

# WHAT LIES BEHIND OUR FUNDRAISING APPEALS, OR HOW OUR FINANCES WORK

## Collected Works Publishing Process and Costs

*Loyal readers and supporters,*

Talking to friends, we are often surprised to find out that many people believe Steiner-Books to be a profitable business—sometimes even believing that, rather than requiring support, we should in fact be helping to support less “commercial” anthroposophical ventures.

In part, this misperception means we are doing a good job. As Steiner-Books (Anthroposophic Press), it is our mission to bring Rudolf Steiner and Anthroposophy into the cultural mainstream. We try to make our books and catalogs as pleasing to the eye, heart, and mind as we can. In everything we do, we try to be as professional, attractive, and dynamic as possible.

We actively promote the works of Rudolf Steiner and Anthroposophy so as to make the name of “Rudolf Steiner” universally known and recognized. To this end, we attend the major bookselling shows, as well as academic meetings like the American Academy of Religion and the American Education Research Association, not to mention environmental and other meetings like the Bioneers Conference. To the best of our ability, we try to function like a professional trade publisher, working in every way like a business.

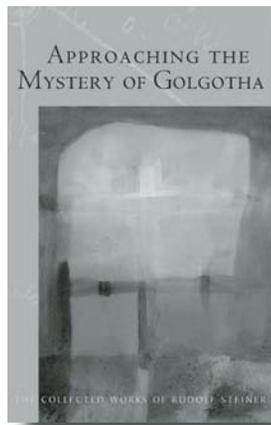
All this can give the impression that we are a commercial publishing business. In fact, however, we are not a commercial publisher in any sense of the term.

Publishing Rudolf Steiner is not a profitable business. If it were, major houses would be competing to publish him. In fact, every book we publish must be funded in order to break even. Our struggle is not to make an annual profit, but rather to balance our budget while continuing to grow, which we must do to fulfill our mission.

We are an independent 501(c) 3 not-for-profit corporation, incorporated in New York State. The Anthroposophical Society does not fund us, nor does the Rudolf Steiner Foundation or any other foundation. We do not have an endowment that would help cover any shortfalls. In fact, to do business, we depend entirely on the support of individuals like you—in terms of both the books you buy and the gifts you make. We are deeply grateful for all the support we receive through books you buy and gifts you make. We cannot emphasize this enough. We could not do our work without you. Indeed, from our perspective, the work we do is work that we do *together*.

Without you—the primary community of those who recognize the vital, future-oriented value of Rudolf Steiner’s contribution to human evolution—we would be unable to carry Rudolf Steiner’s message to the wider public and nurture the fragile seed of Anthroposophy as the ferment necessary to spiritualize world culture.

Under the sign of our collaboration, then, and in the interests of transparency—as well as perhaps to dispel some misconceptions—we would therefore like to explain some of the finances of publishing.



## 1. THE COLLECTED WORKS OF RUDOLF STEINER

As you know, we have begun the undertaking—long overdue—of publishing the Collected Works of Rudolf Steiner in English. The project began with an announcement in our brochure called “Mission, Vision, Plans” (which we presented at our First SteinerBooks Seminar in March 2003). It included a section devoted to the ideal of publishing a uniform edition of all of Rudolf Steiner’s works in English.

A generous gift from an anonymous donor at the end of 2004 enabled us to begin the project. Since then, we have made two more appeals and are grateful for the generous support received from our readers and from the Mid-States Shared Gifting Group.

As a result of the three appeals, we have received to date a total of \$268,933. Of this, we have so far spent \$179,218.

With all the new books commissioned and the new editions going into the series, we have committed to actual expenses of approx \$350,000 in total. Therefore, since we have only received \$268,933 so far, we are still **short \$80,000** for books on the following list. This does not include all the others still to be finished.

### HOW WE HAVE SPENT THE MONEY:

1) We have eleven new translations commissioned and in various stages of production. These include:

CW 152	<i>Approaching the Mystery of Golgotha</i>
CW 211	<i>The Sun Mystery, Esoteric and Exoteric Christianity</i>
CW 217 a	<i>Youth and the Etheric Heart</i>
CW 182	<i>Death as Change</i>
CW 265	<i>Freemasonry and Ritual Work</i>
CW 266/1	<i>Esoteric Lessons Volume 1 (1904-1909)</i>
CW 266/2	<i>Esoteric Lessons Volume 2 (1909-1914)</i>
CW 284	<i>The Rosicrucian Unity of Art, Science, and Religion</i>
CW 218	<i>Spiritual Relations in the Human Organism</i>
CW 179	<i>The Influence of the Dead on Destiny</i>
CW 342	<i>Anthroposophical Foundations for a Renewed Christian-Religious Activity (Priests' Course, VOL 1)</i>

