

From: Valerie Peterson [mailto:vpeters[REDACTED]]
Sent: Monday, June 25, 2012 12:55 PM
To: Read, John
Subject: DOJ Proposed Settlement Threatens Public Interest - U.S. vs. Apple, Inc., et al., 12-cv-2826 (DLC) (SDNY)

John R. Read, Esq.
Chief, Litigation III
Antitrust Division, United States Department of Justice
Washington, D.C. 20530

Re: U.S. vs. Apple, Inc., et al., 12-cv-2826 (DLC) (SDNY)

Dear Mr. Read—

As an author of four books, a journalist, and a former publishing professional, I am writing to ask that you please note that a healthy, competitive book market is vital to our culture and to the public interest.

Mr. Read, books are not widgets: at their best they are well-selected, carefully-curated products of passionate, committed teams of people who already often work for the equivalent of pennies an hour to put new ideas and creative works into the world. Making free and cheap content available to gain market share can be a useful strategy, but in the hands of the largest online retailer, at the possible expense of the financial health of much of the industry, it is not in the long-term interest of the public.

Whether through libraries or bookstores, in print or online, it is in the public's interest to have access to thoughtful, well-curated, well-edited content, to fresh ideas and stories that enlighten, enlarge worlds, or even just entertain. By allowing one retailer excessively deep, unchecked discount book pricing, the DOJ proposed settlement inadvertently encourages consumer devaluation of all published content and, by doing so, erodes the viability of the industries that thoughtfully produce it, much to the public's detriment.

If writers, agents, publishers, and booksellers can't make adequate returns on the labor-intensive, quality content they put into the world, much of it will never be created—it will exist neither for the book-reading public, nor for the media frequently "fed" by book content: periodicals, film, television, or online venues, and our culture will be poorer for it.

With thanks for your thoughtful attention and hopes that the DOJ will reconsider the proposed settlement—

Respectfully,
Valerie Peterson
valeriepetersonink.com
publishing.about.com