

From a young age moving to Sydney was my greatest aspiration. Everything about this city was appealing, its interesting mix of people, the architecture, but more importantly the vibrant arts and culture. In 2011, 19 years old, I packed my things up, enrolled at Macquarie University and began my new life. I had no friends, no money and no idea what career path I was going to follow. But I couldn't have been more excited.

Thanks to a vibrant nightlife, I quickly established new friendships, some of which will be life long. I also discovered my serious passion for music, through frequenting my favourite nightclubs and events. I remember visiting the Oxford Street, Kings Cross areas and knowing I had to be part of it, the atmosphere was electric. I spent a year and a half living in Kings Cross prior to lockouts, between 2012-14 and during that time I never encountered any serious violence or danger within a venue, and also felt extremely safe getting home due to a high level of police presence. Since these laws and regulations were railroaded through, the streets are much quieter (in patronage and police presence), and much scarier to be on at night (the complete opposite result to what was intended). I also moved to [REDACTED] during this period and have seen some major negative cultural impacts as a result, the Newtown regulars no longer feel safe, or welcome in their own community, which you can see as a result of lockouts simply displacing the cultural violence issue (which is related to a bigger issue of macho culture).

My investment in this issue is multifaceted and goes far beyond patronage. I have also been working in hospitality to support myself throughout the course of my studies. I can say from a first hand perspective how much has changed within the industry. The level of stress due to these regulations filters down on every level. What used to be a fun, and attractive industry to work, has quickly become challenging, and fraught with issues of accountability, negative mental health, and absolutely no perks of the job (which helps build morale for those of us who gave up weekends whilst paying our own way). I also want to work in the music industry long term. How am I supposed to do this with live music venues closing their doors, increased cost of running venues, and inability to play several shows in a night because artists can't get into the venue after 1:30am? It's a joke that in an 'international city' artists can't travel to bar for a drink after playing packed out stages because drinks service ends at 3am. Late night drink trade represents a huge chunk of income for venues that cater to a late night crowd because they showcase a variety of DJs and acts (often local, and simply trying to make an honest living).

Despite negative impacts to hospitality industry, I have continued to work in bars, part of it out of need to survive but mostly because it is an industry that I feel connected to. I was initially working behind the bar, but I have since moved into a part time marketing role for The World Bar, one of the few

remaining Kings Cross venues. The World Bar is venue that's known for it's unique culture, and strong community. It seems unfair that unique venues struggle, because they are family run and owned. The World Bar is one of the few remaining venues that support local, live bands, and cater to the dwindling theatre community (for performances and free rehearsals). This is a venue that continues to comply with all of the new licensing, and required Kings Cross scanners (and also cameras) that burden these venues with huge ongoing costs (over \$100,000 per year on top of a 20% decrease in annual revenue- which has lead to downsizing of events and axing of staff).

I have been actively seeking work in Europe since the legislative changes were brought in. That would mean after 5 years of working hard at my degree and establishing industry connections that I would throw it all in and start over fresh because I cannot see any potential in my chosen career path in Sydney. I have at least 20 friends who had established careers in music/arts orientated industries who have had to make the tough decision to leave the city they love because they simply can't support themselves long term in this city. Culture and arts are an integral way of not only entertaining but also stimulating people. Creativity is imperative in any industry, especially as we move into a technological age. These laws have major implications for our development as a global city. We don't want to be the next Detroit.