2) We are also putting new editions of existing translations into the Collected Works. All of these have new introductions, notes, and indexes. In addition, many of the translations have been checked for accuracy against the original German texts and revised accordingly:

CW 8	<i>Christianity as Mystical Fact</i>
CW 16/17	<i>Way of Self Knowledge &amp; Threshold of the Spiritual World;</i>
CW 28	<i>Autobiography</i>
CW 110	<i>Spiritual Hierarchies and the Physical World</i>
CW121	<i>The Mission of Folk Souls</i>
CW 132	<i>The Truth of Evolution</i>
CW 134	<i>World of the Senses, World of the Spirit</i>
CW 136	<i>Spiritual Beings in the Heavenly Bodies</i>
CW 142/146	<i>Bhagavad Gita and the West</i>
CW 145	<i>The Effects of Esoteric Development</i>
CW 217	<i>Becoming Michael's Companions</i>
CW 264	<i>From the Contents of the First Esoteric School</i>
CW 312	<i>Introducing Anthroposophical Medicine</i>
CW 319	<i>The Healing Process</i>
CW 340	<i>World Economy</i>

## What Lies behind Our Fundraising Appeals

### THIS IS HOW THE PROCESS WORKS FOR A TITLE IN THE COLLECTED WORKS SERIES:

1. Christopher Bamford, our Editor in Chief, consults with many people and recommends a volume. Our publishing team then recommends that the work be commissioned for translation.
2. Having chosen a translator, we sign a contract with that person. Our usual translation rate is \$75 per thousand words, somewhat on the lower end of normal translation rates. There is no such thing as an average Steiner text, but if we were to translate a book of 256 pages, or around 100,000 words, the translation would cost approximately \$7,500.
3. Four to eight months after the contract is signed, the translation arrives in our office. Our Managing Editor (Mary Giddens) looks at the translation with Christopher, and someone is assigned
  - a) to check it against the German and b) to copyedit the manuscript. The cost of checking and editing is approximately \$1500 to \$2500 (depending on the quality of the original English translation).
4. Someone is assigned to write notes at a cost of about \$500.
4. The corrected text is then returned to the translator, who answers any questions that have arisen, responds to suggestions, and considers and approves (or disapproves) the edits.
5. In the meantime, Christopher will have researched and written an introduction to the work, which is then added to the edited manuscript.
6. Mary then sends whole book to a designer, who lays out book in pages. At the same time, a cover will be designed. The cost of both is about \$2000.
7. Once the text is formatted into pages, the book is sent to be indexed at a cost of approximately \$750.
8. Upon return of the manuscript with an index, the book is then sent to a proofreader; the cost is about \$500.
9. Mary then takes a final look at the manuscript and makes final changes: about \$500.
10. The book then goes to the printer. The printing cost for a 256-page paperback book with a 2000-copy print run is about \$6000.

Consequently, at the end of publishing process, the usual cost for a book of 256 pages in the Collected Works is about \$20,000.

Normal publication time for book, from translation to final product, is about 15 months.

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Just so you are clear, all monies donated to the Collected Works project are spent on the Collected Works project. Because our staff spends most of its time working on this great project, and because we must pay salaries, rent, and so on, 30% of all the money donated as an allocation is used for overhead (this is normal university press standards). Naturally, too, every dollar produced from selling books goes back into the business.

## 2. GENERAL PUBLISHING PROCESS AND COSTS

As you know, we publish not only books by Rudolf Steiner, but also books by contemporary living authors writing out of an anthroposophic understanding. We also publish children's books with some connections to Waldorf education, and books on general spirituality written out of a "Michaelic" spirit.

We feel that it is important that we be seen as a modern publisher, addressing the needs of the time. It is also our conviction that Rudolf Steiner is best introduced to the general public by a contemporary voice writing for a North American audience.

The authors with whom we work include Edward Smith, Charles Tidball, Dennis Klocek, Michael Lipson, Henry Barnes, Marco Pogacnik, Joan deRis Allen, Linda Sussman, Julian Barnard, Torin Finser, Shelley Davidow, Diana Cohn, Christopher Schaefer, Robert MacDermott, Sharifa Oppenheimer, David Dalton, Robert Sardello, Nancy Mellon, Christine Murphy, Claire Blatchford, and Robert Zieve.

In general, the publication of these contemporary books follows the procedure just described, except that we do not need to translate the manuscripts. As a result, each new book costs, on average, between \$11,000 and \$13,000. At the same time, we must, of course, remain in business, maintain our tiny staff, and pay our overhead costs. Therefore, a more realistic cost for publishing each book would include an additional 30% over that estimate.

