

[LETTER TO NORMAN MAILER,
AUGUST 12, 1959]

ERNEST HEMINGWAY

[Editor's Note: This letter is the only known letter that Hemingway wrote to Mailer. It was discovered by J. Michael Lennon (authorized Mailer biographer) in July of 2000 while researching Mailer's correspondence from the 1950s. The following typescript provides two bracketed additions that may help clarify the letter. We are most grateful to The Ernest Hemingway Foundation for permission to publish this letter. The Harry Ransom Center of the University of Texas-Austin graciously provided the holograph images.]

Box 955
Ketchum, Idaho
8/12/59

Dear Mr. Mailer,

Regarding pages 265–267 of your last book [*Advertisements for Myself*]:

Sometimes it takes several months for a book sent from the U.S. to reach Finca Vigia-San Francisco de Paula-Cuba. Sometimes they never get there. Yours was evidently returned.

I'm sorry as I would have written you to thank you and to tell you how I liked it. As it was I bought it and read it while laid up in bed and still liked it and thought it had shitty reviews. Do not remember any reference to me but have not taken references to me or me as a writer personally for a long time now.

It is funny when people write not only about what you do publish but about what you have written and not published as though they knew about it. It is like when you are set up really wonderfully and they begin to lure [you] into the trap.

Anyway thanks for sending the book even if I didn't get it. I would always rather buy them, really, and I will.

I hope you have good luck with this one. Try for Christ sake not to worry about it so much. All that is is poison[.] Remember only suckers worry. You can't write, fuck or fight if you worry. That doesn't mean not to think.

This [is] all that I can tell you that might be any use.

Don't bother to be rude about it or to answer. I have no time to write letters with my work piled up and no time ever to be rude. Just wanted to write this to let you know I'd never received the book.

Yours always,
Ernest Hemingway