

**From:** [Annette Harper](#) [annetteharp[REDACTED]]  
**To:** [Read, John](#) [John.Read@ATR.USDOJ.gov]  
**Subject:** Comment on U.S. vs. Apple, Inc., et al, 12-ov-2826 (DLC) (SDNY)  
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Dear Mr. Read,

As an author as well as avid reader, I believe the D.O.J.'s Proposed Final Judgment as to Defendants Apple, Hachette, HarperCollins and Simon and Schuster to be not in the best interest of the public and certainly not in my own. Until last month, Amazon was selling on Kindle an unauthorized e-book of my novel THE WORST DAY OF MY LIFE, SO FAR until I became aware of it and made a big stink. They took it down, but hadn't bothered to check in the first place whether or not the third party involved had rights to the book. Amazon doesn't care about authors' rights, or publishers' survival, or bookstore owners and employees or even the reading public. If this proposed final judgment stands, we'll all be doomed to play on Amazon's very unlevel playing field where they make up the rules as they go along. Anybody can be "published" via Kindle, even plagiarists. Amazon doesn't vet submissions, they only want to make billions of dollars. So how is it in the best interest of the reading public to be ceded to their unchallenged monopoly? Literature is vital to our society. Should it be handed lock, stock and barrel over to a single entity seeking nothing less than total control?

Brick-and-mortar bookstores like those of my New Orleans neighborhood aren't able to compete with the rock-bottom prices at which Amazon offers titles on Kindle. This damages me as both writer and reader, since an author's backlist profitably lingers on friendly bookstore shelves where it can be sold by hand and browsing readers stumble across it. That's the way I buy books myself, discovering titles I might never hear of otherwise. But in Amazonia where 1,000,000,000 e-books will be made available with virtually no competition, no way to stand out from the pack of worthless or barely-literate titles, no way to attract readers and no way for readers to experience the pleasure of discovering a wonderful book at the front desk of Maple Street Bookshop, much will be lost and gone for good. I'm no Luddite; I accept that e-books are here to stay and that's fine with me. But to ensure that they emerge from one monopoly is crazy. To paraphrase my late farmer father, "The fox is in the henhouse and you're backing the fox."

Respectfully,

M. A. Harper, author

FOR THE LOVE OF ROBERT E. LEE (Soho Press, NYC, 1992)

THE WORST DAY OF MY LIFE, SO FAR (Harcourt/Harvest, 2002)

THE YEAR OF PAST THINGS (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2005)