

I am writing in respect to the matter of Parallel Importation of Books.

As an Australian author, I am appalled that we would even consider this issue from a personal perspective but more troubling for me than my own livelihood is the fact that we are considering a proposal that would see Australian culture taken off our bookshelves.

We cannot believe that should this approach be taken there will be anything other than overseas trash on every shelf of our bookstores. Our own authors will be deserted by their country and the publishers of this country who have done all they can to preserve the Australian Culture and give our own people a fair go will disappear.

Both my currently published novels are set in Australia, as are the three completed manuscripts that now sit in the bottom drawer of desk as the industry waits, holding its breath their livelihoods and their heritage is under threat of being stripped away through lack of foresight, thought and a clear disregard for our people and our culture.

New Zealand has taken this approach and we should learn from the impact that decision is having on their culture, their language and their stock of emerging authors and not walk down that same path.

Where would Australia be without the likes of Banjo Patterson? If we take this step and allow Parallel Importation we will never see the next Banjo Patterson emerge from our ranks and our children will all talk the rubbish language that has already infiltrated our land from the USA through film.

Let our written word be the heart of this country. Instead of doing everything we can to quell the voice of the Australian author we should be pumping in millions of dollars to this industry and being proud to show off to the world what it is like to be an Australian.

If I wanted my children to lose that, if I wanted them to become American clones, I could do that by moving there. If Parallel Importation is allowed then sadly that may be the only way authors like myself who have devoted a lifetime

to this noble art, and those youth who should now be coming along behind us, will be able to continue to write and to put forward the beautiful voice of Australia.

We have a land, a history and a people that we ought to be proud of, we should not be trying to hide it from the world by pretending to be uninterested in our own people and country.

Celebrate Australia, do not desert it in its hour of need.

Bernard J Rossi

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