This brings our average unit cost to about \$6 per copy. This figure is on high side because we do not print large numbers

of our titles. The reason for this is that we cannot sell large numbers of each publication. The average print run is 1500 to 2000 copies. Unit costs begin to fall at around 7500-unit print runs. The retail cost of a book is usually computed by industry standards at six times the unit cost, since most books are sold by the publisher to resellers at an average 50% discount. In other words, a hardback published by us *should* retail for about \$42 and a paperback for \$36.

Clearly, the retail price cannot be that high; we have to price according to the average in the marketplace. At best, in order to break even, at least half of the cost of every book we publish needs to be supported by gifts. In general, this is how university press and professional association publishing work — their books are heavily subsidized. Because SteinerBooks is still struggling to get out of an annual deficit and chronic cash-flow shortage, every book needs to find a community of funders to subsidize its publication.

## 3. DISTRIBUTING, PROMOTING, AND SELLING OUR BOOKS

Publishing is only half of our job; the other half is selling what we publish. We do this through four main channels:

- i. through our catalogs
- ii. through our website
- iii. through the major trade wholesalers and retailers (Amazon, Ingram, Baker and Taylor, and, when we can, the chains — Barnes and Noble, Borders, and

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"A properly written anthroposophic book should awaken the spiritual life of the reader, and not merely be a collection of information. Reading it should be more than reading; it should be an experience accompanied by inner shocks, tensions, and resolutions."  
— Rudolf Steiner (*Autobiography*)



- independent bookstores)
- iv. through anthroposophic outlets such as Rudolf Steiner College and Sunbridge College bookstores, Waldorf schools, as well as resellers like Bob and Nancy's and the Steiner Store.
  - v. internationally through distributors like Rudolf Steiner Press in London and other distributors in Australia, Asia, and Africa.

More than 85% of our books are sold at very high discounts to wholesalers and retailers where we have to accept the standard industry norms, while, in the case of anthroposophical outlets like the schools, we also offer a high discount as a way of supporting the anthroposophical movements. Our average discount comes out to approximately 50%.

In other words, on a \$20.00 book that we have published, we receive \$10.00. Out of this \$10.00 we have to cover all our marketing expenses (catalogs, maintaining distribution databases, and our own website maintenance, and so on); editorial expenses; warehousing costs; shipping and billing fees; as well as cover our general overhead; and salaries for four full-time people and one part-time person.

We also distribute titles from other like-minded publishers (including Rudolf Steiner Press, Temple Lodge, Clairview, Floris Books, Hawthorn Press, Lantern, and Chiron). For these titles, the margins are even smaller—we receive between 10% and 30% of net.

When you consider the relatively low volume of our sales—a 2000-copy printing of a new Steiner title can take three or four years to sell—you can see that the net cash flow coming from sales is, to say the least, low.

### 4. ONGOING GOALS AND NEEDS

We feel that publishing the Collected Works of Rudolf Steiner in English is the single most necessary task if Anthroposophy is to have a chance of fulfilling its healing role in human evolution. It is a task for the future. We have no illusions that Anthroposophy will be completely accepted and practiced overnight. But if we make the vessel available, as

Rudolf Steiner repeatedly told us, the spiritual world will undoubtedly respond in ways we can hardly imagine. Therefore, we wish to continue to publish new volumes in the Collected Works every year. A realistic estimate of what is possible is about ten books annually. Given that the works vary in length from 150 to 500 pages, we estimate an average need of about \$20,000 per book. In other words, our fundraising goal for the Collected Works project is \$200,000 per year. Clearly, this is a large sum. But if we are not realistic in our imagination, there is no possibility that we will succeed.

As for books by authors other than Rudolf Steiner, we try to fundraise them on an individual basis. We try to identify a specific community of support for each title—whether in Waldorf education, Biodynamics, Goethean science, spiritual development, Anthroposophical Medicine, ecology, mysticism, psychology, or any other field. We then try to promote and sell these books as strongly as possible so that we can build the author, the Press and the movement.

We need your help and, unfortunately, your dollars. We are doing everything possible to build a profitable company that can put money back into its publications. But our audience is not yet large enough to allow us to do that. Until that time, we must ask for your support. Believe me, every bone in my businessman's body dislikes holding out the hat, especially after having run a large successful publishing company. But I have recognized the truth of the threefold nature of money—loan/capital money, buy/sell money, and gift money. At our present stage of development, Steiner-

Books is still an enterprise that needs gift money in order to do its work and to grow. We thank you from the bottom of our hearts for all the support and help you already provide. You sustain us in so many ways. We can only hope that the support we give you is also life-sustaining to some degree.

If you are interested in seeing our annual financial statement, we are happy to provide it.

All best wishes,

*Gene Gollogly*

