

Alan E. Nourse, M.D.
Mount Si Road, Route #1
North Bend, Washington
10 January, 1958

Dear Click,

It was nice to have your letter. At Christmas I noticed that DRUMMERS AND DREAMERS was well displayed in several of the Seattle stores; hope the sales are going well.

With regard to your questions about paper-back book publishing: certain of the paper-back lines, such as Bantam Books, will consider no original manuscripts at all, merely reprint books previously published by hard-cover publishers. Certain others, such as Gold Medal Books, publish only original manuscripts, with no reprints. Others, such as Dell, New American Library (Signet), Avon, and Ace Books will consider either original material or reprints.

With the exception of Ace Books, which will publish 40,000 word novels, usually back-to-back in their double books, most of the paperback houses like lengths from 60,000 to 70,000 words on mystery, science fiction or western stuff, and up to 100,000 words on straight novels, historical romances, etc. I don't think any of them will consider anything under 40,000 words except in very unusual cases.

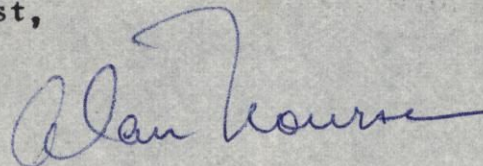
I think that any of the paper-back houses which consider original material at all will give an unsolicited and unagented manuscript a fair reading; the question is how soon, and by whom. Certainly agented material will tend to get more rapid attention, and from higher up the editorial ladder. Also, the agent, when he has a manuscript in hand, has a good knowledge of the immediate needs of these houses, and can better assess the likeliest markets for it. I imagine that the writer who is doing the work on this material with you has an agent to handle the marketing. I certainly think it would be wise.

I doubt that a query of any sort would serve any purpose; none of those houses will make any sort of decision until they see the finished ms. anyway, until they know your work. Just send the manuscript off when it's completed. But only to one house at a time, of course.

In general the publishers of paper-back originals have pretty rigid requirements for what they will buy, and aren't interested in much that falls outside the pattern; you might find a much wider range of interest for the book you are working on among the major New York or Boston hard-cover publishers, and then ultimately sell reprint rights to one of the paperback houses. If the thing is at all off-trail, you would probably be wise to at least think in terms of an original edition in hard covers.

Hope this answers the questions you have in mind, and I'd be interested to hear how the thing goes.

Best,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Alan Nourse". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end of the last name.

Alan E. Nourse, M.D.