

TO THE SENATE SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE FREE TRADE AGREEMENT BETWEEN
AUSTRALIA AND THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA. PARLIAMENT HOUSE
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Senators

I wish to make a submission to the above mentioned committee. As a teacher of LOTE (languages other than English) concerned with the education and development of children, I see the over exposure of Australian children to popular culture from the United States of America as a significant problem. I could site many anecdotal examples of Australians becoming "Americaised" in their language, culture and identity. The most graphic ones which I will site are the incident in one of my language classes when a relatively intelligent yesr six student illustrated the Australian flag with the flag of the USA thinking that it was the Australian flag and the tragic incident recently in Adelaide when a young mother dialled the emergency number of the USA instead of 000 resulting in the death of her child. The over exposure of US popular culture is a world wide trend of course, however Australia is particularly vulnerable as it is an English speaking country without an old and established identity or culture with a close relationship to the USA.

For Australia to survive both economically and with cultural integrity we must create something unique here, to have our own energy to keep people here and give others a reason to visit. At present we are allowing the Australian identity that we have to be diluted and erased. Any agreement with a power as collosal as the USA will inevitably overwhelm Australia with their laws, their ways and their culture. I am aware that the agreement says that it will protect current levels of Australian content in the media but current levels are not enough and the ageement threatens that even these could be eroded by future governments. I oppose this agreement as I believe it will be the fast track both psychologically and actually to the death of the true Australian identity. Yours sincerely

Daniel Connell