

May 14, 2012

John R. Read
Chief, Litigation III Section
United States Department of Justice
450 5th St. NW
Suite 4000
Washington DC 20530

Dear Mr. Read,

I am writing to you today as someone who has been in the book publishing business for a long time. Since 1969 I have been an editor and a publisher on "the publishing side" of the business and in 1986, I began my career as a literary agent. In fact, my family has been in book publishing for sixty years, as my father was the head of Bantam Books from 1952 until 1982

I want to tell you that I passionately object to the proposed settlement between the Justice Department and the three publishers regarding e-book pricing.

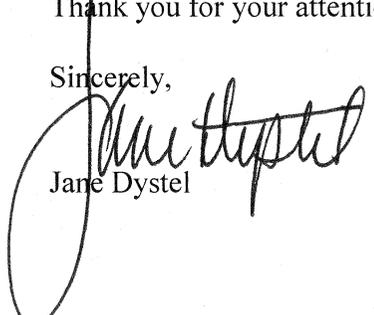
What this settlement will do, in fact, will be to allow Amazon to become a monopoly, able to discount their books below what any other book chain or independent bookstore can afford. (Amazon can treat books as a loss leader since this is only a small part of their business and one they use to lure buyers to buy all of their other merchandise.) By allowing Amazon free rein with pricing over the next two years, the other bookstore outlets could well go out of business because they simply cannot compete.

The result of this settlement will be devastating to the business of book publishing which is already experiencing economic difficulty, to independent bookstores which are struggling to keep their doors open and ultimately to the individual consumers the Justice Department claims it is trying to protect in the first place. Indeed, once Amazon has destroyed the competition, consumers will be at the mercy of whatever price it chooses to charge for its products then.

I urge you and your colleagues, Mr. Read, to reconsider this settlement in order to level the playing field and enable our business to remain competitive and grow in this exciting new world of digital book publishing.

Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,


Jane Dystel