

Since 1978 we have owned and operated consecutively, two independent bookshops. When we started in 1978 books came to Australia at the Australian Distributors whim, in a time frame that sometimes felt like they were being shipped on a raft. We were naïve in the copyright laws pertaining to books thus incurring the wrath and discipline of the Distribution world. Since 1992 the situation has changed to the extent that we now receive most books either within a month or before publication of the books overseas. The books that do not arrive within this time frame tend to be books of small market importance and are able to be imported by any shop for any customer or all customers. Bookshops such as ours benefit greatly from a strong local publishing industry which is financially supported by the Distribution Rights to the Australian market place. We are provided with access to publisher knowledge via a vibrant rep force that services nearly all shops in Australia. If we had to access all the titles ourselves from overseas there would be a much reduced range of books within the small independent bookshops. It is most unlikely we would be able to import books at a cheaper price than we now purchase them, thus prices would probably increase.

Small Independent Bookshops would probably become a thing of the past, and once we are gone you can be sure that the larger establishments would be able to dictate price and supply in their shops with reduced competition.

Australia is in the fortunate position of having supply of all English speaking countries' books. Most countries have predominately books of their country's origin, unlike us with books from around the world.

Our prices are competitive when shown with our dollar against other currencies, in 30 years there have only been 3 times where the dollar with the US dollar has had parity.

I do not have the time to set out all the arguments I have against the opening of the Australian market. The timing of the submission deadline has been impossible for us, with Christmas trading and, being in a holiday destination, the summer onslaught in the shop.

The only omission in the book marketplace is the cheap mass-market final edition of a book. The United States has a very cheap final edition, which I feel publishers and copyright holders could be encouraged to publish here.

As a member of Leading Edge Books we support the submission that has been submitted on behalf of the members.