

5th December 2008

To the Productivity Commission
Re: Parallel Importation of Books review

I am writing to object to the C.O.A.G proposal to review the issue of parallel importation of books to Australia. The Australian reading public is already a healthy buyer of new books, and to off load cheaper books from overseas onto the market will serve only to disadvantage Australian authors, (apart from the one advantage of boosting the sales of retailers). The practice of marking-up book prices higher than the recommended retail price diminishes the argument that books are too expensive.

To leave the cultural significance of books off the terms of reference for this proposal is short sighted and, frankly, condescending to both Australian readers and writers. The true value of books cannot be measured simply in economic terms. This is tantamount to discussing sport solely in terms of words on a page or figures in an account book, without consideration for the impact it has on the spectator in an auditorium.

I register my protest to this proposed review, and its implications, in the strongest terms.

Yours sincerely

Mark O'Flynn