

# **PRODUCTIVITY COMMISSION STUDY OF COPYRIGHT RESTRICTIONS ON THE PARALLEL IMPORTATION OF BOOKS**

***Submission by Virginia Grant. Editor,  
Walker Books Australia Pty Ltd, Newtown NSW 2042***

To the Commissioners:

I am writing to express my views regarding the Productivity Commission Study of Copyright Restrictions on the Parallel Importation of Books.

My submission is as follows:

I have worked in publishing for more than seven years in total – both in Australian and the United States. For more than half of this time, I have worked in trade children's book publishing. I have been an editor at Walker Books Australia (WBA) for more than one year. All of my professional experience has been in publishing.

Walker Books Australia's local publishing list has been established on the strength of its UK and US bestsellers. I believe that parallel importing would significantly reduce the income generated by those bestsellers: chain retailers would import the cheapest available editions from foreign distributors of our bestsellers.

I have deep concerns regarding the potential overall negative impacts of parallel importing, which I have listed in summary below:

- Reduced income generated from bestsellers would in turn threaten WBA's ability to cultivate local creative talent. With a reduced local list, parallel importing would directly threaten the security of my job – and those of my colleagues at WBA. In addition, parallel importing would have a knock-on effect on the jobs of my colleagues across the industry, such as those of our printers, as all of our locally produced fiction is printed in Australia.
- As an editor, I am actively involved in developing Australian children's authors and illustrators. WBA has over seventy authors and illustrators on our local list, many of whom have been published for the first time. With a reduced local list, opportunities for new and emerging talent would be greatly diminished. Even of the more established and most successful local children's authors and illustrators, realistically, few would be picked up by overseas publishers.
- Finally, I have grave concerns that parallel importing would reduce the overall choice available to Australian parents and children. Inevitably, the market would be dominated by cheap bestsellers sourced from overseas. As an editor, I see tremendous value in providing Australian – that is, culturally relevant – content for Australian children.

In understand that the concerns about parallel importing extend far beyond those outlined above. I have limited my comments to those areas in which I have experience.

I urge the Productivity Commission to consider carefully the ramifications of parallel importing for the publishing and printing industries, Australia's creative talent pool and cultural life.

Sincerely,

Virginia Grant  
Editor, Walker Books Australia  
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