

Lock out laws

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To: Liquor Law Review <liquorlawreview@justice.nsw.gov.au>;

To whom it may concern,

I have had a letter delivered into my mailbox with a wonderful heading "HELP US SUPPORT OUR NEIGHBOURHOOD"

I was encouraged to receive such a letter as I have a very personal story about my Kings Cross.

As a very small child in the seventies my family made the long train journey from Tumut to Sydney to the Royal Easter Show every year.

The excitement would build for weeks. The hours spent thumbing the newspapers for any information on what delights would fill the showbag pavilion and later my hotel room. The saving of the pocket money. The rewriting of lists, the agonizing of where my hard earned cash would be spent and the wonder of it all was sometimes too much to bare.

The show was always a highlight of the trip with so many fatty and sweet treats consumed. Hours spent marveling at the placement of apple, pumpkins and grains in the district exhibits (The southern highlands always a personal and loyal favorite) But the jewel in my crown was always that hotel room. It was on the corner of Victoria Street in Kings Cross.

I loved everything about it the walk from the station after we alighted from the red rattler. The man collecting my tiny paper ticket and smiling at my wonderment.

Passing the beautiful women in strappy heels, short skirts and bright red lips that only remained on the outer rim. The men standing in front of the brightly lit doorways encouraging me to enter with a wink and nod telling me I would break his heart one day.

Men dressed in uniforms I had only ever seen in movies, laughing and playfully pushing each other through doors. Once one of them actually picked me up and spun me around in the street. My father was not impressed, me, I loved it.

We could buy a chicko roll at all hours of the night for a man with a funny accent who acted like he knew everyone, he addressed everyone as Love, Darling or Mate. Everyone knew his name, Joe.

I would happily give some of my hard earned pocket money to an elderly lady that would ask for some spare change. I never could understand who would have spare change, it was just change.

Music would waft out of open door ways, the smell of beer and cigarettes would surround me at every corner, sirens would stun back to reality. I loved it.

When I was old enough to leave home I knew there was only one place for me. I took that train ride back to Sydney and to my amazement a young woman without a job could not afford to live in my beloved Kings Cross. I found my self in Homebush.

Six months later with a job I was side tracked to Newtown only to feel the pull of the cross to great.

I have had the pleasure of living in many amazing buildings and streets. Shared coffees in cafes and restaurants that allowed me to share my opinions and worries.

I have had conversations with lawyers, accountants, movie stars, Models/waiters, street sweepers, sales assistants, prostitutes, drag queens and the homeless. My life is so much more richer for the long hours marveling in the dark corners of the Bourbon, the Piccolo, Barrons.

Then I got married. I saved my Money. I finally had an opportunity to buy my little place in my true home.

I have now been a home owner in Kings cross for over ten years. My Husband and I own a ground floor, one bedroom Apartment a small hop from the strip and I am sad.

I am old now and the clubs and bars are no longer my concerns on a friday night. I don't need to know the places to be seen or the places to eat.

I am sorry but you are creating a sterile, cookie cutter suburb like so many others in this city I loved so much but am now ashamed to say I live in.

I have had the pleasure of travelling and meeting people from all over the world and I used to talk about our wonderful progressive city. I have encouraged people to come to Mardi Gras and Vivid. Now I choose not to talk about this city I once loved, I no longer see its merits.

No one wants violence in our streets no one wants people being injured, but I am afraid Sydney through out the baby with the bath water. You took your toys and went home. Shame on you. You took an easy "fix".

AS for my saftey I feel very unsafe walking the empty streets of Kings Cross. Police like people are few and far between now.

I am still holding on for dear life to the home in my heart but I am afraid the developers may win out. I am holding on to the hope the old girl might still have some life in her yet.

STOP THESE LOCK OUT LAWS

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Have a nice day,

Regards Rebekah