

# Spears sparks lip-synching debate in Australia

Last Updated: Friday, November 6, 2009 | 1:03 PM ET [Comments 56](#) [Recommend 27](#)

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*As Britney Spears prepares to begin a series of concerts in Australia, a local debate is raging over whether lip-synching should be disclosed to ticketholders by law. (Matt York/Associated Press)*

Even before the curtain has risen on the Australian leg of Britney Spears' Circus tour, the U.S. pop performer has already become embroiled in a local furor over lip-synching.

A debate about entertainers who lip-synch or mime their performances to pre-recorded music has broken out, tied to Spears arriving Down Under for a 15-concert stint beginning with a pair of shows in Perth on Friday and Saturday.

After reports emerged that Spears would be lip-synching in her tour's shows — for which ticket prices range from \$97 Aus. up to \$1,475 for VIP seating — even the government has weighed in on the debate.

New South Wales Fair Trading Minister Virginia Judge has suggested that a law be enacted to impel performers who use pre-recorded music in their performances to carry a disclaimer on their tickets and not be allowed to bill the performances as "live."

Australians will not tolerate a "Mickey Mouse performance," Judge told Sydney's Daily Telegraph, referencing the singer's stint on the *The All New Mickey Mouse Club* TV show as a child.

"Let's be clear — live means live," said Judge, who is also the minister assisting the premier on the arts.

"If you are spending up to \$200 Aus., I think you deserve better than a film clip."

Consumer groups have argued

that not disclosing lip-synching in concerts equates to misleading advertising. Fans deserve to know what they were paying for, says Consumer Affairs Minister Tony Robinson of the Victorian Legislative Assembly.

'Let's be clear — live means live...If you are spending up to \$200, I think you deserve better than a film clip.'

— Virginia Judge, NSW Minister

"We believe it is good business practice for concert promoters to make it clear to consumers before they buy tickets whether the performer will be miming, and make this clear on advertising, posters and other promotional materials," he told the Herald Sun.

## Promoter defends Spears

Spears concert promoter, Steve Dixon, has defended the singer's shows.

"This is a pop spectacular, this is a showband show," he said. "You come for the experience."

Opposition politicians have attacked the government for its attention to Spears rather than other, more significant issues.

"This is what the joke is today — that a government is focusing on an issue that really doesn't affect the majority of people on a day-to-day basis," said New South Wales MP Anthony Roberts.

The Circus tour will also take Spears to Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane and Adelaide.

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[VerbTheAdjectiveNoun](#) wrote: Posted 2009/11/06

at 6:56 PM ET I'll take The Hip and Rush over this piece of fake plastic any day of the week.

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**JackRu wrote:** Posted 2009/11/06

at 6:53 PM ET She's a hack and a train wreck from the 90's. Why would anyone go to see this buffoon?

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**MikeOhara wrote:** Posted 2009/11/06

at 6:30 PM ET Anyone who pays to see her deserves to be ripped off. Artists have been lip-synching loooong before Britney; check out any B&W vid of a 60s TV dance show. The proposed disclaimer is like the warning on cigarette packs: not necessary.

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**imcynical wrote:** Posted 2009/11/06

at 6:12 PM ET I was surprised to learn that many musical guests doing appearances on talk shows, and the like, get forced to lip sync, whether they want to or not.

There's actually a funny video clip out there of the band Muse on an Italian talk show, where the band rebelled by pretending to play different roles (i.e, the drummer was in fact the vocalist, and vice versa, and the bassist played keys). And the host new nothing about it. The best part is that the song is about rebelling!

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**R.J.K. wrote:** Posted 2009/11/06

at 5:16 PM ET If you are willing to pay \$200 to see Britney Spears lip-sync then you are a moron. The key component of any musical act is TALENT. Clearly Ms. Spears does not have it in sufficient amounts to sing her songs live. Which leads to the logical conclusion that she in all likelihood cannot sing in the studio either. What you hear on the radio and see on MTV is simply a fantasy. The very, very sad part is that so many people fall for the con.

Does anybody remember Milli Vanilli? If anybody thinks that the music industry has changed one bit since that fiasco they are totally wrong. They have just become better at not getting caught.

The old adage "There's sucker born every minute still holds true."

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- Previous
- [1](#)
- [2](#)
- [3](#)
- [4](#)
- [5](#)
- [6](#)
- [7](#)
- [8](#)

- [9](#)
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