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C/

Eric Holder  
Attorney General  
United States Department of Justice  
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20530-0001

ATK

Dear Attorney General Holder:

I work in publishing and have been keeping a close eye on your investigation of the Agency model. I was disappointed that the DOJ decided to go forward with charging Apple and various major publishers, but understand that this is a point of law.

I was shocked, however, to read your comment that the 'DOJ is committed to ensuring that e-books are as affordable as possible'. Who decides what is 'as affordable as possible'? If you're looking to the market to determine that you have to deal with the 3,000 lb. gorilla in the corner-- Amazon and their artificially low e-book prices.

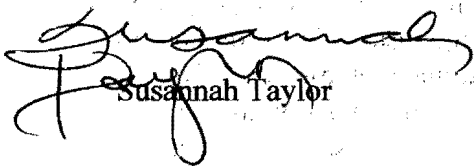
Amazon's business practices are well-documented and not laudable. I, for one, haven't quite figured out how *they* aren't being investigated as they seem to be the poster child for predatory pricing. They are not champions of the book loving public, they're basically the Republican party of the publishing world--they have immense power and influence but are constantly crying about how they're the victim while conveniently ignoring all evidence to the contrary.

You don't help readers, writers or the publishing industry by suggesting that the lowest priced e-books are the best e-books. Those falsely deflated prices in the Kindle store have a huge cost in the present for writers, booksellers and publishers, and in the future for readers and the industry as a whole.

There is a very delicate balance, which is constantly shifting, in the publishing world right now as the industry struggles to maintain the needs of both the physical book market (which is still the predominant format) and the rising e-book market. To basically read from the Amazon playbook and endorse a low price as the real value of e-books you devalue the unique and immensely difficult work of writers and the toil of those of us who work our butts off (in a traditionally low-wage, slow growth industry) for the love of words.

The bad guys are winning, Attorney General Holder, and with your comment it feels as if you and the DOJ are doing the heavy lifting for them. As a citizen, a reader and a literary agent, that's a real pity.

Sincerely,

  
Susannah Taylor