

A submission has been made to the Commission by Allen & Unwin, but I'd like to make a brief one of own, based as it is on thirty three years in the Australian book industry. While heading Australia's largest independent company over this time I have seen Australian publishing "come of age" in terms of both the rapid growth of quality local publishing, and the ever increasing availability and wide promotion of books from around the world. Allen and Unwin has played a significant role in this

First I'd like to suggest what this issue is **not** about. It's not about cheaper books. No bookseller can honestly say they want to sell cheaper books. The issue for that minority of booksellers who want to abandon Territorial Copyright (TC) is of course about better profit margins. They feel that without territorial copyright restrictions they could source cheaper product overseas. However, books currently imported directly into Australian bookshops are invariably priced more highly than those sourced locally and this would not change.

What the issue **is** about is the health of the Australian publishing industry, from which the benefits flow to Australian printers, booksellers and authors. The publishers are the "bankers" to all three – printers are paid for total print runs, booksellers are provided with books on full sale or return and authors are paid royalties often far in advance of publication. Publishers also provide the lion's share of the funding for all book promotion, marketing and publicity, which of course is essential to maximise demand, and sales, for publishers and booksellers alike. To pursue the banking analogy, bankers lend against security, and publishers' security is the knowledge that they have a certain market in which to realise all these investments.

Without Territorial Copyright, and the carrot/stick finessing of the 30/90 day rule, Australian publishing would never have developed as it has. The model would be much closer to that of the current film industry, where locally made films constitute a tiny – and heavily subsidised – minority. Australian book printing certainly would not exist in its current form.

The issue **is** also about trading in rights – about the right to trade in rights. Without a territory you can't trade, and it's in rights trading that Australian publishing is beginning to excel. An ex-publisher who should know better has said in his submission that with the abandonment of TC nothing would change. This is naïve in the extreme, as a combination of opportunism and diffidence on the part of our international partners and competitors would see us gradually drop off their radar screens. Both independents and the publishing divisions of the multinationals have put blood, sweat and a lot of dollars over many years into getting Australia taken seriously as a sophisticated territory to buy from and sell to. All this work would be slowly but surely undone without TC.

I'm aware of the argument that as publishers adapted to the 30/90day rule so they should now be able to adapt to further change. If this is a matter of tweaking and tinkering, maybe so. But the bedrock of books and writing is copyright. To destroy this would have profoundly negative effects on an industry which has made and is making such a major contribution to Australia.

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