

To the Productivity Commission  
Re: Parallel Importation of Books review

As an author of Young Adult and Children's books published both in Australia and overseas, I am writing to express the real fears that I have regarding the possible removal of the restriction on parallel importation of books into Australia.

When my books are published in America changes are made to suit that market. Language is changed (eg mum to mom) as well as aspects of the story that are very much part of Australian culture (eg a rugby match replaced by an American Football match). While these US editions are fine in themselves, I would not want them being the version that Australian readers are forced to buy. The flood of cheaper overseas books dumped on the Australian market that this change to imports could trigger, would erode Australia's unique culture and identity, something that I would have thought we would be striving to preserve.

My first book was published in 2004 by a successful local publisher. I wonder if this would have been possible had the restriction on parallel imports not been in place to foster Australian publishers, Australian writers and Australian stories. Does a *possible* overall reduction in book prices justify a contraction in the Australian publishing industry, fewer Australian writers and the rejection of stories that reflect our cultural heritage?

We are constantly being told that we are living in tough economic times with more to come and as such, Governments around the world are offering stimulus packages to help local industries. Why is it then that our Government would consider a change in parallel imports that would sound the death knell for many jobs within our publishing industry and threaten the livelihood and careers of many writers both present and future?

I urge you to maintain the present restriction regarding parallel imports – one that has made it possible for Australian publishers to print books of the highest quality and at the same time, to find, foster and develop Australian writers. What good is the promise of cheaper books if Australian children and adults can't see themselves and their physical and cultural landscape in the stories they read?

Michael Gerard Bauer