

**Submission  
No 17**

## **SYDNEY'S NIGHT TIME ECONOMY**

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The lockout laws implemented by the NSW Liberal government have had a devastating impact on the livability of Sydney for a student such as myself. Aside from the obvious impact of an Orwellian lack of freedom, my own case can be defined by a severe limitation in revenue streams. As a bartender, DJ and Masters student, there are limited opportunities for me to earn a living in a city already plagued by extraordinarily high rent prices.

The cultural heart of global cities lies with it's youth. And by repeatedly and maliciously attacking the youth of the city, this liberal government has overseen the slow death of a city. Once vibrant areas are now ghost towns. Newtown has become a gentrified mess - its cultural identity replaced by the remnants of Kings Cross gentry.

We are all aware of the dangers of the night time economy. Drugs can go wrong. Physical attacks can happen. I've been the victim of a coward punch. No one doubts the inherent risks involved with heading to a venue in which alcohol is served and different cultures converge. What we cannot do, however, is limit our ability as a society to interact. Placing barriers and walls on the citizenry rarely works. People find a way outside the law to party as they used to. This inherently creates a more dangerous space in the absence of liquor licencing and security.

As a long term member of Sydney's nightlife community, I can personally preach to the importance of a vibrant night time economy. I moved to Sydney as a wide eyed 18 year old barely removed from home and constantly overwhelmed by the size of the city. Coming from a country town, I found it tough to find friends and lived in semi-isolation for the first three years in the city. Sydney's nightclubbing community happily took me in. A community of misfits and music enthusiasts have become my closest friends.

Without the welcoming arms of this community, I find it difficult to see where I would be now. Possibly friendless, certainly not as academically successful as I am today. The media and politicians constantly try to portray nightclub enthusiasts in a derogatory and insulting light. Sure, as with any part of society, there are a few bad eggs. But don't let these few bad eggs colour the perception of an entire community made up of business owners, tradesmen, doctors, solicitors, students and more. There is a human element to these lockout laws that has long been ignored. And a human element that I hope you consider.