

**From:** Laurie StPierre [mailto:percysburr[REDACTED]]  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 21, 2012 9:00 PM  
**To:** Read, John [John.Read@ATR.USDOJ.gov]  
**Subject:** proposed consent decree

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

Dear Mr. Read,

I am writing to express my opinion against the proposed consent decree against Apple, and three major publishers.

The establishment of the Agency Model has given choice back to the consumer and has created an equal playing field for a small business like mine against a major corporation. I was relieved that the book industry was being pro-active in protecting the livelihood of the independent bookstore, but now independent bookstores are in jeopardy once again because of the proposed consent decree.

Customers are losing their freedom of choice to buy from brick and mortar stores. Many people want to buy from local stores, but are forced (in the sense of good decision making) to purchase from Amazon. My customers want to buy from me, but the savings can be significant when buying from Amazon. In many cases, Amazon's prices are below cost - below what I pay for the items. This makes it difficult for the customer to choose my store, even if they want to. E-book pricing is just the beginning. If the proposed consent decree becomes a reality, it will set the stage for the end of not just the book industry, but all retail industries. It will be only a matter of time before Amazon is our only choice, and that is not fair to consumers or Americans. We need to protect "Freedom of Choice" for much more than just abortion. The book industry is shrinking and will disappear if we don't do something to protect it. We need brick and mortar bookstores. We need to uphold the Agency Model.

What is at stake here is not just e-book pricing, but social change. If brick and mortar bookstores can't stay viable, and they won't if something isn't done about Amazon selling below cost, they will disappear. The distributors will disappear, and then publishers. We will be left with Amazon and a 2 Dimensional world. We will be able to click and make purchases whenever we want, but never talk to a human being, never have a chance to have a conversation with a stranger about the book we are purchasing,

and will have no choice but to accept what Amazon is offering once everyone else disappears. Choice will be limited. Diversity will suffer.

Teens are already adapting to a 2-D world. They text their friends who are sitting next to them rather than talk to them; they choose e-books over physical books; they choose shopping from a computer screen over shopping with a friend. They are becoming socially uncomfortable. This decision will affect the world we leave for them.

I encourage the support of the Agency Model and oppose the consent decree. Please do not support that decision.

Sincerely,  
Laurie St. Pierre  
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