

formation contained may also prove useful for those trying to increase organic search through the use of vocabularies and the semantic web, as well as those trying to define taxonomies for the organization of information.

Throughout the book the copious use of acronyms proved challenging, as the reader would have to make notes or repeatedly consult the index. A number of undefined acronyms, such as URI, were not spelled out in the text or in the index, causing the reader frustration. The book, at 184 pages, has a six-page, two-column index and a 13-page bibliography. More thorough editing would have resulted in the elimination of blurry graphs and charts, which were difficult to read and provided little value.

As information professionals, understanding ontology, search, vocabularies, and interrelated information will enhance and facilitate knowledge as we continue to work with larger data sets than ever before. As noted on the back cover, this book meets the goal of being an accessible introduction and exploration of ontologies and demonstrates their value to information professionals. **E**



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Advice for Avoiding Layoffs and Closures in Special Libraries

Mo Khamouna

Before delving into this book, readers will benefit from some brief definitions of special libraries. According to the International Encyclopedia of Information and Library Science, *special libraries* are “Information resource centers located at corporations, private businesses, government agencies, museums, colleges, hospitals, associations, and other organizations with specialized information needs.”

The *Encyclopedia of Library History* says “Having roots in the ancient and medieval periods, these libraries tend to be wholly centered on the total information needs of their users.” It describes special library users as those “who are most often engaged in highly specialized projects that require unique sources and services.”

This volume is authored by two well-qualified scholars and veteran librarians, James Matarazzo, Ph.D., who is dean and professor emeritus at the Graduate School of Library and Information Science at Simmons College, and Toby Pearlstein, Ph.D., who is a retired director of global information services for Bain & Company Inc., a strategic management consulting firm.

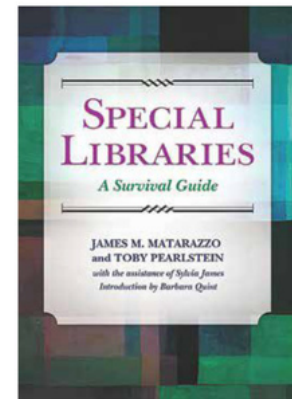
Assault on Libraries

Matarazzo and Pearlstein write about how since the financial debacle of 2008, libraries often are the first target for deep budget cuts. Although financial difficulty is experienced by all types of libraries, this book presents case studies of corporate libraries facing reductions in personnel and even closure.

These financial issues are compounded by the assault from the digital world. The printed page as the norm has given way to many other formats, such as electronic books,

CDs, and DVDs, further threatening libraries.

Users have also changed in that they usually perform their own



Special Libraries: A Survival Guide

Author: : **James M. Matarazzo
and Toby Pearlstein
with Sylvia James**

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information searches, without regard to the value of information they find. In this knowledge economy, they also want immediate access to information, seeking digital downloads, which are easy to find and inexpensive but may be of questionable validity.

Advice for Special Librarians

The authors stress that in times of financial difficulty, special libraries

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have to prove their value to their organizations, and they provide examples of the ways special librarians have found ways to avoid becoming victims of layoffs.

They advise special librarians to collect data to justify their value and relevance and to integrate services and skills with the essential functions of their organizations. In general, it is imperative for librarians to document their contributions to their organizations, regardless of the type of library.

The authors also tell future librarians that – in the absence of library curricula with tracks to prepare them to work in a specialized library environment – they must carefully choose classes that will give them the foundational knowledge in a specific subject area that will make them attractive to prospective employers.

A Slight Omission

Readers may be struck by the fact that all the case studies are focused on the English-speaking world: Australia, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and the United States – as if no special libraries exist elsewhere. In fact, the world-famous Hamburg Commercial Library in Hamburg, Germany, which was established in 1735 with major reference works on trade and navigation, has been regarded as a model for special libraries.

The fact that the authors don't venture beyond these geographic boundaries is indeed a weakness of this volume. However, this omission doesn't take much from the book as a whole. The authors have managed to put together an advocacy book that will help special librarians who are in difficult situations if they apply the

strategies presented in the case studies to their own situations. **E**



About the Author: Mo Khamouna has been a library specialist at the University of Nebraska College of Agriculture since 1996. He has a master's degree in leisure science from the Black Hills State University and a master's degree in web information management from Northumbria University, England. He recently received a document control foundation certificate from the department of information management at Aberdeen Business School. Khamouna can be contacted at mkhamouna1@unl.edu.



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