

From: Regulator Bookshop [mailto:regulatorbooksh[REDACTED]]
Sent: Saturday, June 23, 2012 3:40 PM
To: Read, John [John.Read@ATR.USDOJ.gov]
Subject: Comment on Dept of Justice v Macmillan Publishing et al.

John Read

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RE: Department of Justice v Macmillan Publishing et al.:

The absence of any analysis of the likely effect of the Department of Justice's proposed "remedy" in contributing to the creation of a monopoly in the sale of electronic books can only be called astounding. Has no one involved with this case taken economics 101?

Before the advent of the agency model, amazon was well on its way to monopolizing the ebook market. Now the DOJ proposes to effectively eliminate the use of the agency model, with no mention of the almost certain effect that this action would have in recreating a monopoly. This is our government at work, serving the public welfare?

Note should also be taken that the monopoly being discussed here does not involve something as simple as a widget. (No disrespect to widgets, which can indeed be quite important to the functioning of our society). The monopoly being encouraged by the DOJ's action involves the free interchange of ideas--a freedom that nourishes the very roots of our democracy.

Imagine a world where one company has a monopoly on the devices upon which people read and the distribution of the books and other material that is read on those devices. Then imagine an author--oh, let's call him Thomas Paine--who has a book he'd like to have published. Sorry, says amazon, oh, sorry, says this company with a monopoly, we're not going to publish your little book. Imagine this had been the situation back in the 1760s. Who thinks I'd be able to write a letter like this today?

George Orwell would have a lot to say about the DOJ's ruling in this case, and he'd say it far better than I can. But then amazon has already reached out and deleted one of his books from every kindle in the land, so who knows if anyone will be able to read his comments a few years hence?

Tom Campbell, Co-Owner

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