

Australian authors earn an average of \$12,900 per year from their writing, and reducing the copyright period will reduce their income even further because it will prevent us from receiving future earnings on titles after the stipulated period of time.

For an author, writing is a lifelong commitment so our last book might be published fifty years or more after our first book.

As an author develops their craft, career and reputation, this is likely to lead to increased sales on future books, which in turn may lead to older books being reprinted.

The proposed copyright changes will mean that anyone could just grab that author's earlier title and republish it without their permission or without the author receiving a cent.

John Marsden's "Tomorrow When the War Began" was published 23 years ago and has only just been made into a television series.

Hazel Edwards's, "There's a Hippopotamus on my roof eating cake" was published 35 years ago and has only just been made into a play.

Your proposed copyright changes would mean that Hazel Edwards would have received no income from her play and perhaps John Marsden would not have received royalties on his television series.

If a person buys an investment property they continue you to receive income from that property for as long as they choose to own it.

In both UK and USA the copyright terms are for the duration of the author's life + a number of years.

The Productivity Commission makes its recommendations based on its claims that most works have a commercial life of less than 5 years.

This is totally untrue. My first two books published in 2008 are still both selling well. One of them, A Duel of Words, about Henry Lawson and Banjo Paterson which was written for primary school children has just started being used in Year 12 classrooms to fit in with the topic of Australia's identity.

As I mentioned earlier, older titles often get a new lease of life in the market if the author has a successful new book.

Copyright is an author's investment in our future. It's our way of trying to support ourselves and not be a burden on taxpayers by drawing an old age pension.

If someone buys an investment property, the government doesn't take it off them after 25 years because they think they've had enough income from it.

Proposed changes to the laws will force many authors out of business or out of the country.

The removal of perpetual copyright on unpublished works will make authors, particularly successful ones, targets for having their manuscripts stolen. If you can't copyright an unpublished work, what protection do you have from an unscrupulous person who gets their hands on it, or even members of your own critique group? This could lead to disputes that would clog up our already overburdened legal system.

As an author wishing to protect my interests, the rights of other authors, and literature in our country, I urge you not to make the changes to copyright that you are proposing.

Thank you for your time.

Dee White  
Author