

**Submission
No 259**

SYDNEY'S NIGHT TIME ECONOMY

Name: Mr Daniel Arena

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I have been a performing musician since 1996.

The lockout laws have had a significant negative effect on music, arts and night culture within the city, particularly in what used to be key areas around Oxford St. Sydney has been internationally known for its music and culture since the 70s, but it is harder to perform (and watch) music now than in any point I can remember.

Additionally, things are so desolate now that the on-the-ground situation feels less safe overall. I understand that reports of violence in key areas like Kings Cross dropped by a certain percentage over time but overall foot traffic appears to have dropped by a larger percentage, indicating that it is less safe per-person (and it's still possible that violence has moved to other areas and venues).

In 2016, I posted this - it still feels relevant.

"There's an aspect of the debate on the pub lockout laws that I haven't seen covered in the media yet.

I spent a neat couple of decades playing in little bands around Sydney. There's a ton of work that happens on the night of a show that isn't usually visible to audiences. Bands and crew will start setting up well before doors open, and by the time you've lugged the equipment to whoever lives closest to the venue after the show, it's really late and everyone involved is still pretty full of adrenaline.

So, by now it's 1am on a Friday night, and half the active musicians in Sydney are wide awake (and some are possibly even sober - someone had to drive everything around). The natural consequence of this is that groups of people are going to converge on a couple of central places - i.e. pubs and bars - to talk about music, connect with other musicians (and fans), find out about new bands and music, hustle support shows, and just generally grow the local scene.

A lot of my longest-running friendships and musical connections developed in this environment. The lockout laws mean that a generation of musicians in Sydney are going to find it difficult to build a cohesive and supportive artistic community. That sort of damage can take years to undo."

Thanks for your consideration.

--dan