

To Jill Irvine, Productivity Commission.

I am an author and a Research Professor of History at the University of Sydney. I believe that the current contemplated legislation is an example of blinkered economic thinking. The only beneficiaries will be the giant international publishing houses and the giant international book chains. The losers will be Australian authors, publishers, booksellers and readers.

To give two examples. My last book entitled in Australia and the United Kingdom, *The Seven Ordeals of Count Cagliostro* was also published in the United States by the giant Murdoch publishing chain Harper Collins. Although this book has now gone into fifteen foreign language editions, the dominance of the US publishing chain has been a constant source of regret to me. The book was structured and written to the title *The Seven Ordeals of Cagliostro*, which was used in Australia in what was to a marked degree the outstanding edition of the fifteen. However the US edition cavalierly and against my wishes changed the title (to one which happened to be also used by another book published at the same time) and disseminated that title and an extremely inappropriate and misleading cover throughout the United States and the remainder of the world. Had your proposed legislation been in place this is the edition that would have prevailed in Australia as well.

Again, my current book *Darwin's Armada*, has been published in a beautifully presented and carefully edited edition in Australia by Viking. This is the master edition that will be used by Simon and Schuster in the United Kingdom and also by Norton in the United States. Neither of these last two publishing houses have been sharp enough to catch the huge wave of sales created by the Darwin bicentenary year. Only the Australian edition has done this. As a result my book will not get the international coverage it deserves. Again, I believe that your proposed legislation, which allows Australian publishers only a year to establish their markets, would eventually lead to the erosion of local publishing and to the dominance of the international, and mainly US chains.

For Australia to have its own publishing houses is integral to the health and survival of our national culture and civilization. This is not merely a matter of economics, it is a matter of national civic priority, as countries like Canada understand all too well.

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