HOW TO EAT AN ELEPHANT

PROCESSING A MASSIVE GIFT COLLECTION WITH A STREAMLINED WORKFLOW



PRESENTERS

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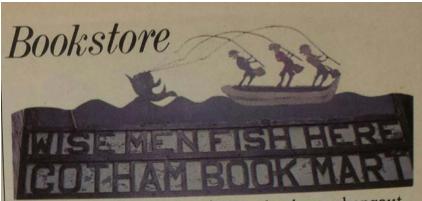
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HISTORY OF GOTHAM BOOK MART



The Gotham Book Mart and Gallery has been a hangout for writers and other booklovers for 65 years—40 of them at 41 West 47th Street. Literary taste, not marketing strategy, rules here; the shop is strong on twentieth-century literature, film, theater, art, and philosophy, both new and secondhand, in print and out of print. Look elsewhere for mysteries or children's books or cookbooks or how-to's: This is a place for people who love to read good stuff. And though there is some logic to the shelving system, it's wise to ask for help if you're seeking a particular treasure among the quarter of a million books and 50,000 magazines. Knowledgeable staffers will help you find what you want—for this place is agreeably cluttered, as a bookstore should be—and will conduct book searches and order books for you.

- Founded 1920 in NYC by Frances Stelloff
- 20th century literary salon
- Sold 1967 to Andreas Brown
- Closed 2007
- Contents donated to Penn

POLL

Did you review the case study in advance?

CASE STUDY

Key issues:

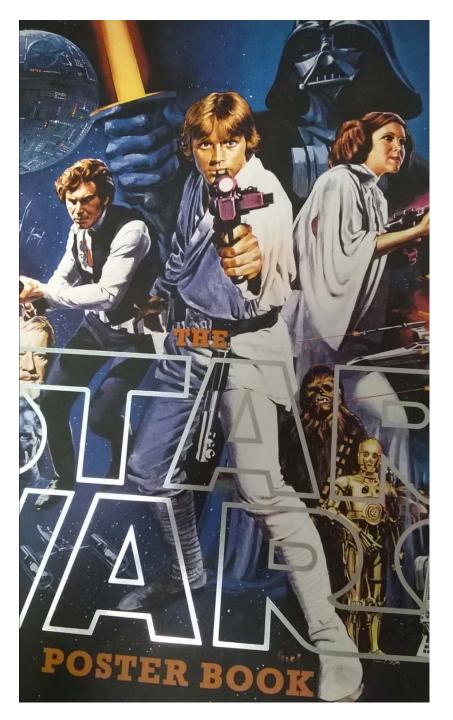
- Size:
 - 76 pallets
 - ~60-80,000 monographic volumes; ~18,000 serial items
- Time pressure
 - 12-15 months; due to construction project
- Potentially rare
- Many stakeholders





POLL

How would your institution handle a large gift collection?

