Copyright Restrictions on the Parallel Importation of Books

Commissioned study

Dear Commissioners,

As I know you will receive many submissions on this matter, I want to make one point only in my role as general editor of the Macquarie PEN Anthology of Australian Literature, a landmark publication to be published by Allen & Unwin in July 2009, with international publication from W W Norton New York to follow in September. This major contribution to our literary infrastructure has been produced to redress the decline in familiarity with and teaching of Australian literature in schools, universities and the community in recent years that is associated, I believe, with the unavailability of many Australian books. It requires a robust Australian publishing industry to keep such works in print and I argue that the recognition of ANZ as a separate copyright territory, as reflected in current provisions, is fundamental to this.The anthology project, which is in the national interest, has been made possible by support from government agencies including the Australia Council and the Australian Research Council, philanthropic bodies and one of Australia's leading independent trade and academic publishers. It has subsequently become an export earner through international publication. Such constructive and creative publishing, which also meets an educational need and has community benefit, is only possible where publishers are in a position to take a supportive long-term approach to the publication of Australian works, especially literary works, and where strategically considered government intervention is applied in ways that continue to nurture Australian education, training, research and cultural life through the successful publishing of Australian books.

I therefore, for the sake of Australian readers, oppose the abolition of territorial copyright in relation to books.

Yours faithfully,

Nicholas Jose

Professor Nicholas Jose
Chair in Writing
Writing & Society Research Group
College of Arts
UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN SYDNEY