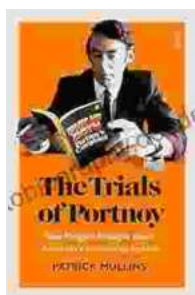


How the Penguin Case Brought Down Australia's Censorship System

In 1962, a group of Australian parents filed a complaint with the Victorian Board of Censors against the book "Penguin Island" by Australian author John Grant.

The book, which was published by Penguin Books Australia, featured a young boy who falls in love with a penguin at the Melbourne Zoo. The board found that the book was "indecent" and "immoral" and banned it from sale to minors.



The Trials of Portnoy: how Penguin brought down Australia's censorship system by Patrick Mullins

★★★★☆ 4.8 out of 5

Language : English
File size : 19250 KB
Text-to-Speech : Enabled
Screen Reader : Supported
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled
Word Wise : Enabled
Print length : 367 pages



Penguin Books Australia appealed the decision to the Supreme Court of Victoria, and in 1963, the court overturned the ban. The court found that the book was not "indecent" or "immoral," and that it should be allowed to be sold to minors.

The decision was a landmark victory for freedom of speech in Australia. It helped to bring down the country's censorship system, which had been in place for over a century.

Prior to the Penguin case, the Australian government had wide-ranging powers to censor books, films, and other forms of media. The government could ban any material that it deemed to be "indecent" or "immoral." This power was often used to suppress political dissent and to protect the interests of powerful groups.

The Penguin case was a challenge to the government's censorship powers. The book was not overtly political, but it did challenge traditional notions of morality. The court's decision that the book was not "indecent" or "immoral" was a blow to the government's censorship powers.

The Penguin case was not the only case that challenged the government's censorship powers. In the years that followed, a number of other cases were brought before the courts, and in each case, the courts ruled against the government.

As a result of these cases, the government's censorship powers were gradually eroded. In 1975, the government established the Australian Classification Board, which was given the power to classify films, videos, and computer games.

The Classification Board was more lenient than the previous censorship boards, and it allowed a wider range of material to be sold in Australia. The board's decisions were not always popular, but they helped to bring down the government's censorship system.

The Penguin case was a landmark victory for freedom of speech in Australia. It helped to bring down the country's censorship system, and it paved the way for a more open and tolerant society.

Legacy of the Penguin Case

The Penguin case is still considered a landmark victory for freedom of speech in Australia. It is often cited as a precedent in cases involving freedom of expression.

The case also had a significant impact on the Australian publishing industry. Prior to the Penguin case, publishers were often reluctant to publish controversial books for fear of being banned. After the case, publishers were more willing to take risks and to publish a wider range of books.

The Penguin case is a reminder of the importance of freedom of speech. It is a right that must be constantly defended, and it is a right that is essential for a free and democratic society.

Further Reading

* [The Penguin Case and Freedom of Speech in Australia]

(https://www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/Parliamentary_Departments/Par

* [The Penguin Case: A Landmark Victory for Freedom of Speech]

(<https://www.theconversation.com/the-penguin-case-a-landmark-victory-for-freedom-of-speech-13203>)

* [The Penguin Case: How a Book Changed Australian Censorship](<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-09-25/penguin-case-50-years-on-impact-on-censorship-freedom-speech/11539378>)

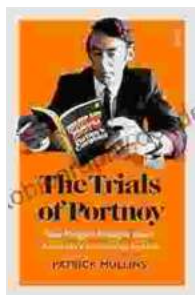
Related Images

[Image of the cover of the book "Penguin Island" by John Grant]

(https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/4/4a/Penguin_Island_Penguin_Island_cover.jpg) [Image of a group of people protesting against censorship in Australia]

(https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/e/e9/Anti-censorship_protest_in_Sydney%2C_Australia%2C_2012.jpg/1200px-Anti-censorship_protest_in_Sydney%2C_Australia%2C_2012.jpg) [Image of the Australian parliament building]

(https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/5/5a/Parliament_House_of_Australia.jpg)



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