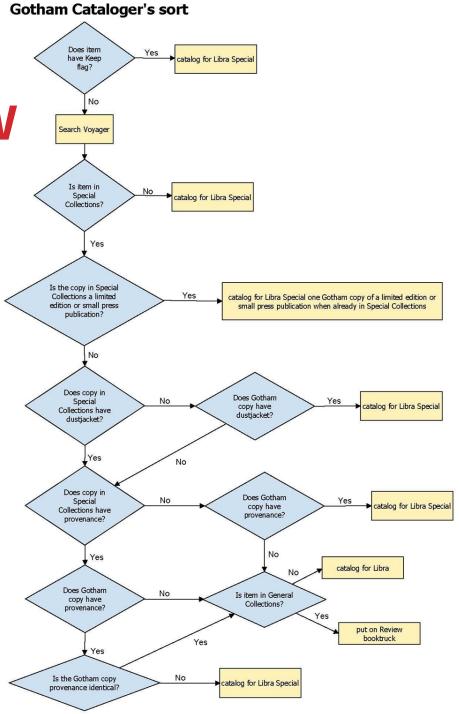


STAFFING

- New hires plus existing staff
- Staff levels

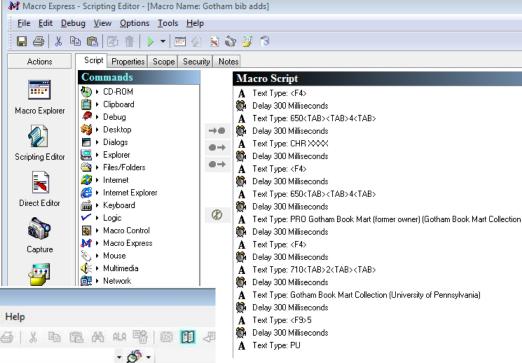
WORKFLOW: SORT & REVIEW

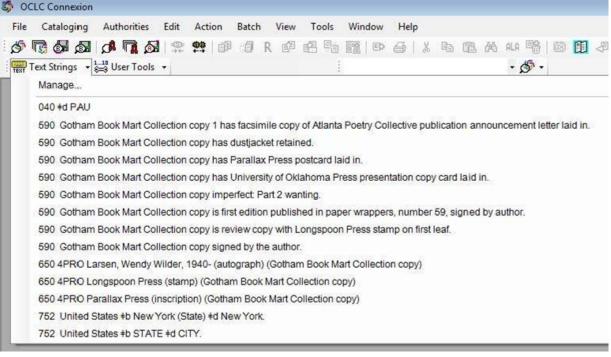
- Criteria for sort
- Phases of sorting:
 - Clerk
 - Cataloger
 - Curator's review



WORKFLOW: CATALOGING

- Macros and templates
- Simplified rare cataloging notes





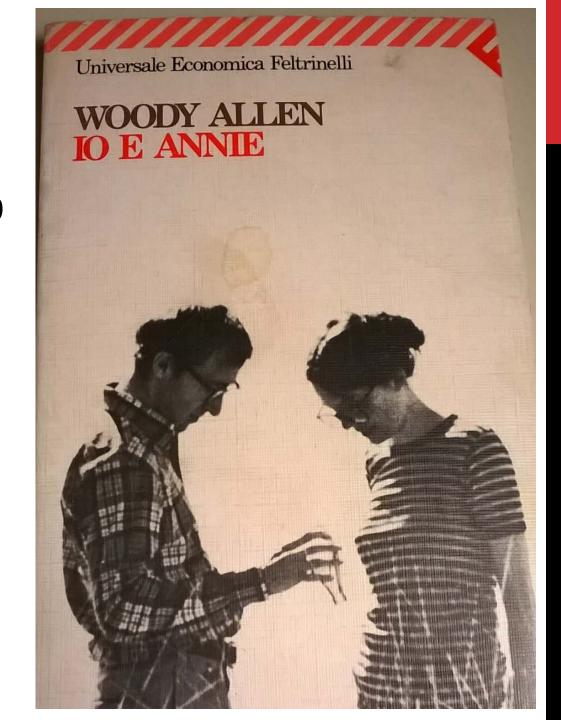
WORKFLOW: STORAGE PROCESSING

- No physical processing
- Exit check



RESULTS

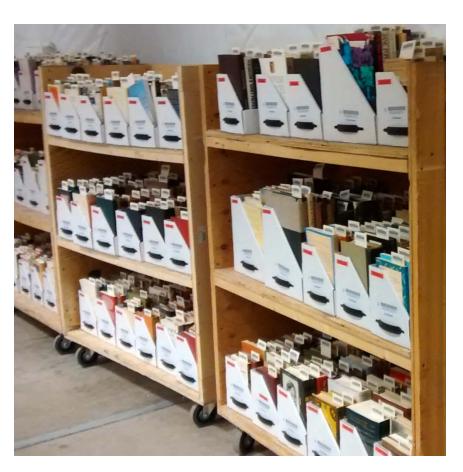
- Averaged over 3,000 titles cataloged per month
- Cost of cataloging:~\$15 per title
- Project extended to 2nd year



