

My name is Jacqueline Harvey and I am writing to express my grave concerns over the Productivity Commission's recommendations with regards to parallel importation of books, terms of copyright being reduced to 15-25 years from creation and Fair Use Copyright.

At the end of 2012, I stepped away from a 20-year career in education to become a full time writer of children's books. Up until then I juggled writing and a senior executive role in a very busy school, only leaving my secure full time position after publishing ten books and with a good prospect of earning a reasonable living from my writing. I now have 27 titles published. To suggest that writers don't write for money is ludicrous. Of course I write because I love it and I feel a need to do so; however, I also need to support myself and my family.

Now the government is threatening my livelihood and that of every writer in Australia if it chooses to adopt the recommendations of the Productivity Commission Report.

Publishing is an industry which takes very little from the public purse. Australian publishers invest heavily in Australian talent, publishing over 7,000 new titles annually. Their investment in our trade (non-educational) authors is over \$120M per annum. More than 1000 businesses are engaged in publishing employing 4,000 people along with another 20,000 employed in the broader book industry including sellers and printers. Australia has the 14th largest publishing industry in the world and the largest independent bookseller sector in the English language market.

It is an industry that doesn't depend on government subsidies and is not protected by government tariffs.

To think that the Productivity Commission would recommend that authors should lose their copyright after 15-25 years is ludicrous. I hope (and of course there are no guarantees) that my books will sell for at least the duration of my lifetime and I will be able to earn a living from them. I don't intend to be a drain on the public purse; however, that's up to the government.

You only have to look at what happened to the New Zealand publishing industry, when in 1998 they allowed parallel imports, to understand the dangers. Their industry has contracted significantly, the range of books has diminished and sales have decreased. Not the intended outcome at all but the one that has occurred.

To quote Peter Carey, Thomas Keneally and Richard Flanagan

'The consequences will be job losses, public revenue loss as profits are transferred overseas, and a brutal reduction in the range of Australian books publishers will be able to publish. Australia will become, as it was in the 1960s, a dumping ground for American and English books, and we will risk becoming – as we once were – a colony of the minds of others... The book industry is not a protected industry. We are not asking for money, or for a subsidy. We are asking for the same rules and intellectual property rights that prevail for writers and book publishing in the USA, in Britain, in Europe.'

I object to these recommendations that would undermine and potentially destroy our buoyant publishing industry and urge the government to consider the damaging effects these changes would have.

Yours Sincerely,

Jacqueline Harvey

Author of the Alice-Miranda and Clementine Rose series'

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