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July 2006



From: Philip Ralli
Editorial Director

To: Prospective authors

Submission Guideline

Thank you for considering Highland Books. As a small Christian publisher, we are looking for authors who will grow in the teeth of the blunt truths that people are reading less and that 80% of books published are more-or-less flops—a flop being any book that does not sell its first print run within two years at normal prices. This flop rate is despite our rejecting 75% of proposals (and 95% of proposals in the area of private suffering). In our estimation, any book that sells 10K copies within four years is a success.

Highland accepts unsolicited manuscripts, but recommends an enquiry letter first, ideally *before* the book has been written so that editor and author can agree certain parameters (length, readership, scope). An early agreement has the benefit of streamlining the author's use of time! The key to any submission is the accompanying letter which should be carefully crafted to impress me or whet my business appetite. Many authors use the help of a friend (or, once they are established, of a literary agent) to make the proposal as attractive and credible as possible.

Here are some questions which will be in our mind as we approach any submission:

What bookshelf (or section) will it be sold on? This is EXTREMELY IMPORTANT because some sections sell better than others; many proposals we receive could be on two or more different racks but that's actually a potential NEGATIVE. It's worth visiting a couple of Christian bookshops to get a feel for this.

If the book is autobiographical, have there already been newspaper articles or radio interviews? Does the story genuinely merit book-length treatment?

For controversial books, is the book taking sides on a familiar debate (eg predestination) or is it an attempt to open a new debate? The latter is more valuable but correspondingly harder unless the author has somehow 'earned the right' to be heard (other than by writing the book).

Finally is the book a "pick me up": a book that will encourage and restore the "abundant life" which was the very purpose for which Jesus came to earth?

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ralli".

Philip Ralli