

From: Julia Glass [mailto:juliegla[REDACTED]]
Sent: Saturday, June 23, 2012 9:09 AM
To: Read, John [John.Read@ATR.USDOJ.gov]
Subject: U.S. vs. Apple, Inc., et al., 12-cv-2826 (DLC) (SDNY)

Dear Mr. Read,

As a published novelist and journalist but, far more important, as someone who has been reading books passionately for half a century, I am writing to say that I firmly believe the Department of Justice's case against Apple and the associated group of trade publishers is both misguided and dangerous to the future of literature. For the DOJ to prevail in this suit would mean, primarily, one thing: Amazon's path to a monopoly of the bookselling industry and, eventually, the publishing industry as well, would be wider and clearer than it already is.

In recent months, I have been asking my friends how they would feel if they woke up one morning to find that the only place to buy clothing was Target, the only place to buy food was WalMart, and the only channel on which to watch programming was CNN. That is the sort of monochromatic world in which readers will very shortly be living if Amazon is permitted to continue its predatory pricing strategy as a bookseller and its aggressive foray into publishing.

I grew up nurtured not just by libraries but by bookstores. I worked in my town's public library from fifth grade through my college summers. Yet many of the richest, most challenging, and quirky books that have helped shape my moral convictions and my intelligence were those I found by browsing through bricks-and-mortar bookstores, often turning to staff members for personal recommendations of titles I would never encounter otherwise. Often the most exciting books are those that just one distinctive "traditional" publisher has championed and that booksellers--that is, the unique individual human beings who maintain bookstores around the country--have put into the hands of their customers. My two sons fell in love with reading not in the classroom but in an independent neighborhood bookstore in New York City.

Bookstores need diverse and fair competition to survive. A marketplace that permits one merchant with very deep pockets to put all its competitors out of business--and, not incidentally, to cheat those of us who create books out of a decent income--is not good for anyone. It is a particular tragedy for those of us who love writing and reading innovative, thought-provoking books as well as formulaic best-sellers. Having had the privilege to stand inside the circular display of Thomas Jefferson's idiosyncratic book collection at the Library of Congress, I fear that American readers in particular face an intellectually impoverished future if you do not reconsider the consequences of this case. Please bear in mind that the American Revolution was fought, in large part, to end the tyranny of one all-powerful entity over the global marketplace.

Respectfully yours,

Julia Glass
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