

FAQ

Contract, Rights, and Permissions

Will I receive any royalties?

The baseline is that very few scholarly publications ever sell enough copies to compensate for, let alone exceed, their production costs. punctum books is a non-profit, public benefit corporation and all the money we make from selling print copies is reinvested into publishing more books. We are kept afloat thanks to the generous contributions of academic libraries. As a result, we do not have a royalties clause in our contract.

However, if you feel strongly that your book might become a bestseller, for various reasons, we are amenable, in specific instances, to adding a royalties clause that will specifically state that any profits above our production costs will be split 65% (punctum) + 35% (author). You will not see anything like this split in any publishing contract from any trade or academic publisher, where 2% to 15% of net profits are the average shared with authors. At the same time, once a book is published, our costs are not over, but continue, because there are many things we are always doing to keep your title visible across the world and integrated into as many global knowledge systems as possible, which systems are always being created, developed, and updated (such as library databases, open book repositories, open metadata management systems, digital preservation platforms, and so on).

May my book be translated?

Yes, the Creative Commons license that we usually use (BY-NC-SA 4.0) allows for translation of your book as long as the publisher is also a non-profit and publishes your book under a similar license. Sometimes it happens that the publisher is commercial and/or they use a different type of license. In both cases, there is usually a back and forth between the publisher, us, and the author about the conditions and terms under which a book is translated. These conditions are then formulated in a contract. Although theoretically possible, we have never encountered "wild" translations of punctum books, that we didn't know of prior to their publication. But they may be out there!

Two translations that were produced recently are the German translations of Michael Betancourt's *The Critique of Digital Capitalism* and Julietta Singh's *No Archive Will Restore You*.

Some of the work included in my manuscript has been published elsewhere. Can I include it?

In developing a book authors and editors often include materials that have already been published elsewhere in an earlier form. Authors are usually free to incorporate their own work into a new publication without fees as long as the original publication is properly credited, but you should check your individual publishing contracts to check whether this is allowed or whether you need to ask for (pro forma) permission.

I want to include some of my (upcoming) work in a separately published article or chapter. Is that possible?

You always retain copyright on your work, so feel free to include parts of it in other publications. Please make sure to include proper bibliographical reference to the (upcoming) punctum publication. We can also help you amplify these publications through our social media and newsletter, so keep us posted on their publication.

Some of the images I want to include are not my own or in the public domain, will you help with licensing?

We do not have a budget to cover image licenses. If you want to include copyrighted images in your publication you will have to secure the proper permissions.

I just got my countersigned contract, can I announce this to friends, family, and social media?

For sure, go ahead and don't forget to tag us on Twitter @punctum_books!

Peer Review

My manuscript has been accepted by punctum after an initial expert review by punctums' co-directors. What happens in the second round of peer review, when my manuscript is sent to one of your Editorial Advisory Board members, or to an expert external to your Board?

The second round of review is intended to help you strengthen your book via friendly and sympathetic suggestions for improvements to your manuscript. We have already decided we want to publish your book, so we do not ask reviewers at this point for a "yes," "no," or "revise and resubmit." Again, this round of review is to secure for you beneficial advice for strengthening what we have already deemed is a smart, well written, highly creative, and worthy manuscript. In some very rare cases, a reviewer may ask for more substantial revisions, after which, they want to take another look.

How long will the second round of peer review take?

This is very difficult to predict. It often requires a lot of labor to *secure* a suitable reviewer, whether a member of our Editorial Advisory Board or an external expert, and since these persons are most likely working in totally overstretched, adjunctified, and austerized educational institutions, they may not have the time to immediately attend to reviewing an entire book manuscript. We know this can be frustrating, but it is the reality of the present system in which we produce our knowledge. We desperately try to keep this process to a few months. The second round of review happens from November to January and only rarely do reviewers need longer, but it does occasionally happen.

Production and Design

Can my book be printed in full color?

Our books are printed by means of print-on-demand, which is a relatively new printing technique that is currently used by nearly all academic publishers. This technique allows us to print books as they are ordered, rather than being forced to print large editions that then have to be warehoused. This allows us to keep the production costs down. Print-on-demand has excellent and well-priced black-and-white printing, but color printing is still costly. Therefore, we usually print our paperbacks in black-and-white, while the PDFs are of course in full color.

