

M068373

THESIS

ML

3504

. H66

THE MAYOR'S A SQUARE

A Regulatory History of Sydney Rock Venues 1957-1997

Shane Homan BA (Hons) UWS, Nepean

Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Macquarie University
School of English, Linguistics and Media
November 1998

Summary

In 1957 Australian audiences witnessed the first live rock and roll performances in Sydney town halls and hotels. This thesis adopts the city of Sydney as a case study in examining the development of live rock/pop performance in Australia, with particular emphasis on the industrial-legal structures framing its production and consumption.

The thesis begins by identifying two related contexts which have impacted on venue governance: the social construction of live performance venues paralleled by understandings of the performer and fan as 'unruly' subject by media, government and the music scene itself; and the commercial development of live music. Further, a third context can be identified in the competing discourses between these broader themes, in which the state's desire for manageable citizens remains in conflict with historic notions of the rock and roll subject. The project draws upon the history of subcultural theory in re-assessing notions of the bohemian/deviant subject. The creation of 'moral panics' in the formation of rock and roll as societal threat is similarly identified in governmental procedures and social control strategies. These aspects are assessed within changing notions defining 'uncontrollable youth' and youth leisure governance.

Three broad stages of development are posited in the history of live rock in Sydney: the appropriation of formal civic spaces (the town hall and ballroom) as initial sites of public performance in the 1950s; a subsequent period of consolidation in the 1960s, during which modifications to stage practices ensured rock's place in registered clubs; and the profitable 'Oz Rock' period (1978-1988), when the New South Wales hotel circuit benefited from the expansion of performance sites in radio and television. A final era of change is documented in the decline of the live pub scene, with an accompanying shift to dance musics as the primary concern of popular music regulation in the 1990s.

The project incorporates interviews with rock musicians who have performed in Sydney to describe venue conditions and stage practices, and uses local, State and Federal government archives to document and assess legislative change. The nature of liquor, building and noise laws, and other legislation relating to venue governance are considered as an alternative means of analysing the extents to which live performance opportunities have been constructed or diminished.

The centrality of live performance to national popular music industry mythologies, embodied in the 'Oz Rock' tradition, is explored within the contemporary decline in live performance venues. Because of the conflicts in the historical construction of the rock subject identified above, the social and legal factors involved in the establishment of music venues presents continual challenges to Sydney venues. It is argued that the presence of live rock and roll within the city remains a matter of negotiation. This thesis provides a re-assessment of how policy environments inform live performance opportunities, to argue for a broader understanding of the nexus between culture and administration.

Acknowledgements

The facilities and staff at various libraries were crucial to research capabilities: Sydney University, Macquarie University, the State Library, the State Archives at Kingswood, the Noel Butlin Research Centre, Australian National University and the National Library, both situated in Canberra. Assistance was also provided at various local council libraries, and the Local Government Association library in Sydney.

The resurgence in activity in the Australia-New Zealand chapter of IASPM provided me with encouragement to persist in a marginalised field of study and scarce resources. The growth in attendance at both the annual conference and Sydney seminars enabled various thesis concepts to be aired and discussed. In particular, IASPM members Peter Doyle, Peter Cox, John Whiteoak, Bruce Johnson, Karyn Duance, Julie Sloggett, Dena Rex, Andrew Murphie and Karl Neuenfeldt assisted at different stages of the project.

I am also appreciative of the support and (financial) assistance provided by staff at the University of Western Sydney, Nepean in providing casual teaching opportunities in leaner times of research. In particular, Peter McGregor, and Virginia Nightingale were helpful in this regard. Similar thanks go to Macquarie University staff Scott Shaner and Helen Wilson for tutoring opportunities. Also, this dissertation would not have been undertaken without the Australian Postgraduate Scholarship awarded in 1994.

My supervisor Phil Hayward deserves a special appreciation in providing sound research and writing advice. His constant assurances that the project was worthy of sustained analysis were crucial at various times of research exhaustion.

I am also grateful to Grant Cusack, whose expertise in liquor law proved invaluable in assessing the broader implications of music venue regulations, and government objectives. Grant also provided access to other liquor industry information and people of value, which allowed me to undertake a 'crash course' in licensing law.

The thesis would not have been possible without the help and enthusiasm of the many Australian rock musicians interviewed in the course of research. The patience of people like Helen Carter, Richard Clapton, Garth Porter, Patricia Thompson, 'Catfish' Purser and Alan Dale presented welcome contrasts to the 'difficult' performer stereotype evident within the industry.

