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To: [ATR-Antitrust - Internet](#) [ANTITRUST.ATR.USDOJ.gov]
Subject: John R Read, Chief, Litigation Section III/Apple et al e-book case
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Dear Mr. Read,

I'm but a lowly novelist and not the lawyer my mother wanted me to be, but I thought I'd write you concerning the ongoing e-book litigation. My guess is that you don't often hear from the likes of me, namely a buyer and writer of e-books (and print books, too).

The Justice Department's stance on this case is unfathomable to me. It's as if it looked at a market with strong monopolistic characteristic and decided to *protect* the monopoly.

Amazon has made a concerted effort since day one to control the e-book market, and has come pretty close. They established a predatory pricing model, using their advantage in print books and non-book online markets to price e-books significantly below the royalty rate.

This established a first-mover advantage in this fast-growing marketplace, after which, it seems rather clear, they intend to dictate prices to buyers and sellers of content. (It's clear from Amazon's behavior in the online print book marketplace.) Amazon got very close to this monopolistic position when Apple entered the market. Indeed, the market is still highly dominated by Amazon.

The bottom line: if there is only one market through which to sell e-books, consumers will pay. Perhaps just as bad, publishers won't be able to charge a sustainable rate for their content, and that content will therefore not get created. This is a chilling prospect for a democracy.

Thank you for your time.

Scott Lasser