How many copies will you print?

Because we print-on-demand, there is no set print edition. Your book will remain in print indefinitely.

What is your production time?

In general we strive to publish a book within 10–12 months from the moment we receive the manuscript, delivered according to our guidelines. In the first few months we will work on your cover and book page on our website, as well as behind the scenes feeding your metadata into different systems. In the last 3–4 months you will see an uptick in activity as we start copyediting and typesetting your book. A lot of this process depends on the size and nature of your manuscript and the collective workload we're shouldering as a small independent press. Sometimes we'll be faster, sometimes slower, but we always try to keep you abreast.

Sometimes things may take longer, for which there may be many different reasons: workload, health-related matters, holiday periods, the sudden arrival of several manuscript at once, or simply complex projects such as art catalogs. Whatever may be the case, **we will under no condition rush your book to completion**. Not only does rushing lead to unforced errors and a less than ideal final product, it also often simply pushes error corrections to the final production stages, when they are more cumbersome to implement. In other words, rushing is never faster and always a bad idea. Please remember that a deadline is a temporary thing, but the book will remain – potentially – forever. We are committed to your work, but not at the cost of itself.

Is there a set deadline for me to deliver my final manuscript?

We do not have any preset deadline for you to turn in your final manuscript. We are aware that everyone's writing habits and the availability of the right time and space for writing, are different. We are happy to discuss a timeline with you that works for you.

Can I be involved in the design of my book?

We always involve authors in the design of their book, but as a press we also have a strong sense of a graphical identity. We always try to navigate in between.

I have a friend who is a designer. May they design the cover of my book?

At punctum books we have a distinctive cover style that we try to maintain, so we design our covers in-house. You are of course welcome to send us ideas, suggestions, and pieces of inspiration.

I have a friend who is an artist. May I suggest one of their works for on my cover?

We encourage the usage of original works of art on our covers. Of course the artists will have to give their permission to have their art reproduced on the cover, and some may also ask for a

monetary compensation. Usually we can find a solution for this, so just ask.

Recent covers that feature original artworks are for example those of [Solarities](#) (Krista Leigh Steinke), [Rituals for Climate Change](#) (Naomi Ortiz), [Taunting the Useful](#) (Natali Leduc), and [Widening the Scripts](#) (Angela Henderson).

My book includes a lot of images, is that a problem?

Images, in any number, are no problem for us as long as they are functional. Including images significantly increases production costs, so we ask authors to be considerate of that fact.

Outreach and Distribution

Do you send out review copies?

Yes, we send out review copies free of charge to reviewers who have shown *prior, explicit* interest in reviewing your work. We do not send out blind review copies.

When are review copies ready?

Since we print our books via print-on-demand, review copies can only be sent out at (or slightly before) the release date of your book. We can send out a PDF for review a few weeks before that if necessary, though we like to avoid the circulation of too many "unofficial" PDFs for obvious reasons. If formatting is not an issue and time of the essence, the author may also choose to send out a PDF of the copyedited manuscript to a (potential) reviewer.

Can I send my manuscript myself in advance to potential reviewers and blurbers?

We advise you to wait with sending out your ms. to potential reviewers and blurbers until after copyediting has been finished. But yes, you are totally free to do so. If you choose to send out the digital PDF galley before publication, please make sure to emphasize these are not for public distribution.

How many copies can I expect my book to sell?

On our [usage statistics](#) page you can see the sales and downloads of all our books. As you can see, most of our publications sell fewer than 500 copies, with a number between 500 and 1,000 and a few "best-sellers" above 1,000 copies sold. It is difficult to predict which books sell well, but success both in terms of downloads and sales so far has been correlated relatively strongly with author's own outreach activities, organizing presentations, and giving lectures around their work.

Can my book be ordered worldwide?

Yes, your book can be ordered worldwide through online bookstores. The only country currently with shipping problems (that we know of) is Switzerland, due to a dispute between Amazon and its government.

Will my book be available in bookstores?

The distribution network that bookstores are plugged in to is very different from online stores, as they are not really tailored to on-demand production pipelines. However, an increasing number of bookstores offers books by punctum. You can check the map [here](#). On the US West Coast, we are represented to bookstores by [Faherty & Associates](#). If you want you can ask your favorite local bookstore to stock our books. Stores get a 40% wholesale discount.

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