

-----Original Message-----

From: T.R. Reid [mailto:[REDACTED]]  
Sent: Monday, June 25, 2012 6:05 PM  
To: Read, John  
Subject: comment on U.S. v. Apple, et al., the book sales monopoly case

Mr. Read --

Thanks for considering my comment on the pending case of U.S. v Apple, et al., involving e-book sales.

I'm an author and a book-buyer, so my interest in this case comes at both the producer and consumer stage.

If you do not allow publishers (such as my publishers, Penguin, Random House, and Simon & Schuster) to use the agency model of pricing, you will be handing a monopoly to Amazon.com.

Amazon may provide lower consumer prices in the short term. Once the local and chain book stores have gone out of business, though, Amazon will be free to gouge the consumer.

Why would you give one retailer that kind of power?

Huge companies will always have the power to cut prices temporarily, just long enough to drive the competition out of business. Our whole price regulation regime was set up to fight the concentrated power of those giant monopolies, such as the Rockefeller trust and the Astor trust.

As a book buyer, I need a marketplace of competing sellers. If you hand Amazon a monopoly, that marketplace will disappear.

As an author, I benefit greatly from local and chain bookstores. Amazon has been great to me; it's the biggest seller of my last two books. But my sales, and business, would plummet if Amazon were to become the only source for my books. This could happen if the Justice Department lets Amazon create a monopoly through predatory pricing.

Please rule on this case in a way that saves the local book stores and gives authors like me more than one sales outlet for my products.

--thank you, T. R. Reid