LESSONS LEARNED

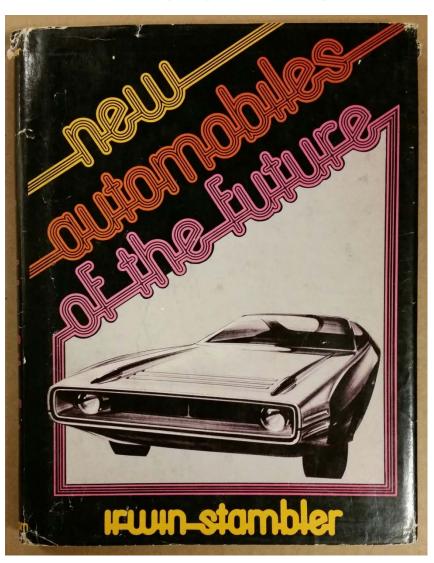
- Work with stakeholders to establish guidelines
 - Group input: pros/cons
- Applying guidelines in practical ways
 - Lower costs; greater throughput
- Be flexible!
- Physical realities sometimes override workflow
- Communication is key!

STATISTICS (2 YEARS)



- Titles: 71,694
- Volumes:81,814
- Serial titles:3,443
- Serial pieces added: 20,789

WHAT COMES NEXT?



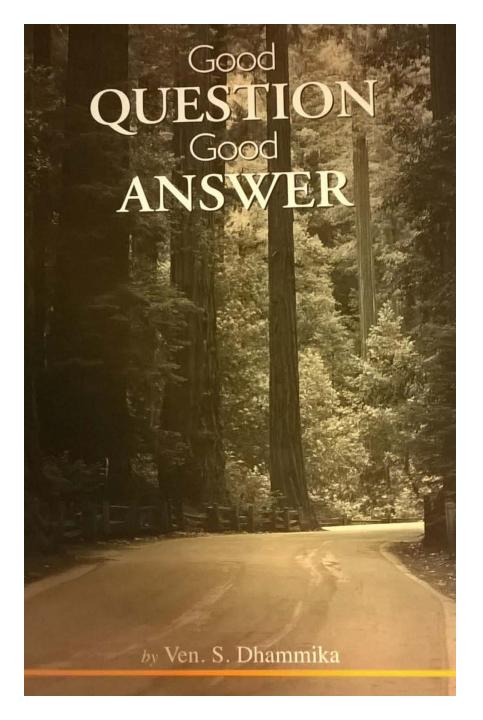
- Archive processing
- Exhibit (2018)

SO...

How DO you eat an elephant???



One bite at a time



QUESTIONS?

LINKS

Gotham Book Mart Project on Tumblr

https://gotham-bookmart-project.Tumblr.com/

Gotham Book Mart Collection on Instagram #gothambookmartcollection

https://www.instagram.com/explore/tags/gothambookmartcollection/

Gotham Book Mart Collection at Penn Libraries

http://franklin.library.upenn.edu/search.html?filter.author_creator_facet.val=Gotham%20Book%20Mart%20Collection%20%28University%20of%20Pennsylvania%29

PICTURE SOURCES

- 1. The living wild / Art Wolfe; William Conway [and others]; edited by Michelle A. Gilders; page 193.
- 2. Marcel Duchamp, "Lazy Hardware", window display for André Breton's "Arcane" 17, 19.-26. April 1945, Gotham Bookmart, E. 57th St. New York, Photography Maya Deren, Philadelphia Museum of Art, Marcel Duchamp Archive.
- 3. "The Gotham Book Mart (1920-2005) gets a nod in *New York* magazine's annual Best of New York issue, 1985." From project's Tumblr site built by Brad Duncan. https://gotham-bookmart-project.Tumblr.com/post/98975330156/the-gotham-book-mart-1920-2005-gets-a-nod-in-new
- 4. Pallets at LIBRA (Penn Libraries storage facility). Photo: B.P. Camden.
- 5. The Star Wars poster book / by Stephen J. Sansweet and Peter Vilmur.
- 6. Shelving units at LIBRA (Penn Libraries storage facility). Photo: B.P. Camden.
- 7. lo e Annie / Woody Allen.
- 8. Crates of trayed books at LIBRA (Penn Libraries storage facility). Photo: B.P. Camden.
- 9. "'New Automobiles of the Future', Irwin Stambler, Putnam, New York, 1978." From project's Tumblr site built by Brad Duncan. https://gotham-bookmart-project.Tumblr.com/post/133606674656/new-automobiles-of-the-future-irwin-stambler
- 10. Consider the lemming / Jeanne Steig; pictures by William Steig; page [4].
- 11. Good question, good answer / S. Dhammika.