

As an author struggling to establish a firm foothold in the publishing industry, I am concerned about the push for parallel importation. Parallel importation has seen New Zealand swamped with imports and its publishing industry has suffered. Both the US and UK ban parallel importation, thereby protecting territorial copyright for their authors. Australian authors and publishers deserve the same protection. Please say 'no' to adopting parallel importation in Australia.

Regarding your reference to psychic income – satisfaction derived from producing a finished piece of writing is the same job satisfaction derived by all hardworking individuals. The notion of psychic income would not be applied to builders or politicians (male dominated fields). Writers are professionals who approach their work in as businesslike a manner as any other individual. The reference to psychic income is demeaning to any self-employed individual who is simply trying to earn a living.

I am donating my psychic income to the commission. If this seems a ridiculous notion then you may now understand what authors felt when reading that section of the report. While it acknowledged psychic income it ignored the psychic loss experienced by authors each time a piece of work is rejected and receives no income. If willing to acknowledge non-pecuniary rewards then the commission must acknowledge the non-pecuniary losses. The push for parallel importation is one psychic loss you can remove.

Earning an income as an author is difficult. By your own admission, the introduction of parallel importation would see a leakage of income to overseas authors and publishers. Therefore, the introduction of parallel importation will only make earning an income more difficult. Further, it will put Australian publishers at risk, thereby reducing the opportunities available to authors and reducing readers' choices and it will flood the market with imports that do not reflect Australian culture.

The price buyers pay for books is something they already have a choice about now. Each time they purchase a book they deem that its cost is acceptable to them. If the commission is genuinely interested in ensuring the best outcome for Australians it must consider more than reducing the already acceptable price. It must consider the overall implications for our publishing industry, our authors, our readers and our culture. It must help preserve an industry that parallel importation will, by the commission's own admission, be detrimental to. It must say 'no' to parallel imports.

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