

As a children's and YA author, published in Australia and internationally, I would like to state my strong opposition to the proposed changes as detailed in the Productivity Commission's draft report of April 29, in particular, the lifting of restrictions on the parallel importation of books, and the proposed implementation of "Fair Use" which ridiculously reduces the longevity of copyright.

The removal of restrictions on the parallel importation of books would, in effect, remove the concept of territorial copyright for Australian authors and publishers, which would have significant impact on the Australian publishing industry.

The proposed changes will result in the decline of the practice of purchasing international rights by Australian publishers, which has provided a steady income stream for local publishers, enabling them to invest in Australian authors. Less investment in Australian authors will result in fewer Australian books, which would be devastating for Australian education and Australian culture. Australians deserve to hear their own voices and read their own stories – stories that reflect our culture, language, identity and society.

The proposed changes will also result in the reduction of author income – which for most is already meager, well below the minimum wage. The implementation of "fair use" will erode the potential for Australian authors to earn income from their creative work, which may have taken many years to produce. It disturbs me that the commission sees such little value in this work that they feel after 15-25 years creators should no longer hold copyright – in their own work! Really? And the lifting of restrictions for parallel importation could see the local market flooded with overseas stock, with the Australian authors of these books receiving the much lower net receipt royalties of overseas editions instead of the local retail royalties.

The UK and US still uphold parallel import restrictions on their own books, thereby protecting their authors. Why Australia wants to abandon its authors is beyond me.

Please note also the experience in New Zealand. The impact of the lifting of restrictions on the parallel importation of books has been devastating for the NZ publishing industry and NZ creators. The publishing industry has shrunk considerably, with a number of publishers, including Scholastic and Random House, closing their NZ offices. And the same impact is likely in Australia too.

We have a vibrant publishing culture that produces innovative, high quality *Australian* literature. An industry that nurtures and develops new voices. As outlined in the many submissions already logged on the website, changes to the importation and copyright laws and "fair use" will jeopardise this.

Please protect our Australian creators and publishers. Australian stories must continue to be told.

Sue Whiting