

From: Cheryl Pearl Sucher [mailto:cpsuch[REDACTED]]
Sent: Sunday, June 24, 2012 9:53 PM
To: Read, John [John.Read@ATR.USDOJ.gov]
Subject: Don't help Amazon target bookstores.

Dear Mr. Read - As a writer and a bookseller I am imploring you to reconsider the Justice Department's recent accusation of collusion between Apple and five major American publishers to control the prices of e-books. This is a mistaken allegation for many reasons.

1) Amazon has controlled the dissemination and sale of e-book through its innovative Kindle, and has limited the amount of royalties due to individual authors by limiting the cost of its e-book pricing. While the cost of Amazon's e-books is lower than that worked out between Apple and the five publishers, it was a panzer act that monopolized the market. It LIMITED the free market, it did not play to it. As the original and only manufacturer of a device that could read its e-books, it cornered the market. This is and was a very un-American act of pure monopoly.

2) I have been an independent bookseller for many years. While the initial threat to the success of independent bookstores were the chains, the true threat has been Amazon. While retailers have been forced to cut its minimal profits to compete with Amazon, Amazon has done nothing to help brick and mortar stores stay in existence. Brick and mortar stores serve the community as gathering paces, sources of free readings and places where books are often hand sold. It costs a great deal to rent space and hire intelligent booksellers. Amazon has defrayed these costs and created a one-stop shopping place. Because it does not have to pay for retail space or pay retail salespeople, it has the ability to cut prices substantially as well as offer free shipping in a way that smaller independent publishers can't ever deem to offer. Therefore they have literally annihilated the competition.

3) While I truly believe that Amazon fills a very necessary niche in online book sales, I do believe that the Justice Department is charging the WRONG PARTY with collusion. Amazon's size, wealth and lobbying power reaches far beyond even the cooperative strength of independent booksellers and independent publishers. By supporting Amazon's claims, the Justice Department is undermining the free market economy, jeopardizing jobs, undercutting small business owners, and supporting the big and the mighty over the everyman.

I urge you to reconsider your judgment. The American publishing industry is at stake - both in its retail and wholesale incarnations.

Sincerely,
Cheryl Pearl Sucher
author and bookseller.