style could have been more clear. It's not necessary to construct convoluted sentences to appear academic. I am not against scholarly material nor do I negate its value. I felt I had to re-read many sentences and paragraphs and de-code what the author meant, sometimes unsuccessfully. I realize my opinion of this book is not in alignment with the other positive reviews. I believe the material could have been presented in a better way. I do not recommend this book if you do not have a solid background in library science.

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