

Submission to
The Productivity Commission
re Parallel Importation of Books Study

As an Australian author of children's books, I object to any moves towards abolishing the 30/90-day rule, which would effectively lead to surrendering Australian copyright, and a decline in the Australian publishing industry.

I am proud to write children's stories that have a distinctive 'Aussie' flavour. It is wonderful that Australians have embraced multiculturalism, but within that mix, Australian children should be encouraged to appreciate and relate to their own brand of culture, and have access to books that reflect this.

Children are already swamped by North American culture from its dominance in cinema and television. It would be a great pity if books for children in this country followed suit.

I am concerned that copyright deregulation would lead to;

- A necessary contraction of the local publishing and printing industries, which would result in hundreds of job losses in editing, illustration, design, marketing, distribution and printing;
- The cost of locally produced books being likely to increase;
- The dumping of US editions into Australia, which would mean local publishers could no longer take the same risks in fostering new Australian talent, and also compromise the motivation to sell rights of Australian authors overseas;
- Australia's culture uniqueness being eroded. Australian children's books would be undercut and replaced by American editions with references to 'sidewalks', 'diapers' and 'mom'; and
- Market power being concentrated in the large chain booksellers and discount department stores, creating a blockbuster-only market in which the diversity of books available to Australian readers would be significantly reduced.

I assert that copyright deregulation would be detrimental to Australian children's education, and erode their cultural identity. It will seriously affect my livelihood as an Australian children's author by reducing the incentive to Australian publishers to accept my work for publication. I therefore ask that the Productivity Commission reject any proposal to abolish the 30/90-day rule.

Carol Faulkner
Children's Author
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