

Independent review of liquor law reforms

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[REDACTED] on behalf of Paris Martine [REDACTED]



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I am a visitor to Sydney. I work in the music industry and have done so for over 10 years. It is very important that these decisions are made by people who understand the nature of punters and punter behaviour on a night out.

It is also important that the decision is made with the understanding that live music is a culture, it is not something that is driven by the 'weekend warrior' who is attracted to the city for the sole purpose of getting drunk.

I have listened to much of the debate driven by medical staff and politicians. I have sympathy for their position. Medical staff do not understand the late night culture and are therefore are responding solely to the aftermath and stereotypes of people who present at emergency departments. Their view is skewed by the traumatic situations they are exposed on a weekly basis.

This is tragic, yet, they have no experience with building a liveable, vibrant, diverse and cultured city.

What they do not understanding and have no experience with traffic management, strategic city planning, the community that a music culture delivers, nightlife security, entertainment and psychology.

The examples that were provided by Anthony Lynham, QLD Minister for State Development - who is driving part of these conversations - fails to see the problems created by the Brunswick St Mall and Kings Cross which is the heavy concentration of late night venues and to recognise the correlation. This is what initially caused the Melbourne lockouts, it was the concentration of bars in King St Melbourne and the lack of live music, culture (galleries, theatres, restaurants, boutique bars) located there. He said, we (Bris), tried more police, more resources, even small triage wards, why didn't it work?? because you have the wrong mix of business. The wrong mix of patrons. The wrong mix of entertainment which drives a diverse mix of people into a concentrated area.

These outspoken doctors and politicians on this topic are conveniently (and misleadingly) using Newcastle as a working model, a city with a population of 500,000 while denying the success story of Melbourne, a vibrant worldwide city of **equal population** to Sydney (and much greater than Brisbane). Where did these guys study? Even common sense will tell you that people who choose to live in or travel to Newcastle do not have the same expectations of people who are driven to a city like Sydney or Melbourne.

Live music mitigates violence, this a fact proven by police attendance at live music venues as compared to other licenced entertainment venues you should look at these studies - happy to provide...

Sydney is the second largest city on touring schedule for overseas bands and National touring bands. Ticket sales are right down in Sydney. Without a nightlife culture, without venues to play at, without a ticket buying culture promoters can no longer justify bringing bands out to Australia. This means no Prince, no Grace Jones and Leonard Cohen and all those other scary violence inducing acts.

No small live music venues, this means nowhere for bands to grow & develop. No Paul Kelly, no ACDC, no Courtney Barnett, no Preatures etc.

Think that sounds extreme?, just ask any ticket selling promoter how Melbourne trumps Sydney's ticket sales at all levels. Most promoters can show you on paper the common calculation is Melbourne sells double Sydney now. Why? Music is no different to the food-boom, it is culture driven. If it is vibrant and exciting more people join in. If your friends are going you go!

So you might think why does that matter, these shows are done by 12midnight. Answer - These venues all make their money after the shows. During the show people do not go to the bar. It is the hours between 12 - 3AM where live music venues make all the money required to keep the doors open. Stop people from being able to come in the door and you reduce their capacity to provide live music.

Not every person is suited to a boutique bar culture. Not every person (thank goodness) is suited to going to the cultureless zones like casinos.

There are solutions that are currently working that will not kill Australia's thriving music industry. There are better solutions that will not kill community and social transaction between young people. Music is healthy. Dancing is healthy. Having a good time is healthy.

Forcing people to sit in front of their computers watching Netflix on a Friday and Saturday night will only work for so long. People need to be entertained. They need to be active. They need to be connected. Otherwise you will see a greater uptake in anti-social behaviour and you won't be able to measure it in reduced facial injuries and all the surgeons in the world will not be able to fix this (or roll it back) for you.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Paris Bacon

