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Sent: Monday, June 25, 2012 11:14 PM
To: Read, John [John.Read@ATR.USDOJ.gov]
Subject: bookstores, publishers, amazon and what's fair

I am a bookseller at Eagle Harbor Book Company, a small, independent book store on Bainbridge Island, WA. I am a passionate believer in books, authors, my customers, and the importance of a bookstore in a community (small or large). I am so disheartened at the DOJ's suit against publishers and Apple, when you consider how Amazon has SYSTEMATICALLY worked to undercut their competition (through loss pricing) and blast us off the map. Is the DOJ leveling the playing field? Yes, if by that you mean making it the Amazon Stadium.

I have worked in bookstores long enough (since the early 2000s) to have witnessed the evolution of eBooks. I can honestly tell you that until the agency pricing model was adopted, small bookstores had no real chance of joining in that game -- and if we are to survive (and I think that is important to our communities, our nation, and our children), we MUST be in that game. Yes, we could sell eBooks, but at crazy prices with limited availability and few devices that were compatible. Once the agency model was adopted, we were able to tell customers that we could offer eBooks at competitive prices and on a growing number of devices (except, of course, the Kindle, unless you are a hacker, which we do not promote). We have to work hard at it, and we do. We educate, we market, we offer advice and assistance to customers. We are proud that we have a small but growing number of customers who buy their eBooks locally through Eagle Harbor Book Company.

I know that DOJ does not think the agency model is illegal, but that the "meetings, telephone calls, and dinners" that occurred before had were unfair. Excuse me, but isn't that how business is done? When Amazon is striding around the nation demanding this and that from states, businesses, employees, authors, airlines (I know a lot about it, I live amongst many Amazon employees out here and they are my friends and neighbors, and they tell me things), how can you call that unfair? How are businesses supposed to communicate? How can they compete against Amazon when it is busy bossing the universe around with no restraint? The Amazon business model is about as anti-competitive as you can get. Their business practices are anathema to our ideals of a free and competitive system.

And in the proposed settlements, you are requiring that publishers eliminate the agency model, which will effectively cut independent bookstores off at the knees. I have heard many Amazon supporters say that bricks and mortar bookstores are dinosaurs and are not worth saving. What a naive point of view! I have read the countless articles detailing your charges, both the rebuttals and those that believe you have a case. I am not a legal person, and cannot speak to all the

point, but as a bookseller who is watching this transpire, I truly hope the DOJ will redirect its efforts at making books available fairly to ALL, and not just through Amazon.

Thank you for listening. I am heartsick that I have to write this letter.

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