Oh, God! It’s the END of PUBLISHING!!!

written by Holly
August 30, 2011
By Holly Lisle

Here’s a link to yet another idiot in love with the straight-line-projection, declaring that professional writers are doomed.

"Doooooomed! We're all DOOMED, I tell you!"

He makes the following assumptions:

- That 100% of people, given a choice between stealing something and paying for it, will steal it.
- That the shitbags who steal from torrent sites would have actually paid for the books had the torrents not been available.
- That quality has no virtue, and that no writer will be good enough to warrant the support of readers enthusiastic enough about their work to PAY them, rather than stealing from them.
- That publishers somehow PROTECT writers, and that left

in the wild, no writers will be able to survive.

This article is generating some worried discussion on the How To Think Sideways Renegade Marketing board. (Members only, so no link).

Now read my counterargument.

> *Our objective HERE is to make sure good writers without publishers don't get lost.*
>
> *To do that, you:*
>
> - *Write a story worth reading*
> - *Price it at a price people with integrity will willingly pay*
> - *Recommend other writers whose work is like yours.*
> - *Get to know them, exchange site links, and promote each other's work as well as your own.*
> - *Interact personally with your readers.*
> - *Thank them when they recommend you to other readers.*
> - *Let them know they matter to you.*
> - *Listen to what the people who LOVE your work have to say about it. (To hell with the ones who hate it—they're not your market and you'll kill your writing trying to satisfy them.)*
>
> *Look. It's always "the best of times, the worst of times." If you figure out what really matters to you in life, decide on a plan of action to make it happen, and then act, for you it will be the best of times.*
>
> *If you sit on your hands and bemoan the horrible state of publishing, you'll live in the worst of times, and never get out.*
>
> *Figure out who you want to be.*
>
> *Figure out how you want to live.*

Figure out what you want to write.

And then make it so with your effort, your determination, and your intelligence.

I could have let my career die any number of times when things were bad. Every series I ever wrote got cancelled prematurely. Having that happen ONCE has killed a lot of careers.

I found ways to remake myself, remake my writing, change genres, change from fiction to non-fiction. I have ALWAYS gotten paid. I have ALWAYS paid the bills (though sometimes it's been scary).

And there's always some dick-head saying from now one, no one will pay for whatever it is you do.

You know what?

There's all sorts of free information on writing on the internet. Why are you paying to be here? ***(ED.: In my writing class.)***

Because the information you pay for from recommended sources is better than the stuff that's free.

Same with fiction. People will pay to read something good. The folks who just want "free" are willing to put up with a lot of crap. Let 'em have it.

The folks who steal wouldn't have bought your work anyway. They're thieves. They're scum. They LIKE what they are. Screw 'em.

Be good enough to get paid, and the people worth dealing with will pay you.

And with that, you come full circle. This is why you're here.

> *To learn THAT.*

And how do you know when you're good enough to get paid?

> *When you put your work out there, and the first person pays you, then recommends you to one other reader.*

> *This is not the end of publishing. This is the beginning of publishing the way it should be.*

And some additional info. Most people have abandoned newspapers. But there are individuals making tens of thousands of dollars a month independently publishing single-topic newsletters.

Long-tail publishing will probably destroy the multi-million copy bestseller. But word of mouth works, folks, and if people like your work, they'll tell friends. You can make a living by writing for your readers, LISTENING to them, and creating things that matter to both them and you.

Corporations that rely on manufacturing (like print book publishers) are going to have a hell of a time surviving.

In the wake of their passing, agile individuals have the opportunity to step up and make their own places. I've been doing this since 2006 now.

You can't be lazy and succeed.

But you can succeed.

Contents © Holly Lisle. https://hollylisle.com All Rights Reserved