A huge thanks to Justine Lloyd, who endured many readings of incoherent draft chapters, while attempting to finish a thesis herself. Justine's good humour and calm appraisal of issues was always there when I needed another perspective.

Finally, I would like to thank a 1960s mod who has always encouraged (sometimes against her better judgement) my interest in music, and assisted in a variety of ways throughout my years of university study: my mother, Lorraine.

Table of Contents

Introduction		1
	Research Orientation	3
	Thesis Structure	5
Chapter 1	Theoretical Frameworks	12
	Sociologies of Deviance	12
	Australian Cultural Studies	18
	Foucault: Disciplining the Government Body	25
	Towards A Politics of Performance	38
	The Ritual of Live Performance	47
	Industrial Contexts	51
	From Space to Place	57
Chapter 2	Sydney's Live Performance Traditions	62
	The English Music Hall	63
	Theatre and Vaudeville in Sydney	68
	Jazz	77
	Liquor Law 1788-1955	80
Chapter 3	Construction Sites 1955-1961	89
	The Dance Hall Circuit	91
	The Police Boys' Club Circuit	104
	The Hotel Circuit	107
	The Deviance of Amplification	114
	Giving Up The Day Job	119
Chapter 4	Clubland 1962-1972	126
	The Hotel Circuit 1962-1964	129
	Licensed Clubs	132
	Surf City 1962-1964	139
	Disco 1964-1972	148
	The Café des Artistes	160
	'More Bread Or You'll All Be Dead'	164
Chapter 5	Suburban Sounds (Know Your Place)	170
	Mixed Audiences and Prejudices	171
	The Oz Rock Tradition: Part I	177
	'This isn't music'	181
	The Oz Rock Tradition: Part II	186
	The Star Hotel	202

Chapter 6	An ‘Orwellian Vision’: Growth and Decline 1975-1997	207
	Local Practices, Global Interests	209
	Beerhemia Inc	212
	From Permissiveness to Control	218
	Resident Power	220
	The Manly Vale Hotel	226
	LAByrinthine Legislation	233
	The Harold Park Hotel	244
	On The Road	250
	Access All Eras	254
	Casino Communities	260
	Gentrification	265
	Public Interests, Private Rights	269
Chapter 7	The Phoenician Club, the Premier and the Death of Anna Wood	277
	Youth On The Streets	281
	Phoenician Club History	283
	‘From High School To Tragedy’	286
	Representations of Difference	293
	Policy Responses	301
	Final (Re)Developments	304
Chapter 8	Conclusion: A Fragile Legitimacy	311
	Moral Spaces	312
	Taming the Wild Child	316
	Policy Directions	322
	Competing Policy	328
	See You At The Local	334
Appendix A	Manly Vale Hotel, Chief Health and Building Surveyor’s recommendations regarding renewal of licence, 1984	344
Appendix B	Sydney Morning Herald venue guide, 3rd-4th October 1997	348
Appendix C	Director of Liquor and Gaming v Phoenician Club of Australia Ltd, Grounds of Complaint, 1995	349
Bibliography	Publications	352
	Policy Publications and Legislation	377
	Law Publications	381
	Local Government Archives	381
	Film/Television	382
	CD-ROMs	382
	Discography	382
	Interview Notes	383

List of Illustrations

Figure 1	United Licensed Victuallers Association advertisement, 1954	85
Figure 2	United Licensed Victuallers Association advertisement, 1954	86
Figure 3	<i>Parramatta Advertiser</i> , 21st August, 1958, p.1	100
Figure 4	Australian Hotels Association advertisement, <i>AHA Review</i> , December 1983	224
Figure 5	Manly Vale Hotel, c.1986	228
Figure 6	Interior of Hopetoun Hotel, September 1998	241
Figure 7	Comedy Hotel, Glebe, September 1998	246
Figure 8	Comedy Hotel, Glebe, September 1998	247
Figure 9	Midnight Oil tribute band advertisement, <i>Drum Media</i> , 29th April, 1998, p.44	258
Figure 10	Strawberry Hills Hotel, September 1998	264
Figure 11	Phoenician Club, Ultimo, September, 1998	285
Figure 12	<i>Daily Telegraph Mirror</i> , 25th October, 1995, p.1	300
Figure 13	Entertainment board, Phoenician Club, Ultimo, September, 1998	310