

From: [Eleanor Selfridge-Field](#) [esfie[REDACTED]]
To: [Read, John](#) [John.Read@ATR.USDOJ.gov]
Subject: United States v. Apple, Inc., et al., 12-cv-2826 (DLC) (SDNY).
Date: Wednesday, June 06, 2012 1:14:21 AM

John Read
Chief, Litigation III
Antitrust Division, United States Department of Justice
450 5th Street, NW, Suite 4000
Washington, D.C. 20530

Dear Mr. Read:

As an author of mainly academic books, I share the belief of many that it is very important that:

- (1) the DOJ prevent ebook publishing from becoming the monopoly of one (or two or even six) companies;
- (2) the DOJ recognize the important of models of publication that do not usurp the traditional roles of peer review and method of publication conducive to the publication of books of enduring quality.

The rapid rise of ebooks has distorted book markets by creating a few large emporia (most notably Amazon and Apple). Amazon and iTunes marketing robots are not qualified to make human judgments about value or quality in writing, research, content, or expression.

The most troubling aspect of the online "content" industry is that publishers' margins, authors' royalties, and agents' commissions are being displaced by the automatic 30% toll charged by Apple and Amazon, leaving the remaining 70% to cover creation, production, and publicity. As an academic author, I spend roughly five years writing a book and barely make enough in royalties to take my husband to dinner once a year. Now Apple feels entitle to tell me to forget footnotes and formulas (they cannot currently be accommodated in ebook formats) but let them have 30% of the gross for "dumbing down" texts.

Whether the subject is online books, online music, or online films, it is in the public interest to insist on a playing field that involves at least a dozen players in each of these venues. (There were many times more in each of them 20 years ago.) The content in books, music, and films reflects an enormous cultural and linguistic variety. No single publisher or small group of publishers--physical or virtual--is equally competent in every area. Independent bookstores, specialized presses, and documentary film companies are all being ground into extinction by one-size-fits-all models for "delivery." What is likely to be missing for this delivery is the "content" that originally preceded the delivery.

Yours sincerely,

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