

Shannon Stein

17<sup>th</sup> April 2009

Dear Mr Woods and Ms Sylvan

RE: SUBMISSION TO PRODUCTIVITY COMMISSION ISSUES PAPER; COPYRIGHT RESTRICTIONS ON THE PARALLEL IMPORTATION OF BOOKS.

I'm writing to express my concern and dismay at the proposed changes relating to parallel importation. I'm a struggling writer, and so of course I protest against the reduction of possible future earnings. I realise I have a stake in this decision, but so do the Australian people.

It's not just authors who are at risk, but a complete industry. I see the proposed changes as putting jobs (not just my hope) at risk. Our publishing industry is young, smart, innovative and fabulously creative. By removing protective parallel importation provisions you place that very industry at risk. As yet I've seen no documented evidence that it contributes to lower book costs (although we do seem to be a very highly taxed, highly priced nation for such commodities).

Where is the nation pride in home-grown industry and products? Why can we not make Australian Publishing a truly competitive, thriving market instead of giving away our advantage to those overseas? Haven't we learned anything from the manufacturing and textiles industries with regard to removing employment opportunities from Australians and giving it to other countries to benefit from? Where do I go if I can't get published here at home by an Australian publisher? Aren't we battling the brain drain? Experience has already taught us that cheaper isn't necessarily better. As well as a writer, I'm also a mother. I can tell you that when it comes to quality books for children, I will buy Australian product over the import, hands down, because of the great quality. (And this goes across industries!) You want quality, and you want it to last.

All those involved, from the writer, illustrator, publisher, book-packager, printer, editor, distributor and bookseller, work so hard to bring good, quality Australian books to the Australian public.

Please don't take our opportunities, culture, history and voice away from us.

Yours sincerely

Shannon Stein