

The Productivity Commission.

To whom it may concern,

I am an author with Random House, Australia and have published six novels in the Australian rural fiction genre to date, with another due for release this year. My books are published by an Australian company, for a predominantly Australian audience. I rely on the income from the sale of my books in print, ebook and audio formats also available in larger print and Braille) to contribute to my families living. ie. mortgage = shelter, food and education. I will also be relying on the hard work I am doing now to provide ongoing royalties from my books to assist in retirement for my husband and I (ie. Superannuation) , thus hoping to alleviate the need to rely a government pension/handouts in our old age.

I have concerns with regards to some of the suggestions made by the recent Productivity Commission on Intellectual Property Arrangements, which will be highly detrimental to a) the way I earn my living and b) my retirement.

- Copyright. It's not just good for authors and publishers. It's good for readers and the whole society. It enables Australian books to be published by Australian companies. It allows Australian stories to be heard by the Australian people. If the domestic market is flooded by cheap overseas books (which *will* happen if parallel importation restrictions are removed) Australian voices will be drowned out by cheap imports. Australian publishers will not be able to afford to publish Australian books (nor take chances on debut novels). Imagine if Rosalie Ham's *THE DRESSMAKER* was never published and thus never made into the multi-million dollar block buster movie where Australia and Australians showed the world how things could be done across a broad spectrum of areas.
- Territorial copyright matters; it's how rights are traded and investments made in authors and their books. Giving it up will be bad for Australia. Australian books will become a thing of the past. Authors will not be able to AFFORD to write. We will have to rely on government handouts to live.
- Free is not fair. Equitable remuneration is, and it works well for Australian education.
- In publishing, copyright, and in particular territorial copyright, is the core system by which writers and creators are rewarded for their ideas.
- Trade in rights is the way the business works.
- Authors have the right to decide if, when and how their work is made public.
- Copyright is a property right. Calling it a monopoly is misleading and deceptive. An author puts years into honing their craft, years into writing their novels. Why should someone else benefit from that dedication? Again I quote *THE DRESSMAKER*. Rosalie Ham wouldn't have got a cent if copyright was slated at 15 years.
- Free isn't fair. A wide-ranging educational exception has devastated educational publishing in Canada;
- Allowing parallel imports would make it harder to invest in Australian authors, so there would be less diversity and fewer Australian titles for Australian readers;
- The biggest difference between the US-style 'fair use' and our own 'fair dealing' is that

ours includes 'equitable remuneration. Ours is like a fair day's work for a fair day's pay. Theirs is for a fair day's work, without any pay.

- The report says copyright is weighted too much in favour of creators. In rebuttal, I ask you, why shouldn't the creators of something get the rewards for that creation?
- Their changes will reduce the incomes of Australian writers. They'll get lower royalties and lower advances.
- Far fewer high-quality, local educational resources vital to Australian curricula will not be produced
- Consumer are already free to buy books from anywhere in the world. Why does this need to be made any easier?
- There is no guarantee that books will be cheaper if PIRs are removed. Look what happened in New Zealand. Prices fell further in Australia, but the range of titles available shrank.
- Australian publishers are not dependent on Government subsidies.
- Australian authors will be back where they were when the Australian right was bundled with Commonwealth rights - dealing with publishers far away for whom they're a low priority. It's regression at best. Annihilation of a rich publishing industry, at worst.
- Jobs will be lost in Australian publishing, bookselling and printing. It will prove to be the decimation of publishing here, as we know it.
- It will be bad for independent booksellers as they won't be able to compete with cheaper imports.
- The Productivity Commission's data is almost 10 years' old and since 2008, the price of books in Australia has reduced by 25%.
- World Trade Organisation chief economist, Robert Koopman, recently commented that the PC's call for weaker intellectual property protections sells local firms short. He was surprised to hear of the proposed changes and the idea that they were justified because Australia was a net importer of innovation.

Yours sincerely,

Margareta Osborn  
Author  
Glenmaggie, Australia  
June 1, 2016