

PRODUCTIVITY COMMISSION SUBMISSION: COPYRIGHT RESTRICTIONS
ON THE PARALLEL IMPORTATION OF BOOKS

20 January, 2009

I am an Australian author of Young Adult fiction who has recently signed a two-book deal with a major Australian publisher.

I am firmly opposed to the proposal to remove parallel importation protection.

It has taken me six years to land a publishing deal. During that time I was always confident that Australian publishers were looking for new talent and my work would eventually find an outlet. In a scenario without parallel importation protection, I would have had no such confidence.

I am proud that my stories have an Australian context and contribute to the Australian literary landscape. I have an Australian literary agent. When I first started writing, I obtained representation with a UK literary agent. My first book was set in London and I was living there at the time. She declined to represent any of my subsequent works on the basis that they were set in Australia. In her words, based on previous experience, it was too difficult to sell Australian stories straight to UK publishers; they preferred work that had proved successful in Australia first.

I strongly believe that the removal of parallel importation protection will result in fewer new Australian writers being published, and a reduction in the diversity of the work being considered.

I am looking forward to making an income from my writing and I hope my publisher is rewarded for the risks they have taken in nurturing and developing me as a writer.

Australian culture should be promoted. Opportunities for the export of Australian intellectual property rights should be nurtured. I find it incredible that the removal of parallel importation restrictions is being considered here, when territories such as the UK and the US – who have the most to gain from such a move – do not allow parallel importations.

Thank you for inviting submissions on this topic.

Yours faithfully,

Kirsty Eagar