

From: Rachel Stout [mailto:rachelrachel.sto[REDACTED]]
Sent: Monday, June 25, 2012 5:05 PM
To: Read, John
Subject: United States v. Apple, Inc., et al., 12-cv-2826 (DLC) (SDNY)

John R. Read, Esq.

Chief, Litigation III

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Dear Mr. Read,

I am writing to you today in regards to the suit that has been brought against Apple, Penguin and Macmillan (United States v. Apple, Inc., et al., 12-cv-2826 (DLC) (SDNY)). While I would never consider myself an expert on legal matters or business affairs, it is still very clear to me that if the proposed settlement is passed, that there would be severe detrimental effects on the publishing industry, authors, and the millions of book-buying citizens of this country.

While I am a relative newcomer to the world of publishing, I have seen enough and learned enough to know that with the eradication of the agency model of pricing, publishers and booksellers will be virtually unable to compete with the huge corporations that are able to drop their prices incredibly low. Business in all forms thrives on competition, and without it, how can anyone but the biggest and strongest be expected to survive? Passing this settlement puts the entire industry associated with books in all forms at a disadvantage. There will be no choice for the consumer, no say for the author on how their books are sold, and no option for the publisher or bookseller but to keep lowering and lowering their prices until profit margins get thinner and thinner and ultimately disappear.

That one large corporation should be able to determine the price of e-books to both authors and publishers without taking into consideration anything about the individual work itself—not its length, not the author's fame or anonymity, not the amount of design or time that has been put into a single book—is reproachable.

I've been an avid reader all my life (as I'm sure you've heard time and time again) and while the majority of my books are still hard copies, I see fully the advantages and popularity of e-books. What I do worry about, however, is the fate of all the people who make their living working in bookstores, the millions who take solace in an afternoon browsing shelves, and the sense of community that forms around these institutions. Take away the price limitations, and you take away both the incomes and livelihoods of an enormous part of the American public.

My words are only a few in a deluge of thousands, I'm sure, but I hope they contribute in the smallest part towards making your decision, Mr. Read. I thank you so much for your time and want to urge once again that the government of the United States of America takes a step back and understands that pursuing the terms set forth in this case can only lead to the downfall of a highly respected and important industry.

Thank you so much,

Rachel Stout